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**Germany and Japan as Regional  
Actors in the Post-Cold War Era:  
A Role Theoretical Comparison**

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# **GERMANY AND JAPAN AS REGIONAL ACTORS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA: A ROLE THEORETICAL COMPARISON**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Germany and Japan as Regional Actors in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theoretical Comparison**

Recent non-comparative studies diverge in their assessments of the extent to which German and Japanese post-Cold War foreign policies are characterized by continuity or change. While the majority of analyses on Germany find overall continuity in policies and guiding principles, prominent works on Japan see the country undergoing drastic and fundamental change. Using an explicitly comparative framework for analysis based on a role theoretical approach, this study reevaluates the question of change and continuity in the two countries' regional foreign policies, focusing on the time period from 1990 to 2010. Through a qualitative content analysis of key foreign policy speeches, this dissertation traces and compares German and Japanese national role conceptions (NRCs) by identifying policymakers' perceived duties and responsibilities of their country in international politics. Furthermore, it investigates actual foreign policy behavior in two case studies about German and Japanese policies on missile defense and on textbook disputes. The dissertation examines whether the NRCs identified in the content analysis are useful to understand and explain each country's particular conduct. Both qualitative content analysis and case studies demonstrate the influence of normative and ideational variables in foreign policymaking. Incremental adaptations in foreign policy preferences can be found in Germany as well as Japan, but they are anchored in established normative guidelines and represent attempts to harmonize existing preferences with the conditions of the post-Cold War era. The dissertation argues that scholars have overstated and misconstrued the changes underway by asserting that Japan is undergoing a sweeping transformation in its foreign policy.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND SPECIAL TERMS

### Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile (-Treaty)
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BdV	German Association of Expellees (Bund der Vertriebenen)
CDU	Christian Democratic Party (Germany)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
Corps-SAM	Corps Surface-to-Air Missile
CSCE	Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe
CSU	Christian Social Union (Germany)
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
EU	European Union
FDP	Free Democratic Party (Germany)
FSAF	Future Surface-to-Air Family of missiles
GDR	German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
GEI	Georg-Eckert-Institute (Braunschweig, Germany)
GPALS	Global Protection against Limited Strikes
HAWK	Homing All-the-Way to Kill (Missile)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM	inter-continental ballistic missile
IR	International Relations
IRIS-T	Infra Red Imaging System Tail (Missile)
ISEI	International Society for Educational Information (Japan)
JDA	Japan Defense Agency
JSDF	Japan Self-Defense Forces
JSP	Japan Socialist Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MD	missile defense
MEADS	Medium Extended Air Defense System
MoD	Ministry of Defense (Germany/ Japan)
MoE	Ministry of Education (Germany/ Japan)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRV	multiple reentry vehicle
MIRV	multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIDS	National Institute for Defense Studies (Japan)
NGO	non-governmental organization
NMD	national missile defense
NPD	National Democratic Party of Germany

NPT	(Nuclear) Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRC	national role conception
NTWD	Navy's Theater Wide Defense
ODA	official development aid
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAC-3	Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (surface-to-air interceptors)
PKO	peace keeping operation
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SDP	Social Democratic Party (Japan)
SM-3	Standard Missile-3
SORT	Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty
SPD	Social Democratic Party (Germany)
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
TFT	technology-for-technology (framework)
THAAD	Theater High Altitude Area Defense
TLVS	Tactical Air Defense System
TMD	theater missile defense
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WESTPAC	Western Pacific Missile Defense Architecture Study
WEU	Western European Union
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

## Frequently Used Terms

Article 9	Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution is an article that renounces war
Bundeswehr	German for ‘Federal Defense Force’
Bundestag	German for ‘Federal Diet’ (lower unicameral house of the parliament)
Land/ Länder	States within German federal system (also Bundesland)
Neighborhood Clause	1982 Criterion for textbook screenings, according to which Japan pledges to take into consideration the feelings of neighboring countries in reviewing the depiction of recent history in textbooks
Ostpolitik	Policy of expanding West Germany’s social, economic, and political ties with communist countries of the Eastern bloc during the Cold War, often associated with Chancellor Willy Brandt
Prime Minister	Term used for the position of ‘Ministerpräsident,’ the political leaders of the <i>Länder</i> in Germany
Tsukurukai	Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (Atarashii rekishi kyōkasho o tsukurukai)
Senshu bōei	Japan’s concept of an exclusively defense-oriented security policy



## INTRODUCTION

Germany and Japan in the post-Cold War era offer superb opportunities to examine the factors and forces that shape and guide a country's foreign policy. The end of the Cold War lifted the structural constraints and limitations placed upon both countries' external strategies by the rigid bipolar system. The new environment gave them more freedom in formulating and pursuing their own policies. West Germany and Japan had previously been tied firmly to the strategies of the US-led 'capitalist camp' as important anti-communist strongholds, allowing them only minor deviations in their own policies. Following the Second World War, Washington had exercised direct control as an occupying force, later it had retained indirect power over Bonn and Tokyo as the most important ally guaranteeing national security against the Soviet threat. The end of the bipolar era thus constituted a significant change in the external setting, granting Germany and Japan more leeway to pursue foreign policies divergent from the strategies of Washington and its partners. The change was perhaps most patent in the case of the Federal Republic, which regained full sovereignty through its unification with East Germany. Subsequently, Bonn was no longer constrained to a policy of 'buying the goodwill' of its former occupiers to reach this goal. Decreasing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union had a fundamental impact on Tokyo as well, as it was no longer constrained by ideological lines in its foreign relations. In policy-speeches, decision-makers from both Germany and Japan clearly recognized the expanded latitude in their foreign policy in the early 1990s.<sup>1</sup>

Germany and Japan were widely examined and analyzed – often through comparative studies – in the academic literature on international relations and politics in the early to mid-1990s.<sup>2</sup> The pressing question was how the two countries would behave in international politics given their new freedom and leeway. What would determine the foreign policy trajectories of Bonn and Tokyo once the forces that had held Germany and Japan in place during the Cold War had fully faded? Would the two countries stake out new foreign policy courses with more unpredictability and the potential for disruption or would they continue to stick to their traditional policy-lines of self-restraint and consideration for other countries' concerns? Many scholars were particularly interested in how Bonn and

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<sup>1</sup> See for example: Kinkel 1993d for Germany and Kaifu 1990a for Japan.

<sup>2</sup> To name a few: Maull 1990/1991, Waltz 1993, Garten 1989/1990, Garten 1992, Buruma 1994, Grieco 1996, Mearsheimer 1990, Berger 1996, Becker and Rüländ 1997, Katzenstein and Shiraishi 1997.

Tokyo would act vis-à-vis their regional neighbors in Europe respectively East Asia. Would their regional security postures be characterized by old habits of power balancing and the quest for dominance?

Comparative studies addressing these questions were inspired by the striking commonalities between Germany and Japan. Both are populous, democratic and formidable economic powers and they retain strong alliance relationships with Washington, sustained by a substantial American military presence. Their histories exhibit obvious parallels: Germany as well as Japan went through delayed, rapid processes of industrialization in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, setting the stage for the development of militant nationalism and expansionary and aggressive foreign policies in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After their defeats in 1945, Germany and Japan progressed from their former *Machtbesessenheit* (self-aggrandizement before 1945) to *Machtvergessenheit* (low profile in international diplomacy and abstention from traditional power politics after 1945). (Schwarz 1985, Inoguchi 2005: 185) The legacies of the past and residual mistrust among neighbors continued to bear heavily on the two countries' foreign policies ever since. Especially in the early 1990s, politicians in Bonn and Tokyo faced contradictory expectations by neighboring countries and partners: On the one hand, they were criticized for enjoying the 'free ride' through reliance on the US security shield; on the other hand, their moves to expand international contributions were met with watchful eyes and calls to exercise restraint. Germany and Japan also share an overwhelming interest in regional and global stability, especially for economic reasons. Both are characterized by high levels of interdependence and strong economic ties with their respective region. The two countries are poorly endowed with natural resources and hence dependent on the import of almost all raw materials or semi-finished goods. At the same time, they require free access to world markets as countries with high export ratios. Thus they have a strong interest to shape and maintain a peaceful and cooperative international environment by making active contributions.<sup>3</sup>

Most studies in the early 1990s predicted that Germany and Japan would pursue similar foreign and security policies, although scholars disagreed on the direction the two would take. Realist theorists expected Bonn and Tokyo to seek dominating political leadership positions in their respective region commensurate with their economic strength.

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<sup>3</sup> Without doubt, differences between Germany and Japan should not be overlooked. While Germany is geographically located in the middle of Europe and sharing borders with a number of countries, Japan is an island nation isolated in geographic terms from the rest of East Asia. Moreover, Peter Katzenstein points out that economic disparities between Japan and other Asian countries are much greater than those between Germany and some of its key regional partner countries, such as France and Great Britain. (Katzenstein 2005: 220)

They argued that the two countries would inevitably act more aggressively in their own national interest, demand autonomy in foreign policy decisions, and strive to acquire greater military capabilities including nuclear weapons. They foresaw the emergence of regional instability and power rivalries, as Germany and Japan adopted assertive and unilateral policies. Kenneth Waltz, for example, was pessimistic about regional peace and stability, when he wrote in 1993: “Ironically, Japan in Asia and Germany in eastern Europe are likely in the next century to replay roles in some ways similar to those they played earlier.” (Waltz 1993: 63) In contrast, constructivist scholars were more optimistic about the prospects of the two countries as regional and global actors. They argued that realist scholars underestimated the importance of ideas and values and the influence of experiences. They pointed out that Germany’s and Japan’s normative foundations were overhauled after 1945, based on their experience as aggressors in World War II, their defeat, and their subsequent economic and political rehabilitation. Hanns W. Maull reasoned that Germany and Japan at the end of the Cold War were emerging as “prototypes” of a new kind of international power, which he called “civilian power.” (Maull 1990/1991: 92) According to Maull’s definition, the foreign policy of a civilian power is characterized by an acceptance of the need to cooperate internationally, a strong preference for non-military means in dealing with other countries, and a willingness to develop supranational structures. (Maull 1990/1991: 92–93) Thomas Berger similarly argued that both Germany and Japan would continue to be reluctant to use military means in international affairs. He based his prediction on a comparative analysis of what he called the “politico-military cultures” of Germany and Japan. (Berger 1998)

Now, roughly two decades after the end of the Cold War, a fresh look at German and Japanese regional security behavior since 1990 promises new insights into the fundamental question: What factors have guided and shaped the foreign policies? An initial examination of actual behavior reveals an intriguing picture of distinct and consistent patterns in each country’s policies and strategies over the past two decades. One can observe similarities as well as differences. It is evident that the two countries have explicitly rejected unilaterally dominating regional roles that realist scholars had foreseen. Both have demonstrated a pronounced aversion to the use of military force, thus assuring neighboring countries of their peaceful intentions. They gradually expanded their support for UN missions by contributing military personnel, though only after intense domestic debates and considerable soul-searching. The differences between Germany’s and Japan’s foreign and security policies are, however, as notable as the similarities. Japan has

restricted the use of force in UN activities much more than Germany has. Although both countries have contributed to regional cooperation, Germany has done so more enthusiastically, often acting as a key initiator and advocate. It supported formal multilateral institutions and regional cooperation vigorously and was willing to transfer sovereignty to the supranational level. Even among European partner countries, this was unparalleled. (Pond 1992, Aggestam 2004) Japan, in contrast, has taken a more hesitant stance in regional security cooperation, preferring bilateral and less formal, issue-specific multilateral cooperation. Furthermore, Tokyo has consistently given priority to relations with the US in its foreign policy. (Hughes and Fukushima 2004) The comparative study at hand examines the factors that have driven these distinct foreign policy approaches in the post-Cold War era.

A second motivation for the present comparative analysis on Germany and Japan is linked to the recent scholarly literature on the two country's foreign policy trajectories. A central question that pervades in the discussions is the degree to which the post-Cold War foreign policies have been marked by continuity versus change. The majority of recent books and articles avoid comparative perspectives in seeking to answer this question.<sup>4</sup> In the predictions of the early 1990s, scholars foresaw similar foreign policy-lines for Germany and Japan, but current assessments tend to diverge considerably. Whereas the majority of recent accounts on Germany find *overall continuity* in the Federal Republic's foreign policy course after the Cold War, prominent works on Japan contend that the country has been undergoing a *fundamental and extensive transformation*. The different assessments provoke a number of questions, which will be addressed in this comparative study. But first, a closer look at the academic debates on Germany and Japan is warranted.

Studies on Germany find substantial continuity, especially in the foreign policy *goals* pursued by subsequent administrations.<sup>5</sup> Most scholars assert that policy continuity is anchored in a stable set of normative guidelines and principles that has developed among policymakers and the public since 1945. As a leading study in 2001 asserted, German foreign policy after unification "is best explained as norm-consistent foreign policy behavior." (Rittberger 2001: 7) However, the analyses also point to important behavioral

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<sup>4</sup> A notable recent exception is Katzenstein's valuable comparative work on Germany and Japan. (Katzenstein 2005) His research will be discussed in further detail below. Other important existing studies are also described below.

<sup>5</sup> Aside from the ones mentioned below, studies that emphasize overwhelming continuity in German foreign policy include (among others): Risse 2004, Schneider, Jopp, and Schmalz 2002, Meiers 2002, Malici 2006, Speck 2007, Bierling 2006, Duffield 1999, Risse 2001, Boekle, Rittberger, and Wagner 2001. Only few studies have raised doubts about the continuity thesis, see: Schöllgen 2003, Hellmann 2004, Baumann 2006, Fröhlich 2008. These studies focus particularly on changes during the government of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.

adjustments – particularly in the choice of policy *instruments and means* – implemented to meet the new requirements of the post-Cold War world order. The most significant adaptation was made with regard to the use of military force, with Germany now playing a more proactive role in international peacekeeping missions than during the Cold War and in the early 1990s. Most scholars conclude that the adjustments represent attempts to harmonize Germany’s foreign policy traditions with the conditions of the post-Cold War world. As August Pradetto attests, the adaptations retain their roots in the normative and politico-cultural traditions of the Federal Republic and can thus be seen as “modifications below the threshold of fundamental change.” (Pradetto 2006: 22)

The question of change was particularly debated with the inception of the coalition government between the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Green Party in 1998. Gerhard Schröder was not only the first SPD chancellor since 1982 but also the first leader of the ‘post-war’ generation.<sup>6</sup> Observers realized that he referred to German foreign policy differently from his predecessor Helmut Kohl, not hesitating to voice ‘national’ interests and exhibiting more pragmatism. Schröder’s policy in the lead-up to the Iraq War in particular gave rise to academic debates. In the midst of an election campaign in January 2003, Schröder declared that Germany would not send troops to Iraq, no matter what the UN Security Council decided. His stance seemed to go against the traditional German emphasis on multilateral decision-making and the attachment to international institutions. Nevertheless, most studies concluded that – with the possible exception of the Iraq case – the substance of Schröder’s foreign policy revealed “little evidence of fundamental change” in Germany’s basic orientation, although the policies were “dressed up rhetorically with a new sense of self-importance and self-confidence.” (Maull 2006a: 273) Some observers argued Schröder’s different style reflected German “emancipation,” but not a new direction in Berlin’s foreign policy. (Forsberg 2005) Continuity has also been detected in the policies of the grand coalition between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats under Chancellor Angela Merkel. As Christian Hacke observed, Merkel has “pursued a high degree of continuity in Germany’s security and defense policy” – not only in substance, but also in style. Her government has shown a preference for keeping a low profile, seeking compromise and mediation, and maintaining good transatlantic relations. (Hacke 2008: 2) Overall, an overwhelming majority of studies on Germany thus conclude that the Federal

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<sup>6</sup> Schröder, born in 1944, has no personal recollection of World War II. Hence he has been counted as part of post-war generation of leaders.

Republic's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era can be described as "modified continuity." (Harnisch 2001: 48)<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, prominent studies on Japanese foreign policy find significant change and even transformation since the end of the Cold War. Two recent books, each by a foremost authority on Japan, see fundamental change in Tokyo's policy. Historian Kenneth Pyle contends that Japan today is "on the threshold of a new era" (Pyle 2007a: 374), preparing to "become a major player in the strategic struggles of the twenty-first century." (Pyle 2007a: 17) He holds that Tokyo's current shift will be major, similar to previous "abrupt changes and wide swings of international behavior" during such times as the Meiji Period in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or the post-1945 era. (Pyle 2007a: 19) Similarly, political scientist Richard Samuels sees a "transformation" in Japan's foreign policy strategy, as a new national security consensus is emerging. (Samuels 2007b: 64) Both Pyle and Samuels point out that Japan's stance on the use of military force has changed considerably, as reflected in the proactive dispatches of Japanese troops to the Indian Ocean and Iraq recently. Samuels observes that Japanese leaders today are "slicing in earnest" at the "pacifist loaf" (Samuels 2007b: 91), backed before by such politicians as Yoshida Shigeru, an influential post-war prime minister. Moreover, Pyle and Samuels argue that nationalistic Japanese leaders such as Prime Ministers Koizumi Junichiro or Abe Shinzo have displayed more assertiveness and self-confidence in their foreign policy. In both Pyle's and Samuel's accounts, the changes in Japan's policy were in large part precipitated by the end of the Cold War.<sup>8</sup>

Several specialists agree in the view that Japan is undergoing a fundamental transformation. Kevin Cooney, for example, argues that changes in Tokyo's foreign policy are "not merely incremental course corrections but also major shifts in national policy." (Cooney 2007: 8) In his opinion, Japan is in the "midst of a maturation process in which it is seeking to present itself as a great power." (Cooney 2007: 3) Others, however, are more cautious – seeing important changes in Japan though not necessarily an outright transformation. Former Japanese Foreign Ministry official Tanaka Hitoshi maintains that Tokyo's policy reflects a "process of adapting to the changing domestic and international

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<sup>7</sup> A number of scholars have recently also noted long-term sources of gradual change that are not directly related to the policy goals. In particular, two trends have been discerned: the "domestication" of German foreign policy (i.e. the mounting importance of the domestic context in foreign policy decisions) and the growing importance of financial aspects due to budgetary constraints. (See Overhaus 2004: 552, Harnisch and Schieder 2006, Maull 2006a) These aspects are not the focus of this dissertation, but they will be discussed further in the conclusion.

<sup>8</sup> Compared to Pyle, Samuels puts more relative emphasis on domestic sources of change in addition to international factors, examining ideological configurations and coalitions of ideologies. Although Samuels does not stress the end of the Cold War as a sharp discontinuity (as Pyle does), he still sees it as a key factor. Samuels argues "there was no single 'big bang' forcing the transformation, though the end of the cold war comes close." (Samuels 2007b: 86)

strategic environment” and cautions against exaggerating and misinterpreting current trends. (Tanaka 2008a: 1) At the same time, he concedes that Japan’s foreign policy style and form have undergone significant mutation. Similarly, political scientist Soeya Yoshihide argues that Japan has not made a turnaround in its policy from traditional principles and norms, but is rather in a phase of adjustment and reformulation. (Soeya 2005: 207–08)<sup>9</sup>

These assessments, which place Germany and Japan far apart on the spectrum between continuity and change in foreign policy, raise several essential and interrelated questions. Firstly, if we adopt a comparative perspective, thereby in a sense ‘calibrating’ our evaluation of continuity versus change in one country through the parallel analysis of the other country, would we come to the same conclusion? In other words, would we still find a significant discrepancy between the two countries, with prevailing continuity in German policy and fundamental transformation in Japanese policy? Secondly, can we specify more precisely the extent and type of change (or adjustment) taking place in either country? For example, the “new era” that Pyle professes in Japan’s international orientation implies a significant shift in the country’s policies. Does this mean a complete break with former policy goals and established policy instruments? Or have the changes in Japan been more comparable to the ‘adjustments’ that are seen in Germany’s case – with core policy objectives remaining unaffected?<sup>10</sup> Conversely, we can ask whether German adjustments have perhaps been underestimated and the country has in fact experienced a more fundamental ‘transformation’ with significant policy elements being altered. A third question arises if we assume that recent assessments seeing continuity in Germany and a far-reaching ‘transformation’ in Japan are correct: What has determined and driven the divergent paths in foreign policy? Where is Japan going and what kind of policies should we expect from Tokyo in the coming years?

Surprisingly, the studies asserting extensive change in Japan’s foreign policies hardly provide an answer to the last question, how Tokyo will likely behave in the future. Kenneth Pyle maintains that it is too early to tell what the new strategy will be, although he implies that policymakers tend to respond in line with elements of Japan’s traditional

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<sup>9</sup> Mike Mochizuki agrees that Japan is undergoing important adjustments, but not a transformation. (Mochizuki 2007, Mochizuki 2006). Christopher Hughes sees fundamental changes, with Japan increasingly “becoming a more assertive or ‘normal’ military power,” but he points out that these changes have taken place within the traditional framework in Japan’s security policy: the US-Japan alliance. (Hughes 2004a: 18, Hughes 2007)

<sup>10</sup> As Mike Mochizuki has accurately pointed out, Richard Samuels fails to substantiate his argument that the emerging consensus in Tokyo constitutes a new strategy rather than “just a more robust and updated version of the Yoshida Doctrine.” (Mochizuki 2007: 195) The Yoshida Doctrine is considered the tenet of Japan’s post-1945 foreign policy. Named after Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, this policy-line placed high priority on economic development, while simultaneously keeping a low profile in international affairs.

“style.” (Pyle 2007a: 1) “Given the uncertainty in the region,” he argues, “it is impossible to predict what the new strategy may be or when it will coalesce.” (Pyle 2007b: 210) Richard Samuels goes further in his characterization of Japan’s new policy course. He sees a domestic consensus emerging, which he calls “Goldilocks’ preference,” based on a hedging strategy in which “Japan’s relationship with the US and China will be neither too hot nor too cold, and its posture in the region will be neither too big nor too small.” (Samuels 2007b: 132)<sup>11</sup> He also insists that Tokyo’s policy will be defined by more assertiveness and “greater strength and independence.” (Samuels 2007a: 205) At the same time however, Samuels contends that the domestic debate is still in flux, and that the “final shape of Japan’s new security consensus is still up for grabs.” (Samuels 2007b: 203) In his view, the future of the US-Japan relationship in particular is still open for discussion. He points out that Tokyo’s and Washington’s divergent strategic preferences have become more visible and that these “combine with Tokyo’s preferences for autonomy and prestige in ways that may threaten the currently close relationship.” (Samuels 2007b: 191)

On a basic level, observers who see a fundamental change or transformation in Japan seem to agree that the normative constraints on Tokyo’s security policy are loosening and that future behavior will be bolder and more focused on military force. Yet there seems to be little agreement on what objectives Tokyo will pursue through military means. In this respect, neither Pyle nor Samuels give clear answers.<sup>12</sup> John Feffer of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington D.C. is convinced that due to the growing influence on policy-making by a “group of neo-nationalist politicians,” Japan is “moving steadily toward a conventional and potentially disruptive ‘normalcy,’” in which it will use military force without hesitation. Feffer is by far not the only analyst alarmed by Japan’s potential for instability in East Asia. In a 2003 *Foreign Affairs* article, Eugene Matthew similarly warned that Japan’s traditional pacifism was being replaced by a new fierce nationalism that could lead to “the rise of a militarized, assertive, and nuclear-armed Japan, which would be a nightmare for the country’s neighbors.” (Matthews 2003: 75)

Using an explicitly comparative framework for analysis, this study reassesses the issue of change and continuity in German and Japanese foreign policies. The chosen

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<sup>11</sup> Samuels is alluding to the children’s story ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears’ by Robert Southey.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel’s book is vague on this point. On the one hand, he gives the impression that the expansion of Japan’s military role has been primarily driven by revisionists who have a nationalist agenda and who – picking up on a shift in popular sentiment after the Gulf War – “began to paint Article 9 as an obstacle to ‘international cooperation.’” (Samuels 2007b: 1) This would suggest that revisionists with a narrow-minded nationalist policy agenda might have significant sway over the future use of military force. On the other hand, Samuels maintains that revisionists will not be able to push through all their objectives, since other ideological groups will also seek to influence policies.

analytical framework helps to illuminate the causes and reasons for each country's distinct policy strategy and style. Furthermore, the comparative approach facilitates the characterization of the extent and type of change under way in each country. Based on the analysis, the study wants to shed new light on the question of where Germany and Japan may be going in their policies in the coming years.

### **Theoretical Approach and Key Questions**

This dissertation uses and further develops a role theoretical approach to compare and analyze how Germany and Japan have formulated their foreign policy goals and strategies in the post-Cold War era. Role theory assumes that state behavior is guided by *role conceptions* encompassing a body of attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and ideas shared within society. Role conceptions define and circumscribe the aims, the perceived responsibilities and the instruments or tactics judged appropriate and legitimate in a country's foreign policy. They serve as reference frames for policymakers when considering behavioral options and formulating goals and strategies. (Boekle, Nadoll, and Stahl 2000: 11, Hyde-Price and Aggestam 2000: 253) In role theory, states are seen as purposeful actors behaving in accordance with collective expectations for proper international conduct. Each country is assumed to have a distinct set of role conceptions, which distinguish it from other countries and lead to different foreign policy orientations, strategies, and preferences. Role theory thus helps to explain the high variation that can be observed in actual security policy behavior of states. It is particularly useful in understanding different behavior of countries with similar capabilities, structural environments, and strategic challenges.

Role conceptions are products of countless domestic and international influences and they have both ideational and material roots. They stem from environmental factors such as geographic location and natural resources, from domestic and international socialization processes, and from material factors such as economic power and capabilities, which may open up or rule out certain policy choices. Role conceptions are fundamentally shaped by collective experiences and societal learning based on formative events, past failures, and successful policies. Just like individuals, nations act based upon past experiences and the resulting, shared convictions and perceptions. Role conceptions reflect a negotiated understanding of the world and represent the collective memory and normative ideals and beliefs of a society. They are relatively stable understandings regarding the

proper behavior of a state, but are “neither invariably fixed nor immutable across time.” (Krotz 2002: 7) Furthermore, it is assumed that dominant role conceptions can be analyzed by studying foreign policy speeches of political elites in which they indicate their commitment to particular behavior, functions, and responsibilities of their country. (Aggestam 2000: 97)

As a strand of constructivist thinking in the academic discipline of International Relations (IR), role theory emphasizes the importance of normative and ideational structures in the formulation of policies, while also recognizing the influence of material structures. In doing so, it criticizes rationalist and structural accounts in IR theory, which maintain that national interests are formulated purely on the basis of systemic pressures and the drive to maximize power. Based on a role theoretical approach, this dissertation argues that the international structure does not determine state behavior and that material factors are only given meaning through social processes, ideas and shared knowledge. In other words, the material environment does not provide us with objective ‘truths’ from which we reflexively deduce behavior. Other countries, for example, do not come classified as ‘friends’ or ‘foes’ based on their power resources and capabilities. (Wendt 1995: 73) Rather, we depend on our social interpretation and construction of reality and on our ideas and subjective knowledge about the world to determine appropriate behavior. Structural configurations such as the distribution of power are thus filtered through a “cognitive lens” with which actors are endowed. (Berger 2003: 262)

Because of the emphasis on ideational and normative factors, role theory can help understand state behavior that remains unexplained by utilitarian and structural approaches. Norms and moral beliefs often offer the most convincing explanation of why states participate in humanitarian interventions and peace-keeping missions or why they abstain from using nuclear or chemical weapons. (Tannenwald and Price 1996, Finnemore 1996) Interest politics alone also cannot account for Germany’s and Japan’s pronounced aversion to unilateralism in foreign policy and strong reluctance to use military force. The Federal Republic’s marked tendency to support multilateral cooperation and to pool sovereignty within supranational institutions is another striking policy case that utilitarian approaches have difficulty to illuminate.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The determined German push for the introduction of a common European currency, the Euro, seems particularly puzzling, since the Deutschmark was a strong and stable currency that appeared preferable to most experts at the time.

Role theory can provide valuable insight into the question of continuity and change in foreign policy. By observing the predominant role conceptions over a length of time, it allows to trace shifts and modifications in stated policy goals and strategies and to examine changes in the declared motivations and rationales. It permits to investigate how policymakers reflect on the current international environment, and whether ongoing experiences confirm or challenge existing role conceptions. Furthermore, the analysis of speeches enables the researcher to assess whether new shared understandings and ideas about policy objectives are emerging among decision-makers or to what extent the statements reflect variations of old themes. Based on a role theoretical approach, this dissertation thus presents a dynamic account of change and continuity in German and Japanese foreign and security policies, drawing on the policymakers' own perspectives.

This dissertation seeks to answer a number of empirical and theoretical questions, focusing on Germany's and Japan's regional security policies in the time period since the end of the Cold War from around 1990 to the present. Firstly, regarding the empirical aspects, it will identify and characterize the content of each country's role conceptions and reveal similarities and differences. By taking an actor-focused perspective, it will address the question of continuity and change in German and Japanese foreign policies in the post-Cold War era. It seeks new insights into the fundamental question of where these two important regional powers are headed in their foreign and security policies. Secondly, regarding the theoretical aspects, this dissertation sets out to examine the factors and forces that shape and guide a country's foreign policy, treating Germany and Japan as two pertinent examples. It will consider and probe whether a role theoretical approach can provide convincing explanations for German and Japanese post-Cold War foreign policy behavior observed in particular policy fields. Finally, this dissertation develops a new comparative method based on inductive categorization techniques. This dissertation pays close attention to the ideas and concepts expressed by policy-makers, thus retaining maximum proximity to the original text material. At the same time, the inductive method facilitates a systematic comparison highlighting both similarities and differences.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Other comparative role theoretical studies rely on pre-defined categories to compare different countries. (For example, Aggestam 2004, Frenkler et al. 1997, Kirste 1998). This allows the researcher to gain insight into particular issues that are considered important. On the other hand, it runs the risk that certain ideas or nuances not falling inside the established categories are overlooked. See also the discussion in the method part of this dissertation.

## **Methodological Overview**

### *Identification of Role Conceptions*

In order to identify the role conceptions held by political elites of both countries, a qualitative content analysis of major foreign policy speeches from Germany and Japan was conducted. A minimum of three foreign policy speeches per year and country were chosen for the time period from 1990 to 2008.<sup>15</sup> The speeches were delivered by principal decision makers such as prime ministers, chancellors or foreign ministers, who serve as the most authoritative sources for defining national conceptions of identity and role. In the content analysis, all assertions referring to the conceptions held by decision-makers of the duties and responsibilities of their state with relevance to the region were coded and classified in a categorization system. Coding categories were developed inductively through an iterative process of defining preliminary labels, testing them and then making necessary adjustments or reformulating categories. After coding German and Japanese speeches separately, aggregate labels were devised by identifying areas of correspondence and thematic similarities in the speeches of both countries. This procedure ensures that both similarities and differences in the role conceptions of Germany and Japan can be identified and compared. The six role conceptions found in the case of Germany and seven in the case of Japan will later be discussed in detail.

In the coding process, two important criteria were applied in identifying statements to be included in the analysis. Firstly, statements had to focus on political, diplomatic and security issues falling into the traditional narrow definition of security studies. (Katzenstein 1996: 10) Hence, statements referring to such issues as environmental or economic security were excluded. This limitation was made both to keep the scope of this study within manageable proportions and to analyze social determinants of national security policy – a policy field traditionally dominated by studies relying on utilitarian and structural approaches.

Secondly, only statements focusing on duties and responsibilities within each country's region, i.e. Europe for Germany and Asia for Japan were included in the coding process. This second criterion was chosen both for practical reasons, i.e. to further limit the scope of the study, and for analytical reasons. Germany as well as Japan can be considered

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<sup>15</sup> In total, the analysis covers 118 German and 120 Japanese documents. In addition to speeches, a small number of major interviews and newspaper articles by policymakers are used. Almost all documents were analyzed in the original language – mostly in German and Japanese. A few speeches were only available in English and thus the translated versions were analyzed.

key regional states wielding extensive power within their respective hinterlands, while not having the resources of major global powers at their disposal. Although the two countries' influence sometimes extends beyond their region, German and Japanese foreign policies overwhelmingly focus on regional issues. Given geographical proximity, this is not surprising. Berlin and Tokyo have the greatest incentive to play active roles in ensuring stability and peace in surrounding areas. Regions of course are determined not only by geographic proximity and interdependencies, but they are also socially and politically constructed in the same way as nations are 'imagined communities.' (Blechinger 2000: 60) Because conceptions of the geographical scope of 'regions' may change over time and different notions may coexist within society at any one time, it is difficult to define and delimit precisely the boundaries of Germany's and Japan's 'regions.' This dissertation remains flexible and sensitive to the way German and Japanese foreign policymakers define their respective region, relying only on rough definitions of 'region' that parallel dominant conceptions voiced by Berlin's and Tokyo's politicians. For Germany, the regional 'core' may be defined as the area of the European Union (EU), while the 'extended' region encompasses all member countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), including North America and Russia.<sup>16</sup> For Japan, the 'core' region, termed 'East Asia' in this dissertation, refers to the Western Pacific rim from Siberia in the Northeast to Indonesia in the Southwest, while the 'extended' region, termed 'Asia-Pacific' refers to the whole Pacific rim, including Australasia and the Americas.<sup>17</sup> This dissertation takes into account policymakers' assertions referring both to the narrow and the broad definitions of the region.

### *Approach to Case Studies*

Based on two case studies, this dissertation examines actual German and Japanese foreign policy behavior in the post-Cold War era. Thereby, it seeks to assess whether the two countries' policies can be adequately understood in view of the respective role conceptions. Case studies were chosen with three selection criteria in mind. Firstly, the cases had to have relevance for regional security issues, corresponding to the focus applied

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<sup>16</sup> German politicians frequently speak about a pan-European peace order 'between Vancouver and Vladivostok.' In addition to the two regional conceptions mentioned, German politicians refer to the transatlantic region covered by NATO.

<sup>17</sup> This definition parallels that used in Maull 1998 and Maull 2005. It is important to note that various overlapping conceptions of 'region' exist in Japan, often tied to the geographical membership of various organizations, such as ASEAN plus three, the East Asian Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum, APEC, or the Six Party Talks.

in the coding process of the content analysis. Secondly, German and Japanese policymakers had to be confronted with similar strategic questions and difficulties in the chosen policy fields. If the two countries deviate significantly in their behavior despite being faced with similar circumstances and challenges, the influence of role conceptions can be analyzed effectively. Thirdly, to test the role theoretical approach, the chosen case studies had to cover different aspects in German and Japanese regional security policy.

Two case studies were selected for analysis.<sup>18</sup> The first covers German and Japanese policies on missile defense systems – an issue of enormous significance in the current defense strategies of both countries. It arguably represents a ‘hard’ test case for the explanatory power of ideational variables and role conceptions. As noted above, policies closely related to traditional defense and security questions have been explained mostly through reference to utilitarian and structural variables. Because missile defense (MD) policy covers a broad range of issues, this case study is divided into three sub-studies: the first looks at MD strategies for *national territorial defense*, the second examines MD policies for the *protection of soldiers* deployed abroad, and the last deals with the two countries’ stance on using their MD capabilities to *support partner countries*. Each of these sub-studies is intricately linked to the broader regional security strategies of either country, as the discussion will show. The second case study investigates Berlin’s and Tokyo’s policies on joint textbook commissions with neighboring countries. In Europe and even more so in Asia, the treatment of history in school books has the potential to destabilize security relations. Because of analytical reasons specified in the case study’s introduction, the German-Polish and Japanese-South Korean textbook disputes were selected for comparison.

Each case study involves several analytical steps. First, German and Japanese behavior is examined separately, highlighting the developments in foreign policy strategies and dominant themes in the political debates. Characteristics and distinct patterns of behavior of each country are analyzed and compared. Then follows a discussion of whether role conceptions provide convincing explanations for German respectively Japanese foreign policy conduct. Finally, the analysis considers other factors, which may have influenced German and Japanese strategies and behavior.

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<sup>18</sup> The case studies consider policy developments until July 2010.

## Relevance

Germany and Japan are two key powers in regional and international security dynamics. Both countries wield formidable economic strength and consequently play important roles in shaping their respective environments.<sup>19</sup> For Washington in particular, Berlin and Tokyo remain essential partners and allies in international affairs. A deeper understanding of how Germany and Japan define their interests and roles is thus indispensable. Furthermore, as pointed out above, they are pertinent examples to examine the explanatory potential of role conceptions.

One may wonder whether the analytical focus on two states is appropriate in today's world of globalization, multilateral institutions, and transnational actors. Yet, as Charles Morrison et al. emphasize, “despite the rise of other actors in international affairs, states remain the essential vehicles through which norms are established and authoritative international rules are negotiated, implemented, and adjudicated.” (Morrison, Kojima, and Maull 1997: 86) States thus continue to play crucial roles in the international arena. Especially economically powerful countries such as Germany and Japan can foster and fortify stability by offering political and financial incentives to neighbors for entering security dialogue or cooperative frameworks in the region.

## Existing Literature

Although a systematic comparison of Germany and Japan as post-Cold War regional security actors promises fundamental insights about the forces shaping and guiding foreign policy strategies, theoretically grounded studies are scarce. IR scholarship has primarily focused on one region rather than engaging in cross-regional research. As Young Jong Choi and James Caporaso observe, “research today has become more heavily concentrated in Western Europe, North America and Asia, with little communication across the three areas, producing studies of multiple regions that are in a fundamental way not comparative.” (Choi and Caporaso 2002: 481) Without doubt, language requirements have

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<sup>19</sup> According to the *CIA World Factbook 2008*, Germany is Europe's largest economy in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, with a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately 2.9 trillion US Dollars (per capita: 34,800 US Dollars). (Central Intelligence Agency 2008) In East Asia, China has surpassed Japan's absolute GDP level in PPP terms, but Japan is in many ways economically still more powerful. If we compare the GDP *per capita* (in PPP terms), which is a better proxy for the standard of living and thus a country's economic development level, Japan's lead over China is approximately 6:1. (Japan: 35,300 US Dollars and China 6,100 US Dollars). (Central Intelligence Agency 2008) Peter J. Katzenstein notes that in terms of GDP at market prices, Japan's lead over China is even greater. (Katzenstein 2005: 36)

been a major obstacle to tackle such cross-regional studies and specifically comparisons between Germany and Japan.

The recent work of Peter Katzenstein perhaps comes closest to this dissertation's endeavor of comparing German and Japanese regional security policy strategies. His valuable research examines European and East Asian regionalism, in which Germany and Japan are seen as "intermediaries" (Katzenstein 2005: 3) linking each region to the "American imperium." (Katzenstein 2005: 4) However, Katzenstein's work differs from this dissertation in the analytical focus and in the theoretical approach. He studies the characteristics of European and East Asian regionalism and investigates the interaction between the forces of globalization and internationalization. While he pays particular attention to Germany and Japan as core regional powers, he does not present an actor-specific outlook by examining the political debate or speeches of decision-makers. Rather, he explores the complex forces shaping regional characteristics and German and Japanese foreign policy behavior. His research is based on an eclectic approach drawing on all three main theories in IR scholarship: realism, liberalism and constructivism. (Katzenstein 2005: 39) This allows him to analyze a range of factors possibly effecting policy strategies. In the end, however, the reader is left somewhat bewildered by the complexities and interdependencies presented in the study, and it remains unclear which forces Katzenstein considers most important in shaping policies. Therefore, this dissertation wants to contribute to the research on German and Japanese regional security behavior through a systematic comparative approach focusing on the actors' perspectives.

Comparative role theoretical work on Germany and Japan has also been rare, and – apart from some older work from the mid-1990s – a direct comparison between the two countries is lacking.<sup>20</sup> Recently, Lisbeth Aggestam has examined German, British and French conceptions of regional security roles based on a qualitative content analysis of policy speeches from each country. One of the key questions underlying her work is whether the three countries' conceptions are converging around a European identity through socialization processes. Building on Aggestam's research, this dissertation sets out to gain further insight into Germany's regional role conception. The cross-regional comparison carried out in the analysis below seeks to expose characteristics about German and Japanese thinking patterns that may not be as conspicuous in intra-regional comparisons or single-country studies. Moreover, this dissertation intends to contribute

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<sup>20</sup> Older works include an essential role theoretical comparison between Germany, Japan and the US. See Frenkler et al. 1997.

further by examining the explanatory power of role conceptions through several case studies – a field Aggestam did not investigate. In another lately published study, Hanns W. Maull evaluates recent German foreign policy behavior in light of the civilian power role concept that he developed earlier in his comparative research. Although he provides rich and multifaceted insights into current policies, his study does not include a detailed examination of foreign policy speeches. (Maull 2007)

The only role theoretical study about Japan was lately conducted by Bert Edström. In his short, non-comparative study, Edström examines continuities and changes in speeches before and after the 1993 political upheaval, in which the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lost power. (Edström 2004) Although Edström provides some initial insights in Japanese role conceptions, a more detailed analysis focusing on the developments in the post-Cold War era is required to identify the forces shaping and guiding foreign policy strategies. Aside from Edström's study, two other works deserve mention. Susanne Klien explored Japan's international role including some recent domestic debates among policymakers, but her research is not based explicitly on a role theoretical approach and does not examine foreign policy speeches. (Klien 2002) A Japanese study by Tanaka Akihiko of Tokyo University quantitatively analyzes 133 Diet speeches held by Japanese prime ministers between 1945 and 1999. Although the study presents interesting results, its scope is limited, as it only surveys the different concepts of 'region' used in speeches, such as 'Asia', 'Asia-Pacific' or 'Southeast Asia.' (Tanaka 2000)

## **Structure**

This dissertation is organized into two main parts with several sub-sections. The first part (chapters 1 and 2) presents the theoretical and methodological frameworks and discusses the German and Japanese role conceptions found in the analysis. It introduces succinctly the role theoretical approach, highlighting the main assumptions and exploring critical issues. The dissertation then explains the method to identify German and Japanese role conceptions. A discussion of the role conceptions found in the analysis of foreign policy speeches from both countries follows. The second part (chapters 3 and 4) presents the findings from the case studies about actual foreign policy behavior of Germany and Japan in the post-Cold War era. As indicated above, each study begins with a separate analysis of the two countries' behaviors. Then it discusses whether the particular strategies and policy courses can be understood through the respective role conceptions. The

conclusion summarizes key findings and draws inferences about both countries' foreign policy trajectories. Finally, it considers and assesses the analytical value of role theory.

### **Terminology**

In line with convention, Japanese names are written with the family name followed by the first name. Western names appear with the given name appearing before the family name. Japanese text passages and terms are transcribed according to the *Hepburn romanization system*, with slight modifications. For instance, I write shinbun instead of shimbun. The text refrains from using macrons or inflection marks such as ō or ū in names of Japanese individuals and in names and terms that are commonly used in English, such as the city name Tokyo (instead of Tōkyō). Furthermore, when using the term 'Germany' in descriptions of the Cold War era, this dissertation refers to the Federal Republic of Germany, or West Germany.

# CHAPTER 1

## THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the theoretical and methodological foundations of the dissertation. It is divided into two main parts. The first part introduces role theory and distinguishes it from other theories of international relations. It describes the underlying assumptions and provides an overview of concepts and themes. Furthermore, it outlines the origins of role theory in social psychology and sociology and points out some differences that must be considered in the theory's application to foreign policy behavior of states. The discussion reveals the strengths and weaknesses of role theory and explores key issues. For example, it examines what causes national role conceptions to be stable or in flux. It also deals with the question of whether role theory contradicts the widespread hypothesis in IR that states are rational actors. Role theory, this chapter contends, is compatible with rationality, but unlike utilitarian approaches, it assumes that values and norms are part of an actor's strategic calculations and decisions. The first part concludes by considering role conflicts and their origins. So far, role conflicts have received insufficient attention in role theoretical accounts. Drawing on research results from both IR and psychology, this dissertation seeks to provide a comprehensive and systematic overview of different types of role conflict and of coping strategies used by states.

The second part focuses on the method used to identify and compare national role conceptions. It explains the choice of empirical material, highlighting advantages and reflecting on potential criticism. An outline and assessment of qualitative content analysis as a tool for analytical investigation in role theory follows. This section reviews different coding techniques and demonstrates why an inductive approach is suitable for this dissertation. Next, the chapter describes the labeling and categorizing process employed in the comparative analysis between Germany and Japan. It explains the development of comparative categories that highlight similarities and differences between countries. Lastly, the chapter summarizes the analytical approach used in the comparative case studies.

## Theoretical Approach

### *National Role Conceptions and their Function*

Role theory assumes that a country's foreign policy behavior is decisively shaped by national role conceptions (NRCs). NRCs are defined as intersubjectively shared, value-based expectations about the appropriate role a state should play in international affairs – or for the purpose of this study, in regional security affairs. By specifying objectives, delimiting the range of policy options and tactics, and establishing standards of proper behavior, NRCs provide foreign policy-makers with orientation. Kalevi Holsti introduced role theory to the study of international politics in a seminal article published in 1970. In his article, Holsti relied on a definition of role conceptions similar to the one used in this dissertation:

“A national role conception includes the policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems.” (Holsti 1970: 245–46)

NRCs thus represent the sum total of normative ideas and cognitive perspectives held by a society and especially its political leadership about the responsibilities and duties of the state in foreign policy. NRCs reveal strategic preferences and shared perceptions of how the world *is* and how it *should be*.

NRCs serve as conceptual “road maps” for government representatives. (Aggestam 2000: 87)<sup>21</sup> They facilitate decision-makers' understanding of the highly complex world of international relations and provide guidelines for appropriate behavior. Faced with both time constraints and cognitive limits, political elites have little room to rethink basic strategies on a day-to-day basis. They can only dedicate limited attention to various policy issues and are thus dependent on NRCs as reference frames legitimated by broad domestic support. NRCs liberate politicians from the necessity to identify and redefine appropriate conduct in recurring foreign policy situations. In a newspaper interview in 2006, a top level official from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs addressed the significance of role conceptions or what he called ‘principles’:

“Having principles saves contemplation and time. If we have an established principle, [...] we won't have to doubt it each time we debate something. In my case, I never doubt [...] that the

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<sup>21</sup> Others have similarly observed that role conceptions serve as a „guideline“ (Richtschnur) (Kirste and Maull 1996: 283), as “cognitive maps” (Hudson and Vore 1995: 217), or as “internal reference systems.” (Krotz 2002: 31)

development of the Japan-US alliance is in Japan's interest. My rationalization is to concentrate efforts on managing that alliance." (Tanter and Honda 2006)

NRCs thus ensure that decision-makers can focus their energies on policy implementation and the realization of established objectives. Furthermore, they enable politicians to react swiftly with consistency to new challenges in the evolving environment.

According to Ulrich Krotz, NRCs affect state behavior in three dimensions: first, they *prescribe* by motivating wills and goals, secondly, they *proscribe* by ruling out certain courses of action as inappropriate, and thirdly, they *induce processual preferences* by defining the tactics and instruments seen as legitimate and morally acceptable in foreign policy. (Krotz 2002: 8–9) NRCs thus identify and delineate a country's goals, interests, the perceived responsibilities and duties as well as the instruments judged appropriate in foreign policy. Furthermore, they shape and condition how policymakers evaluate their present external environment, their policy alternatives, and the likely consequences of their conduct. However, it is important to note, that NRCs do not directly cause state behavior. Rather, they provide reasons or motives for particular conduct. Role theoretical research thus cannot explain foreign policy behavior in a conventional positivist sense. (Aggestam 2004: 19) As an interpretive approach, it can expose and highlight the perspectives and views of decision-makers and register apparent linkages to foreign policy behavior.

With its focus on the cognitive dimension, role theory can furthermore help to account for variations in security policy behavior of states. Every country is assumed to possess a distinct set of role conceptions, which will engender different responses and strategies. Role theory can thus capture the diversity among international actors by identifying characteristics that set one state apart from others. This helps to shed light on questions such as why some countries adopt unilateral foreign policies, while others strive for cooperation and integration, or why some states readily rely on military force, while others exhibit marked reluctance.

### *Role Theory in the Discipline of International Relations*

In International Relations, role theory belongs to the constructivist research agenda. Constructivists criticize the dominant theoretical approaches and especially neo-realism for assuming that the behavior of states is dictated exclusively by the material-structural context and the distribution of power in the international system. For constructivists, there

is no external objective reality as such. Rather, the material world is given meaning through an actor's "cognitive lens" comprising his subjective understandings and ideas. (Berger 2003: 390) Alexander Wendt captured the methodological core of constructivism in his well-known maxim: "Anarchy is what states make of it." (Wendt 1992: 395) He argued against the realist claim that power politics and self-help follow causally from anarchy. Wendt maintained that there is no 'logic' of anarchy and that states act instead on the basis of perceptions and perspectives about the external world shared within society. While constructivists are attentive to the material context of state behavior, they stress normative and ideational structures as mediating variables. States are seen as intentional actors and thus their behavior must be analyzed by looking at the subjective meanings. Furthermore, constructivists assume that state interests emerge in the process of defining a particular situation and thus are changeable. This view differs from rationalist theoretical accounts, which argue that state interests are fixed and exogenously determined by the international structure.

Like constructivism in general, role theory emphasizes the dialectical relationship between agent and international structure and seeks to bridge the two for analytical as well as empirical exploration. Alexander Wendt succinctly explains why agent and structure inevitably influence each other:

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

Through their conduct, states reproduce and reconstruct their surrounding structural environment, but at the same time, these social and material structures restrict and influence their behavior. Role theory provides a means of analyzing and coping with the co-constituted and co-determined nature of agent and structure. National role conceptions can be seen as a "hinge" or link between the two dimensions, exposing how both shape a country's policy. (Kirste and Maull 1997: 16) NRCs constrain the foreign policy behavior of states, and simultaneously influence stability and change in the international system. (Kirste and Maull 1996: 292)

In the study of international politics, role theory is thus a unique analytical tool that reconciles different levels of analysis. By subsuming numerous variables that may influence foreign policy, NRCs enable a "micro-macro synthesis" that spans the "individual,

governmental, societal and systemic” levels. (Rosenau 1987: 46) The focus on the subjective perspective of the role holder allows the researcher to assess the interplay between internal and external variables and pinpoint the cognitive outcome. NRCs thus provide an analytical bridge between the ideational, material, and institutional realms. Role theory does not stand in outright contradiction to other theoretical approaches in IR. Rather, it acknowledges the influence of factors that realist or liberal accounts emphasize. However, according to role theory, the effect of such variables on foreign policy behavior may vary both in extent and in type, depending on the cognitive predispositions and beliefs of each state.

Role theory opens the door for a methodical examination of normative factors in foreign policy-making. This is perhaps its greatest contribution to the discipline of IR. Numerous constructivists have highlighted the influence of values and ideas, using terms such as ‘identity’ or ‘political culture’ to conceptualize their effect in shaping policies.<sup>22</sup> These studies have provided valuable insights, but they face the inherent difficulty of systematically exploring and capturing a country’s ‘identity’ or ‘political culture.’ Role theory can identify more precisely the impact of norms and ideas on a country’s behavioral preferences and strategic outlook. Through a content analysis of key speeches or other pertinent material, the analyst can investigate a society’s conceptions of role, which indicate how identity and culture are translated into action templates. Role theory thus serves as an invaluable analytical tool and effective extension of mainstream constructivist approaches.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Application of Role Theory to International Politics*

Role theory was originally developed in social psychology and sociology, to describe and examine patterned and characteristic behavior of individuals given a certain position in a social context. (Biddle 1986: 68) As the term ‘role’ suggests, the theory was inspired by theatrical analogy. In their everyday lives, individuals behave predictably

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<sup>22</sup> See among others Risse 1999, Risse 2003, Duffield 1999, Checkel 2001.

<sup>23</sup> Role theory shares many of the assumptions of ‘identity’ literature. However, a key difference lies in the fact that a nation’s identity is deemed to develop and consolidate during a process of distinguishing between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ – an assumption not made by role theory. As Kai Schulze observes, “To construct one’s own identity, an entity defines what is perceived as unique to *itself* and therefore different to the *other*. In this sense the *other* could also serve as a negative description of the *self*.” (Schulze 2010: 3) As will be seen in detail below, another difference is that role conceptions consist of an ego- and an alter-part. According to role theory, other countries’ behavioral expectations thus can influence the foreign policy behavior of a nation. In contrast, identity theory generally does not presuppose or examine such a connection.

according to collectively shared expectations, just like actors on the theater stage are constrained to perform according to their parts in the script. An individual will thus behave in characteristic ways as a parent or a teacher, for instance. Role theory can be adapted to study foreign policy behavior, as states share certain similarities with individuals. Most importantly, although states represent social collectives, they can be imagined with actor-like qualities, including desires, beliefs, and intentions. (Wendt 2004: 291) States exhibit consistency in their foreign policy goals and strategies, often over long spans of time. Although individual leaders and officials enforce government policy, they do not act as private individuals but as representatives and authorized spokesmen for their country. In formulating specific policies, they draw on the ideas and understandings held collectively within society. Thus, “Effective foreign policy presumes [...] the existence of largely congruent role conceptions legitimated through broad support among foreign policy elites and politically relevant population groups” (Kirste and Maull 1996: 287)

NRCs derive both from the views of domestic society, referred to as the *ego-part*, and from the prescriptions of the external environment, referred to as the *alter-part*. (Kirste and Maull 1996: 289) While both ego- and alter-part conceptions have some effect on the behavior of states, this study considers the ego-part as the one with more immediate and substantial impact, and hence the more relevant realm for examination. In contrast to psychological work on role theory, where the focus lies on the alter-part, the ego-part is more important in IR. Social psychologists like Ralf Dahrendorf maintain that individuals behave predictably according to the expectations of the society they live in.<sup>24</sup> According to Dahrendorf, individuals have no control over the contents of their role conceptions, because “society has sanctions at its disposal, to enforce its prescriptions.” (Dahrendorf 2006: 40) In international politics, by contrast, there are few sanction or pressure mechanisms that can be utilized to coerce a country to conform to behavioral prescriptions emanating from its environment. The norm of sovereignty ensures that a country’s foreign policy normally cannot be controlled by another state. (Holsti 1970: 243) Furthermore, as Michael Barnett points out, when a state does not comply with alter-part expectations, its survival is rarely at stake, “but the government’s domestic standing frequently is.” (Barnett 1993: 278) Thus government officials tend to pay more attention to domestic than external views in making foreign policy decisions.

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<sup>24</sup> Although social psychologists Ralf Dahrendorf and Talcott Parson focus largely on the alter-part, others including George Herbert Mead place more emphasis on the active self-definition of roles by the ego-part through interaction with the external environment. (Mead and Morris 2000)

There are two additional aspects justifying a focus on the ego-part in IR. Firstly, there is reason to believe that alter-part expectations are less specific and less action-oriented than the ideas of the ego. If this is true, the ego-part is likely to have a stronger and more decisive effect on actual foreign policy. In a study examining ego- and alter-part role conceptions of Japan between 1969 and 1982, Bert Edström found that the behavioral expectations of foreign countries were more passive, reactive, and ambiguous than those held by the Japanese themselves. (Edström 1988: 208) It seems plausible that this finding holds for other states as well. Government leaders belonging to the alter-part are aware that they must respect the norm of sovereignty and thus cannot dictate policy details towards the country in question. Furthermore, these officials, who already have to deal with the complexities of their own policies, cannot devote infinite time and effort to formulate precise expectations and prescriptions. For both reasons, alter-part conceptions are likely to be less specific than those of the ego-part.

Secondly, alter-part expectations for states are likely to be less homogenous than those faced by individuals in society. For states, there are no established, broadly recognized position-roles that entail specific behavior. Individuals need to respond to a high level of consensus within society about how they should behave as a teacher or parent. In contrast, a country will be confronted with a number of alter-part prescriptions that may differ significantly depending on the individual relationship between ego and alter. However, a state cannot possibly respond to all demands it faces. Complete conformity may either be unrealistic due to resource constraints or unfeasible because of contradictory or mutually exclusive policy guidelines. States are thus forced to be selective when tending to the requests of other countries. The key question then is: Which alter-part prescriptions will politicians choose to respond and adhere to? Role theory suggests that we may find clues in the ego-part conceptions about preferences and predispositions that will guide this decision. If, for instance, policy-makers embrace the self-conception of being a faithful ally or partner to a particular country, the demands of that country will probably carry considerable weight in decision-making. Ego-part conceptions also reveal to which extent particular alter-part prescriptions have been internalized. Internalization results from socialization between ego and alter and has been articulated in the psychological work of Talcott Parsons. (Parsons 1999: 39, Parsons 1994) The subject adopts and incorporates behavioral expectations of the alter-part into its self-conception, because it considers them legitimate, appropriate and/or relevant for itself. Just like individuals, states may internalize understandings of role over a span of time. The ego-part role conception will thus reveal

which ideas have been adopted as well as indicate which alter-part conceptions may affect behavior.

### *Role Theoretical Terminology*

As suggested in the last section, role theory distinguishes between ego-part and alter-part conceptions. Ego-part conceptions consist of the rights and obligations that a country's politicians perceive on behalf of their *own* state. Alter-part conceptions, on the other hand, denote the behavioral expectations held by *other* states or by international organizations. This dissertation assumes that a country's ego- and alter-part conceptions may consist of several distinct behavioral expectations. In other words, a country can possess *multiple* NRCs at any one time. This assumption is in line with Kalevi Holsti's study, which found an average of 4.5 ego-part role conceptions in one country per source he investigated. (Holsti 1970) In social psychology and sociology, individuals are similarly recognized to hold multiple roles simultaneously, as seen above. (Dahrendorf 2006)

Furthermore, when referring to the sum total of a country's role conceptions, Lisbeth Aggestam's term *role set* will be employed. According to Aggestam, a role set represents the school of thought predominating in foreign policy. (Aggestam 2004: 67)<sup>25</sup> A country's overall approach to foreign policy can be characterized and described by analyzing this role set. This dissertation will depict, evaluate and compare Germany's and Japan's role sets following the content analysis of speeches that identifies each country's NRCs. Finally, *role behavior* or *role performance* is defined as the actual behavior of the role holder. Role theory assumes a general correspondence between NRCs and foreign policy conduct. In case studies, this dissertation will investigate the relationship between foreign policy rhetoric and the characteristics of actual behavior.

### *Continuity and Change in Role Conceptions*

NRCs are fairly stable over time, but not unchangeable. Their temporal stability makes NRCs a useful tool for explaining typical patterns of international actors' policy

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<sup>25</sup> The terminology used in this dissertation thus differs slightly from that of other studies' conducted at the University of Trier. What is called 'role set' here is termed 'role concept' there, and what is called 'role conception' here is termed 'sub-categories' there. The underlying theoretical premises are the same, however. The terminology used in the other projects reflects the deductive approach to coding, which is different from this dissertation's. The deductive studies start from the definition of an ideal role concept (that of a civilian power) and then detail specific behavioral expectations.

behavior while remaining attentive to changes in these patterns. (Holsti 1970: 306–07) In social psychology, temporal endurance of individual role conceptions is explained by the pressure the alter-part exerts on the role holder to conform to common societal beliefs. In international politics on the other hand, the trait of stability rests largely within the ego-part. However, when sanction mechanisms are available, the alter-part may play an important role in ensuring stability. In these cases, the role holder's desire to avoid the costs of breaking an international commitment may perpetuate NRCs. (Wendt 1992: 411)

The temporal stability of role conceptions within the ego-part has several roots. Firstly, by definition NRCs are collectively shared beliefs and ideas that are considered legitimate and appropriate within society. (Edström 1988: 10) Such widespread conceptions become 'sticky' and cannot easily be replaced by alternative sets of ideas. Secondly, for politicians, NRCs are useful reference frames providing consistency and authority in foreign policy decisions. Political leaders thus will not challenge these conceptions frequently. Policymakers also cannot treat NRCs as infinitely malleable and elastic because that would "make the world seem random and beyond control." (Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot 1996: 736) Thirdly, the endurance of NRCs is reinforced by the psychological phenomenon of consistency seeking. To minimize uncertainty and anxiety and to speed up decision-making processes, actors tend to incorporate information that reinforces their existing views, while ignoring or distorting data that is inconsistent with dominant beliefs. (Duffield 1999: 770) Consequently, NRCs – resting on normative-ideational beliefs about proper conduct – are not easily disconfirmed by new information.

Role change is nevertheless conceivable, and it is most likely to occur gradually. As Chafetz et al. argue, "[...] states do not usually abandon role conceptions outright. Instead they slowly downgrade their centrality. Rapid shifts in role may, however, occur in states undergoing internal upheaval [...] or in new states [...]" (Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot 1996: 736) Shifts in background factors and issues arising from interaction between states may induce changes in dominant role conceptions within a state. If new information continually challenges and contradicts societal views, significant cognitive dissonance may arise. In the medium-term, policymakers will not be able to ignore or deny these contradictions. New conceptions will slowly evolve in the domestic debate, while old beliefs recede in relevance. A series of failures to achieve key foreign policy objectives may furthermore lead to dissatisfaction among political elites and the population. As a result, the content of NRCs may shift, as strategies or goals are adjusted in pursuit of a

more successful policy-line. A role conflict, in which a country is faced with competing or conflicting behavioral expectations, may also trigger role change. Different types of role conflict will be discussed in further detail below. While role theory generally assumes stability, it also acknowledges various instances of role change. This makes NRCs an ideal tool for studying continuity and change in foreign policy.

### *Sources of Role Conceptions*

Previous role theoretical studies have shown that NRCs emerge from a variety of factors spanning the domestic and international levels as well as ideational and material spheres. Kalevi Holsti listed sources such as location, topographical features of the state, natural, economic, and technical resources, capabilities, traditional policies, socio-economic demands, national values, doctrines or ideologies, public opinion, and personality or political needs of policymakers. (Holsti 1970: 294–97) Subsequently, several studies confirmed the importance of many of these factors. In his study of Japanese NRCs, Bert Edström examined how policymakers themselves justify their conceptions. He found five main background factors influencing the formulation of NRCs: (1) economic factors, (2) environmental factors such as the level of interdependence between countries, (3) the relative position of a state in terms of national resources, (4) ideology including societal values such as democracy, and (5) expectations voiced by the alter-part. (Edström 1988: 166–67) Naomi Bailin Wish showed that historical experiences and national characteristics such as territorial size, geographic location, and economic development affect how policymakers conceive of a state's role. (Wish 1987)

A number of scholars underline processes of historical learning and adaptation in shaping the content of NRCs. Hanns W. Maull for example shows that the traumatic experience of World War II and the devastating defeat in 1945 spurred a turnaround in Germany's foreign policy course. The new, post-1945 role conceptions were strengthened and solidified by a series of subsequent policy successes, he argues. (Maull 2007) Anne-Marie Le Gloannec similarly illustrates the importance of learning and positive feedback loops in German policy, although her research is not based on a role theoretical approach. She reasons that “the benefits of multilateralism fed a *belief* – which became increasingly more deeply and widely held – that multilateralism worked well for Germany.” (Le Gloannec 2004: 30) Actual foreign policy outcomes thus can have repercussions on the content of NRCs, as existing conceptions are reinforced or called into question.

Finally, a number of studies underscore that a state's interaction with other countries in both institutional and non-institutional contexts affects role conceptions. Through socialization at the bi- and multilateral level, policymakers often internalize alter-part behavioral expectations. (Aggestam 2004, Barnett 1993) Rachel Folz illustrates this using the example of Norway and Sweden. The two countries' national role conceptions have converged considerably since the 1990s due to their socialization at the European level. In particular, the launch of a European Security and Defense Policy in 1999 accelerated the process of convergence. Both Norway and Sweden had to cope with new behavioral expectations and ultimately felt compelled to modify and adjust their own role conceptions. (Folz 2008)

### *Rationality of Actors*

Role theory seeks to go beyond the narrow rational actor premise of neo-realism and neo-liberalism according to which actors mechanically optimize their strategies to reach a preferred outcome. However, even though role theory emphasizes normative-ideational factors, states are not seen as irrational actors. Rather, they act in accordance to their *subjective, value-based rationality* and their *perceptions of reality*. Societal norms and beliefs influence and condition the definition of national interests, and hence there is no value-free rationality. In other words, states do not perceive a contradiction between rationality and norms. As Knut Kirste argues, state behavior is “‘value-rational’ in the Weberian sense, i.e. national interests are formed not primarily as a result of systemic constraints, but rather within the scope of an actor-specific system of values to be realized [...]” (Kirste 1998: 31)

Role theory establishes a middle ground between rationalism and reflectivism in IR research. (Aggestam 1999: 9) The rationalist framework emphasizes material utility maximization of the state, while social ontologies, such as collective intentionality and value-based societal beliefs are left aside. Reflectivism, on the other hand, can be seen as the “mirror-image or antithesis of rationalism.” (Christiansen, Jorgensen, and Wiener 1999: 532) It highlights the impact of normative-ideational factors and cultural practices on the state and its actions. The two approaches reflect two different logics of how state behavior may be understood and conceptualized: the ‘logic of expected consequences’ and the ‘logic of appropriateness.’ (Sudo 2007: 158, March and Olsen 2004) The former takes an instrumental view of foreign policy, in which action is driven by considerations of

anticipated consequences and stable and exogenously determined preferences. National representatives contemplate different options, estimate benefits and risks, and choose the strategy that is best for their own country. In the logic of appropriateness, on the other hand, a society's collectively held norms and values are the point of reference for guiding foreign policy. James G. March and Johan P. Olsen observe:

“Appropriateness need not attend to consequences, but it involves cognitive and ethical dimensions, targets, and aspirations. As a cognitive matter, appropriate action is action that is essential to a particular conception of self. As an ethical matter, appropriate action is action that is virtuous. We ‘explain’ foreign policy as the application of rules associated with particular identities to particular situations.” (March and Olsen 1998: 951)

The logic of expected consequences and the logic of appropriateness are conceptual constructs helpful to enlighten theoretical debates. In reality, however, the two logics are not mutually excluding and the distinction between them is not clear-cut. (Goldman 2005) Indeed, March and Olsen concede that state behavior “is generally explicable neither as based exclusively on a logic of consequences nor as based exclusively on a logic of appropriateness. Any particular action probably involves elements of each.” (March and Olsen 1998: 952) Policymakers pursue national foreign policy goals, but in doing so they rely on subjectively defined interests and normative conceptions about good, rightful and appropriate behavior. They furthermore weigh the likely consequences of their behavior and consider the material context, but their evaluations and perceptions are critically shaped by deeply internalized norms and beliefs.<sup>26</sup> National role conceptions represent the cognitive outcome of the interplay between the two logics. Role theory lays more emphasis on the logic of appropriateness, as state behavior is seen as rule- and value-driven. But it also incorporates the logic of consequences by acknowledging that states may act strategically in accordance to their subjective views.

### *Role Conflict*

A role conflict arises when a state faces two or more incompatible or contradictory behavioral expectations. Ego- and alter-part conceptions represent socially negotiated understandings emerging from multiple sources, and thus behavioral expectations will not

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<sup>26</sup> As Richard Herrmann succinctly summarizes, “The theoretical argument [in constructivism] is that, unlike coercive material power that can change behavior by compulsion, norms affect behavior by changing an actor's motives and beliefs, that is their understanding of their interests. Norms produce, therefore, not only a logic that spells out the consequences of what will happen if they are violated but also a logic of what behavior is appropriate.” (Herrmann 2002: 128)

always coincide or align. Policymakers subjected to conflicting pressures may suffer stress. Philippe Le Prestre distinguishes between two types of role conflicts: first, an actor may be confronted with discrepancy between ego-part and alter-part conceptions of role (termed ‘ego/alter role conflict’ here), and second, he may face contradictory notions of role within the ego-part (termed ‘endogenous role conflict’). (Le Prestre 1997b: 260) An ego/alter role conflict was evident in US foreign policy during the George W. Bush presidency, for example. Decision-makers in Washington saw their country in a hegemonic leadership position with the right to use unilateralism if necessary, but US allies expecting more cooperative, multilateral policies displayed frustration. The divergent behavioral expectations of ego- and alter-part led to growing tensions between the US and its partners. An endogenous role conflict was reflected in French NATO policy during and after the Cold War. While government leaders asserted French transatlantic solidarity to NATO, they simultaneously sought to demonstrate independence from US predominance by remaining outside of NATO’s integrated military command structure. In other words, Paris sought to be independent and allied to NATO at the same time – two goals that were clearly in conflict. (Aggestam 2004: 184)

A third variant of role conflict, termed ‘exogenous role conflict,’ can be added to Le Prestre’s list. In this case, a state faces discrepant behavioral expectations from other countries or international institutions comprising the alter-part. This type of role conflict will often coincide with an ego/alter role conflict, because the self-conceptions of the state will likely collide with at least one of the alter-part prescriptions. The foreign policy environments of Germany and Japan in the early 1990s can be cited as examples of exogenous role conflicts. While the US demanded a more proactive international military role of its two alliance partners, regional neighbors called for Bonn’s and Tokyo’s restraint and moderation. These contradictory expectations put Germany and Japan in difficult positions and required careful balancing acts in foreign policies. Michael Barnett demonstrates another case of exogenous role conflict. He shows that Arab states often experience role conflict as a result of their presence or membership in two or more multilateral institutions.<sup>27</sup> (Barnett 1993)

A role conflict can be the result of the interplay between several factors. Two different origins of role conceptions, such as moral beliefs and historically-grounded views,

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<sup>27</sup> One could argue this is an endogenous role conflict, since the states themselves choose their institutional membership. However, behavioral norms and expectations associated with membership develop in the multilateral context over time, and may thus change significantly after a state’s accession. Hence, these expectations do not necessarily reflect the state’s own desires. As such, this dissertation argues, they constitute the alter-part.

may cause tension. Policymakers may be unaware of underlying frictions until confronted with a situation in which both conceptions are relevant. Changes in the external context may thus precipitate new role conflicts. Furthermore, modified or new understandings of role in either the ego- or alter-part can trigger tensions with other conceptions in the role set. Backman also suggests that 'alter-casting' may be responsible for some role conflicts. (Backman 1970: 316) 'Alter-casting' means that a country, in choosing a particular role for itself, simultaneously casts another (the alter) in an associated role. For example, if a state sees itself as a 'leader,' it invariably alter-casts others as 'followers.' A role conflict may result if the other countries see themselves as proactive, independent actors rather than 'followers.'

### *Coping Strategies*

States cope differently with situations of role conflict. If the two role conceptions are in tension but not in outright contradiction, the simplest strategy for policymakers is to utilize the interpretive room to conceal problematic points. Because role conceptions are broad categories relevant to a variety of circumstances, they can be interpreted with some flexibility. State representatives may thus draw on conceptual ambiguities to ameliorate frictions between two role conceptions. In many cases, however, the role conflict will be more severe, requiring policymakers to adopt elaborate forms of coping behavior. There are four conceivable coping strategies. The first three are particularly useful in the short-term as they do not require adjustments in the two conflicting role conceptions, the last strategy calls for extensive efforts in modifying NRCs and is appropriate for the mid- to long-term.

Firstly, to avoid changes in the conceptions a country may escape the situation that gave rise to the role conflict. It may do so by either withdrawing completely or by proactively seeking to change the problematic situation itself. This strategy will be illustrated and discussed in more detail in the case study on Germany's missile defense policy and the protection of allies and partners. Secondly, a country may decide to enact one role at the expense of another. (Walker and Simon 1987: 142) In so doing, policymakers leave the content of both role conceptions rhetorically unchanged, but in actual behavior they violate one in favor of the other. Role theoretical research suggests that policymakers are guided by a hierarchy of preferences within their role set in deciding which role to adhere to and which to defy. (Edström 1988) The specificity of the two NRCs in question may also be a factor. If one NRC distinguishes appropriate from inappropriate [32]

behavior more precisely, politicians may find it more difficult to violate this particular NRC. Furthermore, in choosing adherence to one NRC over another, political leaders will likely consider possible sanctions for non-conformity.<sup>28</sup> If they need to react rapidly or the role conflict is expected to be a one-time occurrence, policymakers may find this second strategy convenient. In the long-term however, this strategy leads to significant cognitive dissonance and legitimacy problems, and it is thus unlikely to be used for extended periods of time. A third strategy that leaves the NRCs essentially unchanged is for politicians to search for a compromise between the two conflicting conceptions. (Backman 1970: 318, Biddle 1986: 83) Policymakers may meet both behavioral expectations in part or adhere alternately to one and the other. However, in the long-term, this strategy is also problematic, because government behavior will likely be criticized as lacking direction and consistency.

The final coping strategy involves policymakers' efforts to negotiate a new understanding of the competing conceptions. To eliminate frictions, it may be enough for government leaders to suggest small adjustments in one or all affected conceptions. In other cases, it may be necessary to initiate more fundamental changes or to introduce new role understandings – processes that will likely be accompanied by extensive domestic debates. Stephen Walker and Sheldon Simon suggest that a state facing an ego/alter role conflict may try to reorient the alter-part's expectations. In particular, by alter-casting, the state can try to induce changes in the other country, including modification of the alter-part's behavioral expectations. (Walker and Simon 1987: 142) But it is also conceivable that the country confronted with the ego/alter role conflict yields to external pressures and modifies its self-conceptions. A country that does not rely on a coping strategy to deal with role conflict will exhibit incoherent and disoriented foreign policy behavior. Dissatisfaction and uneasiness will build among the population and its leaders, who are convinced of the importance and appropriateness of the conflicting roles and the associated norms and values. It is thus doubtful whether a country can manage a role conflict in the mid- to long-term without adopting one of the coping strategies laid out above.

Role conflict is just one of several role-related issues that can cause problems for an actor. A case of *role competition* arises when the actions to pursue one role compete in time and resources with another. (Backman 1970: 315) In other words, two roles may theoretically be compatible, but material and temporal constraints may preclude an actor from adhering to both roles simultaneously. The actor thus faces similar quandaries as in a

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<sup>28</sup> This aspect is emphasized in psychological and sociological research. (Biddle 1986: 83)

case of role conflict. Furthermore, *role discontinuity*, which is also closely related to role conflict, occurs when a country feels obliged to perform malintegrated roles in sequential contexts. (Biddle 1986: 83) In cases of role competition or role discontinuity, policymakers may rely on coping strategies similar to those described above. Lastly, a state may face *role ambiguity*, a condition in which NRCs offer an incomplete or insufficient guide to behavior in a particular setting. (Morris 1971: 13) Such situations will trigger intense domestic debates about how to proceed in foreign policy, and new understandings and ideas are likely to emerge in the process.

Cases of role conflict, role competition, role discontinuity, and role ambiguity present both challenges and opportunities for theorists. As was seen above, it is difficult to predict state behavior in any of these situations for there are various coping strategies, and states may also rely on a combination thereof. On the other hand, role conflicts and related situations present opportunities to examine in detail the impact and influence of role conceptions and the circumstances which lead a state to choose one coping strategy over another. For these reasons, close attention will be paid to role conflicts and related cases when examining German and Japanese foreign policies.

## **Methodological Approach**

Role theory assumes that a country's dominant role conceptions are reflected in key foreign policy speeches. Decision-makers voice NRCs whenever ascribing a certain role to their country within the international system or when it is clear from the context that such a role is considered relevant. (Edström 2004: 82) The analysis of speeches must thus focus on statements indicating commitment to certain foreign policy behavior, functions, and responsibilities. In this dissertation, a qualitative content analysis of major foreign policy speeches of Germany and Japan was conducted to identify each country's role conceptions. The following sections will explain and discuss the specific method and the analytical steps taken.

### *Choice of Empirical Material*

The empirical material for the content analysis consists of speeches delivered by the highest level German and Japanese decision-makers on questions of regional foreign and

security policy.<sup>29</sup> As explained in previous sections, the focus is set on ego-part role conceptions, which are likely to have more immediate and extensive impact on state behavior than alter-part conceptions. German and Japanese speeches are therefore examined for self-conceptions of role, while speeches from other countries reflecting alter-part expectations are not considered. The selection of speeches generally follows criteria commonly used in other role theoretical studies.<sup>30</sup> To ensure continuous analytical coverage, a minimum of three foreign policy speeches per year and country are chosen for the time period from 1990 to 2008. In total, the empirical material comprises 118 German and 120 Japanese speeches held by principal decision-makers such as prime ministers or chancellors, foreign ministers, and defense ministers who articulate conceptions of role with the greatest political authority and salience. Furthermore, the selected speeches target both domestic and international audiences. They range from policy speeches addressing parliament (the *Bundestag* in Germany and the *kokkai* in Japan) to speeches held at international organizations such as the United Nations.

Easy access and availability were other criteria in choosing material for analysis. Speeches reprinted in diplomatic *Bluebooks* or published on homepages of government agencies fulfilled this requirement. Due to the shortage of online material of Germany's earlier periods, two additional sources were used: the journal *Internationale Politik* (International Politics), which reprints many key foreign policy speeches, and the book '*Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland - Dokumente von 1949 bis 1994*' (Foreign Policy of the Federal Republic Germany – Documents from 1949 to 1994) published by the Foreign Ministry.

Finally, foreign policy speeches were selected according to their relevance for the research question. In the chosen material, key policymakers address the respective country's general or region-wide strategic outlook, especially with regard to security issues. To minimize potential biases, speeches with a narrow focus on a particular policy field were eliminated. In speeches covering both domestic and international policy issues only passages concerned with foreign and security policy were considered.

Indications about a country's role conceptions can be gathered from a variety of sources, such as public opinion data, key legal documents (such as constitutions), parliamentary debates or representations in the media. However, the reliance on

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<sup>29</sup> In addition to foreign policy speeches, a small number of major interviews and newspaper articles by policymakers are used.

<sup>30</sup> See for example, Le Prestre 1997c and Aggestam 2004.

fundamental foreign policy speeches has several essential advantages. These speeches provide rich data and insights in the beliefs and ideas of principal political players, who are responsible for formulating concrete policies. Government officials are central contributors to the narratives that mark particular foreign policy courses as appropriate or legitimate. (Bach 1999: 10) Through speeches, decision-makers consolidate support for their policies, justify particular decisions, and create expectations that will constrain and limit their future options. Politicians are thus active players in creating and sustaining social reality, and they are directly involved in the continuous process of redefining the NRCs of their state. As such, they embody the nexus between domestic and international forces in policy-making. Furthermore, speeches by important decision-makers are likely to reflect only those role conceptions supported by a critical mass within society. Conceptions that are endorsed by minority groups will be given little or no attention in major policy statements. As Glenn Chafetz et al. contend, it seems reasonable to assume that “any role conception carrying significant political weight in the country would be reflected in the statements of the highest policymakers, even if the speakers were only telling a powerful constituency what it wanted to hear.” (Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot 1996: 741) Political speeches thus provide an ideal means to identify broadly shared conceptions of role that presumably affect actual foreign policy behavior.

Another advantage of using policy speeches is that this data occurs naturally, i.e. without the analyst’s or someone else’s prompting. Rather than gathering data through interaction with officials in interviews for example, speeches allow the analyst to rely exclusively on *unobtrusive* research methods. While interviews are essential instruments in studies on decision-making processes, they carry risks if used for identifying NRCs. Firstly, the researcher may face the danger of anecdotalism, in other words, it may be unclear whether the statements are representative and typical. (Silverman 2001: 222) Secondly and more importantly, the outcome of an interview is influenced by the interviewer’s choice of topics and by the way he phrases questions. Bruce Berg describes this problem in the research approach of many sociologists: “By the very act of making trivium (*sic.*) a topic of study and recognizing its prevalence and importance in everyday life, sociologists change the very thing they seek to study; that is, trivium (*sic.*) is no longer trivial, it now becomes important.” (Berg 2004: 210) In policy speeches, in contrast, the government official himself – and not the analyst – chooses what is important. This offers the researcher the opportunity to learn and investigate how the speaker views his social world. Thus, it is

preferable to draw on speeches as naturally occurring and representative data rather than relying on interviews or other materials such as public opinion polls.

A common objection to the use of speeches is that they are rarely written by the speakers themselves. Indeed, the way in which speeches are prepared differs, but in most cases, aides will create a draft. (Edström 2004: 66) Nevertheless, the analytical value of speeches is not reduced by this fact, for in the end, the speaker will be accountable for his words. (Baumann 2006: 87) Politicians will thus feel compelled to take a look at the speech before delivery and perhaps even revise it. One can assume that the text reflects current considerations by the leadership and expresses compromises between governmental agencies, ministries and non-governmental lobbying groups. Furthermore, regardless of its author, the speech contributes to defining appropriate and legitimate foreign policy strategies and induces behavioral expectations among domestic and international audiences.

In democratic societies, where different parties and individuals are vying for power, elite conceptions of roles are generally similar to those of society as a whole, because policymakers seek public support and legitimacy for their ideas. They will thus try to respond and relate to conceptions held by the broader public. It is nevertheless possible that elite views and public opinion diverge. Major parties and different administrations may also propose different foreign policy conduct. Role theory suggests, however, that generally there will be broad areas correspondence within and across parties, comprising the core set of foreign policy role conceptions. Indeed, a number of studies have confirmed that politicians from the same country hold similar conceptions about foreign policy conduct, based on shared ideas such as collectively-held historical understandings and common evaluations of successful and unsuccessful past policies.<sup>31</sup> Even if there is a more extensive gap between governing and opposition parties, widely shared role conceptions held within society are likely to be reflected in government policy due to public and oppositional pressures.

The function of foreign policy statements can be either expressive or instrumental, or a mixture of both. (Edström 1988: 123) In expressive statements, the speaker provides a description of the situation he faces and conveys his outlook. He may furthermore outline and deliberate various policy options. In an instrumental statement, on the other hand, he seeks to reach a particular goal, like defending and legitimizing a decision or action. The

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<sup>31</sup> For example, Naomi Bailin Wish found “greater similarities among role conceptions expressed by leaders from the same nations than from different nations.” (Wish 1980: 549–50) Other studies that discern such a tendency include Weske 2006 and Duffield 1999.

instrumental function of speeches does not lessen their value for role theoretical analysis, since speakers have to draw on commonly held beliefs and views in their society to justify their cause. (Le Prestre 1997a: 13) Both instrumental and expressive statements will thus provide insight into the collective representations and beliefs about national roles. Furthermore, both types of statements will contribute to the continual process of constructing social reality.

### *Qualitative Content Analysis*

The selected speeches were subjected to a qualitative content analysis in order to identify dominant role conceptions. According to Ole R. Holsti, content analysis can be broadly defined as “any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages.” (Quoted in Berg 2004: 267) Content analysis seeks to reduce the amount of text material by highlighting recurrent arguments or themes that are relevant to the research question. In analyzing the material, the researcher seeks to establish representative categories to capture text characteristics and features. Qualitative content analysis in particular focuses on the *meaning* of texts. It strives to understand the authors’ or speakers’ perspectives and to learn how they conceptualize their social surroundings. Philipp Mayring notes that, “Qualitative content analysis seeks to retain the systematic approach of methodologically controlled textual examination (in contrast to ‘free’ interpretation), without lapsing into premature quantification.” (Mayring 2005: 10)

Qualitative research is rarely questioned for its virtues. It enables the researcher to work closely with the text material, examining how issues are presented, contextualized and evaluated. Furthermore, if the research material covers a longer span of time (like in this dissertation), qualitative content analysis ensures the analyst’s attention to shifts in the argumentative structure of texts. Qualitative content analysis can thus provide rich insights and nuanced accounts of the subject’s perceptions and outlook. In contrast, quantitative analyses seek to measure the frequency with which conceptions are voiced. Many role theoretical studies treat frequency of articulation as a measure of the relative importance of role conceptions. (Edström 1988, Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot 1996) Although the two variables may be related, it is far from clear whether they are directly correlated. Therefore, this study relies on a qualitative approach.

Qualitative research is sometimes criticized for being nonscientific and thus invalid. However, qualitative methods should not be rejected simply because some studies in this field are conducted poorly. Good qualitative research can and should be rigorous, systematic, and reproducible. The development of appropriate categories for coding is thus a key challenge for the analyst. As Bruce Berg argues, “Categories should be consistent not only with the question asked and the methodological requirements of science, but also with relation to the properties of the phenomena under investigation. Stated succinctly, categories must be grounded in the data from which they emerge.” (Berg 2004: 276) Furthermore, categories should be sufficiently precise and well-defined to enable other coders to arrive at the same or at least a similar result when examining the identical text material.

The standard method for ensuring reproducibility is to use several coders. The analysts will work on the text material separately and then sort out any differences that emerge between them by redefining or clarifying categorization schemes. (Silverman 2001: 229) Several role theoretical studies have employed this approach, as it guarantees a high level of credibility. (See for example, Chafetz, Abramson, and Grillot 1996) However, due to the limitations on collaborative work in doctoral research, this study could not rely on multiple coders. To ensure transparency, the subsequent sections will explain in detail the process of establishing categories. The methodological discussion is followed by an in-depth explanation of each of the role conceptions.

Categories used in content analysis can be determined deductively, inductively, or by a combination of both. A deductive approach relies on coding schemes adopted from prior projects or developed on the basis of theoretical considerations. This method is best suited to test hypotheses and theoretical propositions. (Shaw 2006: 14) However, pre-defined categories may deflect attention away from specific nuances or uncategorized themes and arguments in the text material. (Silverman 2001: 123) In an inductive approach, the analyst devises coding schemes by formulating categories based on the texts of interest. The researcher thus begins with ‘immersing’ him- or herself in the material in order to identify recurrent themes and meaningful passages that are relevant to the research question. Thus, categories are obtained inductively by referencing patterns that emerge from the data. The labels should reflect relevant aspects of the messages and retain, as much as possible, the wording used in the original statements. (Berg 2004: 268) Criticism against the

inductive approach parallels that against qualitative research in general: that it risks not being replicable due to the analyst's subjectivity. (Shaw 2006: 15)

The content analysis in this dissertation relies on the inductive approach of developing categories, a method with several advantages for this study. Firstly, this dissertation seeks to investigate the drivers of German and Japanese foreign policy since 1990, but it does not aim to test a specific theory-related hypothesis. Existing categorization schemes are thus not predestined for use in this study. Secondly, an open, flexible approach to the definition of categories can avoid biases from forcing data into pre-defined schemes and definitions. An inductive approach can derive from coding schemes that are comprehensive, well-tailored and arguably more accurate reductions of the original text material than deductive categorization systems. (Shaw 2006: 15–16) As noted above, the reliance on naturally occurring data has the advantage that the speaker rather than the researcher can choose what is important. The inductive method reinforces this analytical focus on the subject. Furthermore, by developing labels reflecting specific behavioral expectations in the speeches, the analyst can maintain maximum sensitivity for policymakers' specific conceptions. Since this study aims to identify similarities and differences between Germany and Japan and to investigate possible changes in conceptions over the past two decades, such sensitivity seems particularly important. Lastly, the formulation of categories according to concrete ideas in texts helps to make the coding process and the application of labels more transparent for readers who seek to understand how the content analysis was conducted.

Nevertheless, defining categories and assigning labels to particular passages in the text material remains an act of interpretation. Therefore, the process of coding text passages should be "rule-governed and explicit to the greatest extent possible." (Mayring 2005: 11) Philipp Mayring distinguishes between three basic forms of interpretation in content analysis: summary, explication, and structuring. (Mayring 1990: 54) This study relies primarily on the first and to some extent on the second type. The purpose of the first, summary, is to reduce the text material to basic contents and themes. In other words, this approach seeks to create a "manageable corpus" of concepts that reflects the meaning of the original material. (Mayring 1990: 54) It does so by relying on an iterative process that includes paraphrasing, grouping, integrating, and abstracting. Interpretation through summary serves as the foundation for building categories in this dissertation. Explication was employed as a supplementary tool only after the analysis of speeches was concluded.

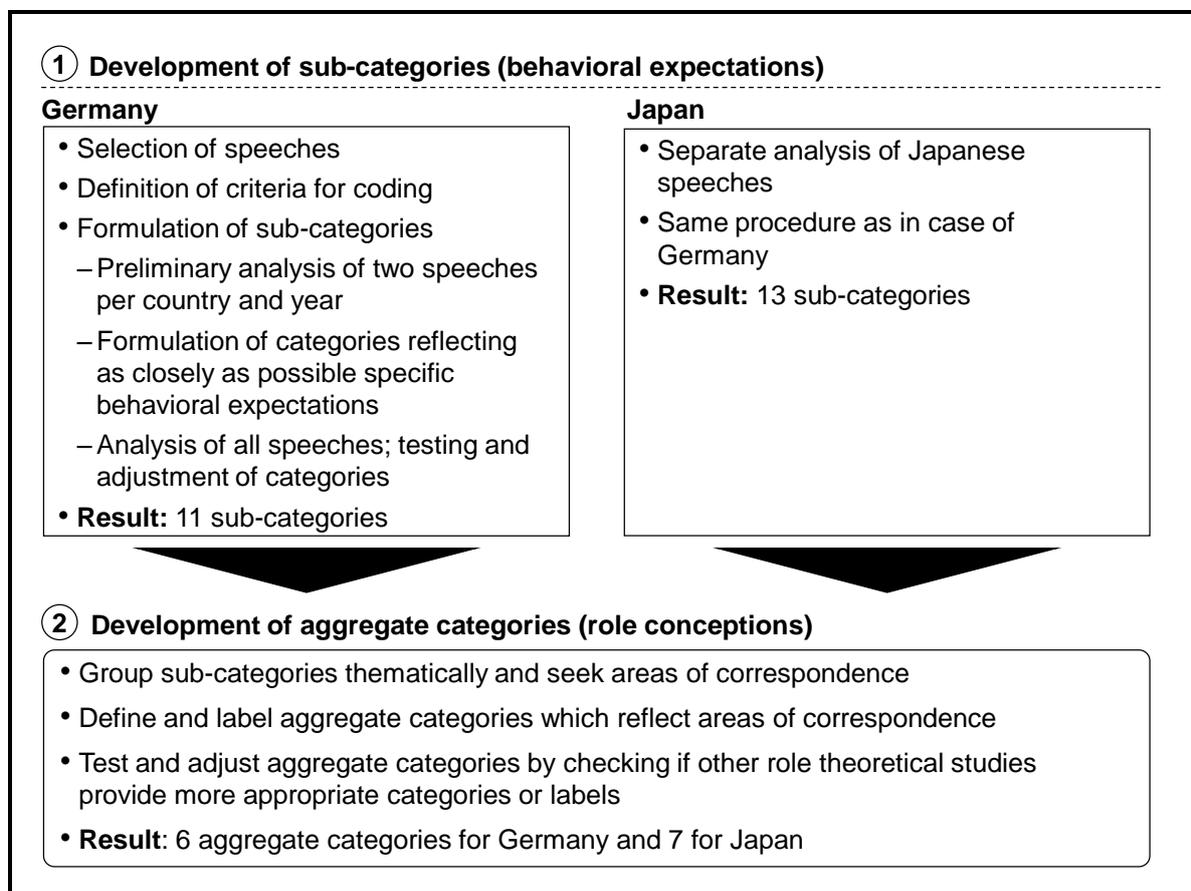
This form of interpretation involves the consideration of additional material that may help to illuminate and explain particular aspects or text passages. The aim is to understand the subject's perspective and views more precisely. In other words, additional material is consulted when it adds clarity or insight into the role conceptions found in the original study sample. The original material of the study is thus supplemented with relevant foreign policy documents, like speeches by vice foreign ministers, diplomatic Blue Books and White Papers, as well as publications and interviews of foreign policy elites. The third form of interpretation distinguished by Mayring, that of structuring, draws on the deductive approach with pre-defined categories and is therefore not applicable to this study.

### *Comparative Coding Process*

A key task in *comparative* role theoretical research is to develop categories that help identify and highlight similarities and differences between the countries under investigation. Previous studies relied on deductively defined categories as thematic domains to contrast and compare countries. (Aggestam 2004, Frenkler et al. 1997, Kirste 1998) This dissertation introduces an alternative method for defining comparative categories inductively. As noted above, an inductive approach has the advantages of reducing unintended biases and ensuring maximum proximity and sensitivity to the source material. Coding categories were formulated through an iterative process of defining preliminary labels, testing them, and then making necessary adjustments or reformulating categories.

The process of coding proceeded in two main steps (see Figure 1). In the first step, the speeches of each country were analyzed separately and so-called "sub-categories" were constructed out of the empirical material. This involved marking and paraphrasing all assertions referring to the conceptions held by decision-makers about roles, duties, and responsibilities of their state in their respective region. Sub-categories were formulated to reflect as closely as possible specific expectations by policymakers about their state's foreign policy behavior. The categorization sought to avoid subsuming several distinct behavioral expectations under one label. More specifically, sub-categories for each country were developed in two stages. In a preliminary analysis, two speeches per year and country were randomly chosen and tentative coding categories were construed step-by-step. After revising each country's sub-categories in order to ensure clarity and consistency, all text material was analyzed. In this second stage, coding categories were tested with respect to their reliability and accurateness, and final adjustments were made. This process

corresponds to Philipp Mayring's proposal in inductive qualitative content analysis, to revise categories after reviewing 10 to 50% of the original material and to conduct a final reliability test by covering all material. (Mayring 2005: 12)<sup>32</sup>



**Figure 1: Process for Development of Comparative Categories**

In the first step, two criteria were used to determine which assertions in the text material should be considered for the analysis. As explained in the introduction, only statements with a focus on political, diplomatic and security issues falling into the traditional narrow definition of security studies were included. (Katzenstein 1996: 10) Analytical considerations primarily motivated this restriction, as the study of national security policy has long been dominated by approaches based on realist theory. The second selection criterion for assertions from speeches was that they should focus on the conceived duties and responsibilities within each country's core or extended region, as defined in the introduction. The identification of assertions referring to regional affairs was not always

<sup>32</sup> Bruce L. Berg suggests a similar iterative labeling process. See Berg 2004: 286.

clear-cut and automatic, however. Relevant passages were identified by examining whether politicians referred to implications for regional security. Keywords signaling regional importance facilitated the process of determining whether assertions would be included. The keywords used were: *region*, *regional*, *neighborhood*, *neighbors* for both German and Japanese texts, and *Asia* (including Asia-Pacific, East Asia, and Northeast Asia) for Japanese texts, and *Europe* (including European Community and European Union) for German texts.

The first step of the labeling process resulted in a total of eleven sub-categories for Germany and thirteen for Japan (See Figure 2). In the second step, “aggregate categories” – also called “ego-part role conceptions” or just “(national) role conceptions” in this study – were developed in order to find and establish comparable elements in the role sets of both countries. This procedure facilitates a direct comparison between the two countries’ role conceptions. Aggregate categories were devised by identifying areas of correspondence between both countries, while remaining sensitive to differences in various ideas and concepts.<sup>33</sup> Behavioral expectations of both countries were grouped thematically, ensuring that they were similar in as many features as possible. These groups of behavioral expectations were labeled to capture thematic similarities. The inductively developed aggregate categories were then put to a final test by comparing them to categories used in other role theoretical studies to check which were most appropriate. Where necessary, final labeling adjustments were made. The categorization process concluded that six aggregate categories applied both to Japan and Germany and that one additional category was distinct to Japan. All sub-categories could be adequately assigned to one or more of the aggregate categories. Figure 2 shows the aggregate categories (or role conceptions) and the corresponding sub-categories for both Germany and Japan. As explained above, the frequency of articulation of particular role conceptions was not taken into consideration, therefore the order in which they appear in Figure 2 does not reflect a hierarchy within the role set.

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<sup>33</sup> A similar approach is used by Harald Gropengießer in a content analysis that compares didactic conceptions and preferences in learning and teaching of high school students and teachers. (Gropengießer 2005: 188)

Sub-categories		
	Germany	Japan
① Exporter of Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributor to intern. security with focus on regional issues</li> <li>• Supporter and propagator of intern. security regimes</li> <li>• Promoter of regional cooperation and integration (Building, deepening, widening)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global contributor to intern. security in partnership with US</li> <li>• Supporter and propagator of intern. security regimes</li> <li>• Supporter of regional cooperation (incl. ad-hoc/ issues specific cooperation)*</li> </ul>
② Promoter of Universal Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoter and defender of universal values incl. democracy and human rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoter and defender of universal values incl. democracy and human rights</li> </ul>
③ Non-Militarist Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate of diplomatic and economic means to settle disputes and conflicts</li> <li>• Supporter of military means only as last resort and in multilateral context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate of diplomatic and economic means to settle disputes and conflicts</li> <li>• Exclusively defense-oriented country*</li> </ul>
④ Reliable Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opponent of unilateral action</li> <li>• Collective actor/ Partner to US and France as well as European countries ("Sowohl-als-auch")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opponent of unilateral action</li> <li>• Reliable US ally as well as supporter of cooperation with other countries (US-Bilateralism plus)</li> </ul>
⑤ Regional Stabilizer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoter of bargaining, compromise and mediation</li> <li>• Propagator of interdependent interests</li> <li>• Promoter of regional cooperation and integration (Building, deepening, widening)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stabilizer through alliance relationship with US</li> <li>• Exclusively defense-oriented country*</li> <li>• Supporter of regional cooperation (incl. ad-hoc/ issue specific cooperation)*</li> <li>• Economic stabilizer through ODA</li> </ul>
⑥ Contributor to Reg.Cooperat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoter of regional cooperation and integration (Building, deepening, widening)*</li> <li>• Supranationalist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporter of regional cooperation (incl. ad-hoc/ issue specific cooperation)*</li> </ul>
⑦ Respected, Trusted Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not found in German speeches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipient of respect and trust due to <i>own</i> international contributions</li> <li>• Country, whose foreign policy engenders trust and respect</li> <li>• Partner at 'eye level' with US through 'global partnership'</li> </ul>

**Figure 2: Aggregate Categories and Sub-Categories Found**

\* Starred sub-categories are assigned to several aggregate categories

## **Comparative Case Study Approach**

The reason for not only analyzing speeches but including case studies in this dissertation is the stimulation of a rich dialogue between the observed behavioral evidence and the ideas and conceptions uncovered in the content analysis. The case study analysis relies on an interpretive approach, designed to uncover characteristics and patterns of invariance in each country's conduct. (Ragin 1987: 51) The interpretative approach forces the researcher to become familiar with the details of the cases, to pinpoint similarities and differences between cases (i.e. between Germany and Japan) and to pay attention to shifts over the time span considered. The case studies thus involve systematically gathering in-depth information about a particular policy field in order to enable the analyst to effectively understand how a subject operates or functions.

Comparative case studies are surveys of two or more research entities for the purpose of cross-unit comparison. (Berg 2004: 258) This dissertation compares German and Japanese foreign policies by contrasting fields in which both countries are confronted with similar strategic questions and problems. The criteria used in selecting the case studies are laid out in the introduction of this dissertation. In each case study, German and Japanese foreign policy choices will first be analyzed separately, taking into consideration important domestic political debates on the subject. Characteristic patterns of behavior and thinking will be pinpointed and compared. The concluding section of each case study will then assess whether the NRCs identified in the content analysis are helpful to understand and explain each country's particular conduct.

## CHAPTER 2

### EMPIRICAL RESULTS: ROLE CONCEPTIONS IN GERMAN AND JAPANESE SPEECHES

#### **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of the role conceptions found in the content analysis of German and Japanese foreign policy speeches. The discussion begins with the six NRCs found to apply to both Germany and Japan. Each section outlines the contents and characteristics of the two countries' conceptions, citing relevant text passages from speeches. The discussion identifies similarities and differences between Germany and Japan and explores the sources of the individual conceptions by drawing on policymakers' explanations and descriptions. Furthermore, the chapter assesses whether NRCs have changed over time and to what extent. The six role conceptions are discussed in the order in which they appear in Figure 2 of the previous chapter. As explained above, this order does not reflect any particular hierarchy within the role set. The content of the seventh NRC, found only in Japanese speeches, is examined in the next section. Because this NRC constitutes the most patent difference between the two countries examined, the chapter investigates in detail the background factors that led to its emergence in Japan, comparing and contrasting the circumstances to Germany.

In the chapter's final section, Germany's and Japan's overall role sets are compared and evaluated. The section argues that at first sight the two countries seem to share many similarities, but a closer examination finds significant differences in policymakers' perspectives. The section also reconsiders the question of change and continuity in German and Japanese foreign policymaking, arguing that rapid shifts in policy goals and strategies have not occurred in either country in the post-Cold War era and appear unlikely for the foreseeable future.

Translated quotes from speeches in this chapter often include phrases or keywords in the original language in parentheses. This is done to allow interested readers to understand particular connotations or meanings in the original text material that may not be easily conveyed in translations. Some citations furthermore feature *italicized* passages to

highlight certain aspects. Unless noted otherwise, italics were added by the analyst, since the original text documents generally did not mark particular passages for emphasis.

## **German and Japanese Role Conceptions in Comparison**

### *(1) Exporter of Security*

The role conception of ‘exporter of security’ refers to Germany’s and Japan’s willingness to contribute to international security, encompassing both regional and global security. It provides insight about how much importance each country attaches to playing a role in regional security affairs. The analysis of speeches demonstrates that the willingness to bear greater regional and international responsibility apparently grew among both German and Japanese policymakers after the Cold War. Government officials in Tokyo and Bonn perceived new opportunities for their countries to actively shape peace and stability. In speeches, they stressed their desire to utilize the new latitude and carve out more proactive roles. However, the definition of the precise scope of contributions was seen as a delicate task in both countries, especially given negative historical legacies and lingering suspicions among regional countries. In early 1993, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel explained: “it is necessary to accomplish [the task that] we have twice failed to do: to find a role in harmony with our neighbors (im Einklang mit unseren Nachbarn) that corresponds with our desires and our potential.” (Kinkel 1993d) In a similar vein, Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki urged fellow politicians in October 1990 to make a determined effort “to identify what we can do in the cause of building a new world order of peace and prosperity.” (Kaifu 1990a) Decision-makers from both countries sought to expand regional and international contributions in a gradual and cautious manner. They furthermore voiced support for the United Nations as the central institution in world politics and for other multilateral cooperative efforts with the aim of increasing international transparency and stability.

Despite apparent similarities, German and Japanese conceptions of being ‘exporters of security’ differ significantly in the relative importance that politicians attach to regional versus global contributions. Especially in the early 1990s, the role conception had a distinctly *European focus* for German decision-makers, while Japanese leaders conceived of their role primarily in *global terms*. The gap between the two countries is still evident today, but it has narrowed, as the following discussion will show.

Throughout the time period investigated, German political elites have seen their chief responsibility in the dedication to regional stability and to the European integration process. They have rejected an independent global leadership role, explaining that they need to focus resources and energies on contributing in the European context. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder explicitly declared in 1998: “we do not claim the role of a leading power in the international context [...]” (Schröder 1998b) If anything, a global role is envisioned only indirectly: Germany may contribute to worldwide security by means of a strong and united Europe. Policymakers thus adhere to the stipulation in the preamble of the Constitution, stating that Germany “as an equal member” shall “serve the peace in the world *in a united Europe*.” Indeed, a number of officials quote this constitutional passage when explaining and legitimizing their policy focus on Europe. (Kohl 1990d, Genscher 1990b) The German rejection of an independent global role doubtlessly reflects deeply engrained skepticism among the political elite about engaging in world politics. Furthermore, the indirect approach to world affairs has a pragmatic reason. As many policymakers acknowledge, the combined force of the EU states represents the best and perhaps only chance for Germany and its European partners to make their voice heard in global affairs. (Fischer 2001, Merkel 2006c)

Despite overwhelming continuity in this European-focused conception of Germany’s role, a shift in emphasis is apparent in speeches since the end of the Cold War. In the early 1990s, few political leaders considered the EU ready to take on global responsibilities. Speeches thus concentrated on defining German contributions to the deepening and widening of the regional integration process and to the creation of a “European peace order” (europäische Friedensordnung). (Kohl 1990d, Genscher 1992) The EU’s progress towards the development of a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) from the late 1990s prompted German elites to reconsider their global outlook, however. Policymakers increasingly highlighted the potential as well as the necessity for Europe to become a major force in worldwide security matters. For example, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer voiced his hope that a united Europe would become the “global partner” of the United States. (Fischer 1999b) Nevertheless, the growing interest in international security matters did not impinge on the centrality of Europe in Germany’s role conception. In a 2001 speech, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder underlined the region’s importance, declaring: “German foreign policy is a policy *in Europe, for Europe*, and of course a policy *from Europe*.” (Schröder 2001b)

In marked contrast to Germany, Japanese leaders focus on the global scope of their role as ‘exporter of security.’ In the early 1990s, they envisioned their country to work jointly with the US towards the establishment of a stable international order. In a 1992 speech, Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi clearly displayed the Japanese leadership’s global ambitions, making three references in just one sentence. He stated: “I think the true *global* partnership between [the US and Japan] lies in the joint fulfillment of our responsibility on a *global* scale towards the building of a *worldwide* peace order by joining the strengths of both countries.” (Miyazawa 1992a)

By the mid-1990s, the emergence of regional conflicts led to declining confidence among Tokyo’s decision-makers about the prospects for international stability and security. The notion of building a new world order gradually disappeared from speeches, but politicians continued to express their aspirations for Japan to play a leading, global role together with the US. Like their German counterparts, Japanese officials referred to constitutional passages in justifying their policy focus. The Constitution instructs Tokyo to play an active role in international affairs and strive “for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time *from the earth*.” (Watanabe 1992a, Koizumi 2006a) This stipulation reflects the global rather than regional focus in Japanese policy. In the minds of many decision-makers in Tokyo, the terrorist attacks on the US in 2001 vindicated their stance to think and act globally. In referring to the US-led war on terrorism, Prime Minister Koizumi thus confirmed his continued commitment to international security in 2002, stating that the Japanese government “will actively fulfill [its] role as a member of the international community in contributing to the peace and stability *of the world*.” (Koizumi 2002d)

Speeches throughout the time period investigated refer to Japan’s global responsibilities, but a trend towards growing attention to East Asian affairs is discernable. In the early 1990s, politicians were excessively optimistic about the new world order, and security challenges in East Asia were commonly underestimated. The North Korean nuclear crisis of 1993-94 and the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1995-1996 left little doubt about the enormous potential for regional instability. In speeches, policymakers began to place more emphasis on the need for Japan to play a regional role in addition to fulfilling global responsibilities. As Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Shiozaki Yasuhisa explained at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Munich Conference on Security Policy in 2006, Japan now intends to “act as a constructive component in Asia *and* the international community.” (Shiozaki 2006)

While German and Japanese role conceptions differ in their geographic focus, some similarities can be seen with regard to the choice of *policy instruments*. Both countries seek to make regional and international contributions primarily by non-military means. This tendency was particularly pronounced in the early 1990s. At the end of the Cold War, Japanese politicians were confident that an exclusively non-military contribution would suffice. In 1990, Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki observed that “as long as military force was the dominant factor in the international order, the contribution a non-military country like Japan could make naturally was limited.” (Kaifu 1990c: 31) He expressed his hope that as “military power’s significance” was “dwind[ling]” in the post-Cold War era, Japan would be able to play a more extensive role. (Kaifu 1990c: 29) Although German political elites did not exhibit the same degree of idealism as their Japanese counterparts, they too emphasized the desire to make contributions by non-military means.

The Gulf War of 1990-1991 was a watershed in both countries, triggering discussions on the need to dispatch military personnel to contribute to international stability. Despite substantial financial support for the US-led coalition troops against Iraq, Germany and Japan were criticized for their ‘checkbook diplomacy’ and their refusal to send troops to the war effort.<sup>34</sup> Chancellor Helmut Kohl responded by calling for a reassessment of Germany’s stance, stating that “in the future, we must be prepared to play a role ourselves [...] in concrete measures for securing peace and stability in the world.” (Kohl 1991a) Likewise, Prime Minister Kaifu demanded that his country “contribute to the cause of peace not only in financial and material terms but also in personnel terms.” (Kaifu 1991a) Over the following years, German and Japanese decision-makers gradually grew more accepting towards the idea of ‘human’ contributions to support multilateral missions for stability. Politicians in both countries argued that they had moral obligations to offer support by dispatching their own troops, since they had benefitted from the Cold War international order without making substantial contributions themselves. For example, Defense Minister Volker R  he in 1995 called on Germany to abandon its role as “importer of security” (Importeur f  r Sicherheit) and become a “responsible contributor country” (verantwortliches Beitragsland). (R  he 1995a) In the same way, Japanese Foreign Minister Watanabe Michio argued in 1993 that Japan “must not just benefit (jueki suru) from the international order, but also contribute and strengthen it.” (Watanabe 1993) German and

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<sup>34</sup> In his book ‘Foreign Policy and the National Interest’ (Gaik   to kokueki), Foreign Ministry official Oe Hiroshi recounts the Gulf War shock. In order to make a financial contribution to the coalition troops’ effort, Tokyo decided to raise taxes – domestically a very unpopular move. The result, Oe observes, was unexpected: rather than being thanked for taking this step, Japan was criticized for its insufficient contribution. (Oe 2007: 240–41)

Japanese thinking with regard to the use of military force will be examined in more detail below in the section on the role conception of ‘non-militarist country.’

The analysis of German and Japanese speeches furthermore reveals remarkable similarity in the *justifications* policymakers from both countries provide for their commitment to the role of ‘exporter of security.’ Three key arguments can be identified. Firstly, elites in both countries express their *own desire* for more active roles in international security. They describe their motivation in terms of responsibility and duty – concepts that suggest ethical and even altruistic behavior – rather than in terms of interests and power. As noted above, decision-makers reason that the time has come for both countries to emerge from their positions as passive consumers of security under US protection. Leaders in Berlin and Tokyo also refer to constitutional passages in justifying their desire to become ‘exporters of security.’ Secondly, political elites speak of the need to respond to the *expectations of partner countries* for more proactive foreign policies. Attention to alter-part prescriptions is most evident in speeches discussing the potential dispatch of military forces to international missions. (Kinkel 1994e, Miyazawa 1992c) No doubt, this reflects the extensive pressure put on Germany and Japan by the US and the rest of the international community. The expansion of military activities was also the most controversial aspect of this role conception domestically. Thirdly, elites point to the influence of a *combination of ego- and alter-part beliefs* by arguing that the contributions in foreign and security policy should match each country’s enormous international weight and potential. Japanese policymakers in particular argue that Tokyo’s contributions must be “commensurate” (*fusawashii*) with Japan’s economic power. (Obuchi 1998h, Komura 1999c, Fukuda 2007, Abe 2007a)

## (2) *Promoter and Defender of Universal Values*

The role conception ‘promoter and defender of universal values’ refers to the importance that Germany and Japan attach to ‘universal values’ such as human rights and democracy in their foreign policy. Both countries strongly identify with these values, which form the basis of their domestic order. Convinced of the universal appeal of democracy, individual freedom, and human rights, policymakers in Berlin and Tokyo seek to promote, spread, and strengthen these values globally. The content analysis of speeches reveals that this role conception has important ramifications for each state’s regional policy: The attachment to universal values *reinforces* Berlin’s orientation towards integration policies

in Europe, while it *dampens* Tokyo's enthusiasm for regional cooperation in East Asia. At the same time, the importance of values serves to bolster both countries' relationships with the US.

German policymakers acknowledge in speeches that their support to regional cooperation is strongly motivated by the shared attachment of EU nations to universal values. In their perspective, the EU's success rests on the common normative ground, uniting the region's countries in a "community of values" (Wertegemeinschaft). (Schröder 2004b) Chancellor Angela Merkel proclaimed the importance of values in her regional outlook in a speech in 2006:

"If one asks what Europe, what the European Union keeps together, it is clear to me: above all, Europe rests on the common values, which the member states of the European Union share: On freedom, justice, democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. These fundamental values have grown in Europe over centuries." (Merkel 2006c)

German politicians furthermore assert their resolve to foster and spread universal values, especially within the region. They seek to create incentives for other states' adherence to these values by offering the prospects of EU membership or by providing support through 'neighborhood policy' (Nachbarschaftspolitik) for those states that are not considered viable candidates for the EU. In a 1995 speech, Rudolf Scharping, chairman of the SPD (and later Defense Minister), stressed the need to aid former Communist countries in their efforts towards the establishment of democracy. In doing so, he emphasized the positive effect of universal values on Germany's own foreign policy behavior and posture:

"It is the fundamental values of Western democracy and human rights that shape our policy and [our] relations [to other countries] and therefore constitute the basis for our peaceful character. We have to and want to help those countries, which are shaking off their legacy of communism, to progress on the same path." (Scharping 1995b)

Since the successful accession to the EU of many former Communist countries in the enlargement rounds of 2004 and 2007, German policymakers have reduced their references to the goal of spreading universal values in Europe. However, they continue to stress the importance of common norms in the relations with both European countries and the US. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder for example maintained that the "set of shared fundamental values" (gemeinsamer Wertekanon) was an essential element in the strong transatlantic ties between Germany and the US and, more generally, between European states and North America's democracies. (Schröder 2004c) Similarly, Chancellor Angela Merkel described

the common norms as “indispensable” (unverzichtbar) as a basis for effective cooperation between European and North American countries. (Merkel 2008b)

In contrast, the attachment to universal values discourages and restrains policymakers’ espousal of regional cooperation in Japan’s case. Although rarely acknowledged explicitly in official statements, government representatives have difficulty to identify with a region that does not share Japan’s fundamental norms. In speeches, they draw attention to East Asia’s diversity and point out that there is no uniform commitment to the values cherished by Japan. In 2005, Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka furthermore insisted that in order to promote multilateral cooperation in East Asia, the region urgently needed a willingness to “maintain shared values” (kyōtsū no kachikan o iji suru), including democracy and human rights. (Machimura 2005b) In books and interviews, Japanese policymakers are more frank about the implications of their role conception. Former Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi for example commented in an interview on the importance of shared norms in state-to-state communication and negotiation. In comparing bilateral consultations with the US and with China, Miyazawa observed: “[...] dialogue is difficult when the values are different. In this respect, it is easier [to hold dialogue] with the US – it is uncomplicated. Europe is alright as well. Indeed, it is Asia that is difficult.” (Iokibe, Yakushiji, and Itō 2006: 50) Apparently, Japanese politicians perceive the greatest difficulty in holding dialogue with Beijing. Like Miyazawa, former Deputy Foreign Minister Tanaka Hitoshi focused on China in gauging the prospects of regional cooperation. He stated: “Regarding [cooperation in East Asian] security policy, it is a prerequisite that the values that are defended are the same [among all countries]. Thus, the answer to the question of whether [Japan] can establish a security policy framework (shikumi) with China is clearly ‘it cannot.’ The values which both countries seek to defend are different.” (Tanaka and Tahara 2005: 221)

The majority of Japanese policymakers thus contend that their country must strive to “advance democratization” (minshuka no zōshin) in the region, in order to create a basis for an expansion of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. (Miyazawa 1993a)<sup>35</sup> In the view of Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro, securing peace and prosperity in the region based on ‘universal’ values continues to be a “priority issue” (yūsen kadai) for Japanese diplomacy. (Mori 2001) In seeking to promote and foster such values, Japanese policymakers intend to build on Japan’s own insights as an “experienced democracy.” (Shiozaki 2006) In a

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<sup>35</sup> Some policymakers are more hesitant, however. Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro noted that Japan should respect East Asia’s diversity and “not foist our values on our neighbors” (kachikan o oshitsukenai). (Koizumi 2002f)

prominent speech in 2006 on the importance of norms and values in Japan's foreign policy, Foreign Minister Aso Taro described his country as a "veteran player" (shinise) in the area of democracy and human rights. He furthermore stated his desire that Japan actively support countries striving for democratization by playing the role of an "escort runner" (bansō ranā).<sup>36</sup> (Aso 2006c) In addition to drawing on Japan's own experience as a democratic country, politicians seek the support of partner countries that share the attachment to universal values. They place particular importance on the US as Japan's global partner and on Australia and New Zealand as countries located in Asia.<sup>37</sup> Foreign Minister Aso reflected on the strong relationship between Japan and the US, stating "At the core of this alliance is our shared embrace of the universal values of freedom, democracy, and free markets. We are committed to spreading these values across the region as a way to ensure that the stability East Asia has enjoyed for the past five decades will continue over the next 50 years and beyond." (Aso 2006e)

Japanese policymakers – like their German counterparts – thus strongly rely on universal values as guiding principles in their foreign policies. This finding contradicts Kenneth Pyle's argument that officials in Tokyo tend to eschew political ideals such as democracy as "anathema." (Pyle 2007a: 351) In Pyle's view, Japan's "readiness to tighten cooperation with the United States is not the result of shared values, so much as it is the realist appraisal of the value of the alliance." (Pyle 2006: 22) However, the content analysis of speeches demonstrates it would be mistaken to dismiss the effect of universal values on Japan's policy. Decision-makers' perceptions of other countries – including the US – are decisively shaped by the role conception of 'promoter of universal values.'

Both German and Japanese political elites provide similar justifications for the firm commitment to their respective role conception, highlighting both ego- and alter-part influences. Firstly, they maintain that their countries have drawn the lessons of history by accepting these values as the foundation for their peaceful development. Specifically, they draw attention to each country's successful economic and political rehabilitation since 1945. Secondly, democracy, individual freedom, and human rights are widely supported and accepted by the international community, government officials point out. A value-driven

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<sup>36</sup> Aso's speech highlighted his goal of establishing an "arc of freedom and prosperity" consisting of the emerging democracies that line the outer rim of the Eurasian continent and stretch from Northeast Asia to Central Asia and the Caucasus, Turkey, Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states.

<sup>37</sup> Some speeches also note South Korea as a country that shares Japan's regard for universal values. However, considering Korea's geographical proximity to Japan, such references are surprisingly rare. In comparison, Australia, New Zealand and even India are often mentioned in the context of regional cooperation.

policy approach thus conforms to alter-part expectations regarding Germany's and Japan's foreign policy conduct.

### *(3) Non-Militarist Country*

The role conception 'non-militarist country' implies the rejection on the part of Germany and Japan of a strong military capability that may be used aggressively to defend or promote the national interest. It reflects the two countries' preferences to use diplomatic and economic means to settle disputes. The analysis of speeches reveals the centrality of this role conception in regional foreign policy behavior of the two countries. Restraint in the use of military force is seen as a moral imperative based on contrition for pre-1945 militarism and aggression.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, it constitutes a concrete measure to confront suspicions of neighboring countries about a possible resurgence of Germany's and Japan's former belligerence. Chancellor Kohl indicated such considerations, promising in 1990 that there would be no "nationalistic going-it-alone" (*nationalistische Alleingänge*) for his country in the post-Cold War era, since Germans sought to be "good neighbors." (Kohl 1990d) In a similar vein, Japanese Foreign Minister Watanabe Michio in 1992 declared Japan's resolve "never to become a military power that might pose a threat to its neighbors," given the "deep rooted apprehension stemming from the past and from Japan's sizable [economic] presence" in the region. (Watanabe 1992a)

Despite these parallels in this role conception, policymakers in Berlin and Tokyo exhibit radically different views regarding the use of military means for purposes other than pure self-defense. Whereas German political elites *perceive a need* to use military force under certain circumstances, their Japanese counterparts tend to *reject* this possibility. The following discussion will describe the two countries' approaches in detail, outlining adjustments since 1990 and discussing policy implications.

Provided that military force is used as an *ultima ratio*, German elites accept their own state's participation in multilateral operations with the aim of preserving international peace and security. They emphasize that such operations should always take place under the leadership of an international organization to ensure legitimacy. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel remarked in 1992: "When all other means have failed, if necessary, justice has to be

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<sup>38</sup> Thomas Berger provides a detailed account of the emergence of what he calls Germany's and Japan's "politico-military cultures." (Berger 1998)

defended by military means against the one violating justice (Rechtsverletzer). That is one of the lessons of a – particularly for us Germans – disastrous past.” (Kinkel 1992b) An expansion of the geographic scope of Germany’s conception is evident, however. During the Cold War, Germany had relied on a restrictive interpretation of the Basic Law, according to which the *Bundeswehr* could not be deployed to international missions outside the geographic area of NATO or the Western European Union (WEU). In the early 1990s, politicians were divided on whether Germany could extend its military contributions to ‘out of area’ missions under the law. In particular, the Gulf War of 1990-91 and the conflict in the Balkans starting in 1991 triggered new debates. Faced with US demands for a more active German role, politicians in Bonn grew more accepting towards the idea of worldwide missions. The issue was formally clarified in a ruling by the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe on July 12, 1994. The Court asserted the constitutionality of the *Bundeswehr*’s global participation in any institutional or multilateral context of ‘mutual collective security.’<sup>39</sup> The Court’s decision was welcomed by many German politicians, especially in the ruling coalition. Officials insisted however that their country would employ military force only as a last resort and in a multilateral context. As Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel stated shortly after the ruling in August 1994, “There will be no militarization of German foreign policy. [...] In the future, our foreign policy will continue to give priority to political, economic, and cultural cooperation and help.” (Kinkel 1994b) The emphasis on non-military means in conflict resolution was also evident in speeches of subsequent chancellors and their cabinet members. For example, Chancellor Schröder asserted in 1998:

“German foreign policy is and continues to be peace policy. In this, we explicitly acknowledge the willingness to contribute to peace enforcing and [peace] keeping measures and missions. [...] However, we emphasize clearly that the possession of *military potential* should serve the *prevention of crises*, and that its *use* should remain the *ultima ratio of peace policy*.” (Schröder 1998b)

Despite adjustments in the geographic scope, Germany’s conception of being a ‘non-militarist country’ thus reflects overall continuity in core elements.

Japanese political elites, in contrast, hold a significantly more constraining and limited conception of being a ‘non-militarist country.’ Japanese prime ministers and foreign ministers emphasize their country’s determination never to become a threatening military power again. Asserting their commitment to an “exclusively defense-oriented policy”

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<sup>39</sup> On the Court’s broad definition of the concept of ‘mutual collective security’ see Zöckler 1995: 277.

(senshu bōei), decision-makers highlight Japan's stance to use military means solely for the purpose of self-defense, i.e. in response to an attack on Japan. (Miyazawa 1992c, Kono 2001a) They furthermore pledge to retain only a minimum of defense capabilities necessary for self-defense. Prime Minister Kaifu clearly expressed this stance in a 1990 speech:

“In the 45 years since the end of the war, Japan has repeatedly declared its determination *not to become a military power that might once again threaten other countries*, it has *renounced war as a sovereign right of the nation*, and it has *rejected the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes*. There is a broad consensus in support of these ideals, and I am certain that this Japanese stance has contributed significantly to the peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus it is only right that Japan should seek to undertake responsibilities for preserving peace by means that are compatible with these ideals and this stance.” (Kaifu 1990a)

The Japanese conception thus *rules out* the threat or use of military force against states violating international law or jeopardizing peace and stability.<sup>40</sup> Accordingly, the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) are not permitted to participate in international missions, in which they would be required to use military means, such as peace *enforcement* missions.

As in Germany's case, the Gulf War of 1990-91 and subsequent regional tensions such as the Cambodian conflict and the North Korean nuclear program elicited new debates about Japan's contributions to international security. The Gulf War in particular was a turning point in discussions. As political scientist Iokibe Makoto explains, Japan after 1945 developed a strikingly polarized outlook on armed conflict, which distinguished only two types of war: “war of invasion” (shinryaku sensō) and “war of self-defense” (jiei sensō). (Iokibe 2006a: 237) Washington's demand for a Japanese military contribution to the US-led effort to repel the Iraqi aggressor could not be discussed and evaluated in these two categories, however. Political leaders increasingly felt the need to reconcile the Japanese restrictive notion of being a ‘non-militarist country’ with the new requirements of the post-Cold War era. They realized that Japan's desire to be an active ‘exporter of security’ and a ‘reliable partner’ to the US was in tension with the strict ban on overseas deployments of JSDF personnel. Frustration about these gaps and tensions surrounding the conception of being a ‘non-militarist country’ mounted among Japan's leadership. A number of observers and political leaders criticized Japan's stance as “one country pacifism” (ikkoku heiwa shugi), because of the inward-looking focus on Japan's own peace and security rather than a broader perspective. (Kohara 2005: 119) Former Japanese Ambassador to the Netherlands

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<sup>40</sup> It is important to note, however, that Japan does not explicitly reject the threat or use of military force by *other* states in such situations.

Togo Kazuhiko went as far as to call Japan's traditional stance regarding the use of military force "idealistic, irresponsible, and passive." (Togo 2008a: 42)

In the domestic discussions a gradual consensus thus emerged in favor of a more proactive understanding of Japan's role conception of 'non-militarist country.' In a speech in 2008 for example, Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo described Japan's desire to become a "peace fostering nation" (*heiwa kyōryoku kokka*) that "spares no efforts" (*rōku o oshimazu*) in the pursuit of regional and global stability. (Fukuda 2008) Fukuda's conception signals a trend towards a more internationalist outlook among the Japanese leadership.<sup>41</sup> This trend is also reflected in the efforts undertaken by politicians to adjust Japan's legislation, enabling international contributions by the Self-Defense Forces. Following the passage of the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) Bill in the Diet in 1992, JSDF personnel were dispatched for the first time ever since 1945 to a UN mission in Cambodia. Subsequent revisions of the law in 1998 and 2001 sought to further facilitate Japan's cooperative international role. (Ishizuka 2004)

Despite these gradual adjustments, the core of Japan's conception of 'non-militarist country' remains unchanged, however. The PKO Law places strict limits on JSDF activities abroad. Tokyo continues to adhere to the principle of exclusive self-defense, accepting only participation in peace-keeping missions, while rejecting peace-enforcing mission, as the use of military force would be inevitable. Japanese decision-makers furthermore continue to display a marked reluctance to deploy the JSDF abroad. In speeches they repeatedly declare that Japan should never again becoming an aggressive military power that wages war. (Koizumi 2001c, Aso 2006c)

In both Germany and Japan, the conceptions of being 'non-militarist countries' emerged following the devastation caused by pre-1945 policies of aggression, as indicated above. The gap between German and Japanese views on the use of military force rests on distinct understandings of history in each country. The Federal Republic's leaders reason that rampant nationalism in the pre-1945 time period was the main cause for their country's mistaken foreign policy course. Their objective is thus to forestall the reemergence of nationalist-minded security policies in Europe by intensifying cooperation in cultural,

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<sup>41</sup> Interestingly, initial deliberations about taking a more proactive role in efforts for international peace and especially in PKO activities were made already in the 1980s. Based on considerations about the conflict in Cambodia, Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru charged the Foreign Ministry in 1987 with an investigation into the possibility of Japanese participation in PKO missions. The study was shelved, however, when Takeshita and other key politicians in his administration were charged with corruption and insider trading in the so-called 'Recruit Scandal.' (Iokibe 2006a: 242)

economic, and political fields among neighboring states. This approach explains why a multilateral context is considered a prerequisite for international contributions of the *Bundeswehr*. (Kinkel 1994a) In Japan, on the other hand, the roots of pre-1945 militarism are seen in the misguided policies of a small group of elites from the military establishment. (Nakayama 1991c) This understanding has nurtured a fundamental distrust of the military leadership, finding expression in persistent post-war efforts to restrict the powers of the armed forces. Through the maintenance of only a minimal and non-offensive defense capability, Japanese policymakers moreover hope to avert balancing behavior by other countries that perceive Japan to be too powerful and threatening.

Although both Germany and Japan have sought to allay fears of neighboring countries about their aggressive nature, they have done so in radically different ways. Berlin's politicians seek to project an image of a *responsible power* that uses military force for the protection of its partners and for the defense of international peace and justice. By binding capabilities to multilateral institutions they signal their benign intentions. Japanese decision-makers, on the other hand, evoke the impression of Japan as a *self-aware and self-controlled nation* that abstains from the acquisition of threatening, offensive military capabilities. However, in doing so, they do not challenge the underlying view among neighboring countries that Japan cannot be trusted with military capabilities. Instead, Tokyo's pledge to never become a military power may seem like a confirmation of such suspicions. Political scientist Paul Midford found that Japanese leaders routinely endorse the cap-in-the bottle view, according to which U.S. troop presence is seen as a 'cap in the bottle' designed to prevent the rise of a more assertive and militarized Japan. (Midford 2002: 29) The analysis of speeches by Japanese policymaking elites provides further evidence of such endorsements. For example, Foreign Minister Watanabe Michio stated in 1993 that the US-Japan alliance was important "to increase the international credibility of Japan's position not to become a military power that can threaten other countries." (takoku ni kyōi o ataeru yōna gunji taikoku ni naranai to iu nihon no tachiba no kokusaitekina shinruisei o takameru tame ni) (Watanabe 1993) However, as a result, Japan forfeited the chance to build up a record as a country that uses its military capability responsibly in the interest of the international community.

#### (4) *Reliable Partner*

The role conception of ‘reliable partner’ refers to Germany’s and Japan’s determination to work and act together with other countries. Officials from both countries stress the importance of avoiding unilateral foreign policy conduct. The analysis of speeches reveals two similar motivations for acting as ‘reliable partners.’ Firstly, political elites from both countries express their hope that by acting together with other countries, they will avoid stirring fears among neighboring countries about a narrow-minded and national interest-driven foreign policy course. Decision-makers call attention to their firm rejection of unilateralism and of a dominating leadership role. For example, Chancellor Kohl in 1990 promised that Germany would continue to act together with others, especially in the security policy field – a field that “concerns the interests of all our neighbors.” (Kohl 1990a) In a speech in 2001, Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi similarly reflected on the lessons of history explaining Japan’s desire to act together with other countries. He pledged devotion to international and regional cooperation, warning that Japan “must never again isolate itself from the international community” (*nido to kokusai shakai kara koritsu [suru] [...] yō na koto ga atte wa narimasen*). (Koizumi 2001a)

Secondly, according to policymakers in both Germany and Japan it is unrealistic to achieve various policy objectives alone in today’s globalized world. A reliance on partnerships is practically inevitable. Chancellor Merkel expressed this view in 2006, pointing to the complex security problems that the global community faces today. She concluded, “No country in the world can handle the dangers alone. For that reason, German security policy is always [...] a policy of partnership (*partnerschaftliche Politik*). German security policy cannot be thought of as a national policy.” (Merkel 2006b) Japanese policymakers cite such pragmatic reasons less frequently compared to their German counterparts, but they still acknowledge the need to cooperate with others to confront international security problems. Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo for instance contended in a 1999 speech before the Diet, “In the world of today, no nation can stand alone,” urging Japan to act jointly with other countries in confronting transnational challenges. (Obuchi 1999b)

Despite the parallels in the motivations, the role conceptions of Germany and Japan differ with respect to the *choice of countries* with which principal partnerships are pursued. While German politicians attach *equal weight* to two countries, the US and France, Japanese elites attach the *highest single priority* to the US. Each country’s choice reflects

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distinct beliefs and understandings about foreign policy options in regional and international affairs. The following discussion describes Germany's and Japan's role conceptions in further detail, highlighting reasons for choosing particular countries as key partners.

German policymakers identify the US and France as the two partners with equal importance in foreign policy-making. Although they also name other states such as Great Britain and Poland as relevant partners (Fischer 2000a), attention in speeches is clearly focused on the bilateral relationships to Washington and Paris. For German elites, it is essential to refrain from choosing or prioritizing relations with either partner. In their view, Germany must make every effort to foster good, collaborative relations with both countries. Policymakers assert that partnership with the US and France is compatible ('sowohl-als-auch'), despite the often contrary perspectives of the two countries. In 1993, Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel contradicted accusations that Germany after the Cold War would begin to prioritize France and Europe in its foreign policy over its relations with the US. He declared:

"The bridge of friendship across the Atlantic was the key for the conclusion of the Cold War and [Germany's] reunification. We will never forget what we owe to our American friends. The maintenance of a close and a trustful German-American partnership is more than a debt of gratitude, however. The demonstration of unity and solidarity (Schulterschluss) across the Atlantic remains the cornerstone of our foreign policy and *cannot be pitted against* (ausspielen) our relationship with our closest neighbor France." (Kinkel 1993d)

Political scientist Holger Mey called this policy of equidistance in relations with Washington and Paris "Germany's preference not to make a preference," adding "even if this includes a danger of doing the splits and sitting between all chairs." (Mey 1995: 205) Indeed, this policy has required difficult balancing acts by Berlin, because French leaders tend to see the EU as an autonomous force, while US politicians emphasize the transatlantic NATO as the essential framework for cooperation. The policy of 'sowohl-als-auch' has also held an advantage, however. Germany was able to expand its room to maneuver and gain influence on policy outcomes by assuming a pivotal role in mediating between two important actors of international politics. Based on its strong relations with both the US and France, Germany has wielded significant power to shape compromises involving those two countries. Recognizing this advantage, German policymakers continue to act as a reliable partner to the US and France, and, by extension, to the Atlantic Alliance and the EU. As Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer acknowledged in 1998, Germany's concurrent attachment

to transatlantic relations and to Europe helps to create “new room to maneuver” (neue Spielräume) for Berlin. (Fischer 1998)

For German elites, the relations to the US and to France each have special historic meaning and they serve distinctive purposes. The US, the country with the most immediate influence on Germany since 1945, is seen as an indispensable partner that shares the attachment to universal values and that has helped to foster peace and stability in Europe and beyond. Washington is considered the ultimate guarantor of security in Europe – at least as long as there is no “functioning security system covering all of Europe,” as President Richard von Weizsäcker remarked. (Weizsäcker 1993) German political elites seek to engage the US in European security policies and initiate cooperation on a wide range of issues. Thereby, they hope to forestall the emergence of transatlantic misunderstandings or rivalries. (Fischer 1999b)

Relations to France also have historic significance to German policymakers, because the two ‘arch enemies’ achieved what many thought was impossible: After 1945, Bonn and Paris cultivated a new, future-oriented bilateral relationship based on reconciliation. The close cooperation between the two countries became the bedrock of the integration process in Europe. German elites conceive of the bilateral relationship as an indispensable “motor” of integration that provides ideas and proposals to further regional cooperation. (Kohl 1993a) They emphasize that their initiatives are not imposed unilaterally on other European states, however. In 2003, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer described the partnership to France as follows:

“German-French cooperation is the *core* and the *flywheel* (Schwungrad) of European development and – I contend – will remain so under the conditions of an EU of 25 [member states]. [...] When Germany and France agree, it was *never exclusive or targeted at others*, but it has always functioned as a flywheel. [...] It is the task of the German-French *motor* to advance such compromises.” (Fischer 2003a, emphasis added)

Decision-makers see Paris and Berlin as particularly qualified to propose initiatives in the EU, because the two countries can reach balanced compromises based on their diverging standpoints. As Foreign Minister Fischer argued in another speech, “The dynamism that Germany and France have unfolded in the European integration is based not on similarity, but rather on a complementarity between our peoples [...]” (Fischer 1999d) The implicit assumption is that bilateral initiatives will be acceptable to other member states of the EU.

In other words, Germany and France seek to forge “proxy compromises” (Stellvertreterkompromisse). (Weske 2006: 15)

Decision-makers in Tokyo also emphasize the compatibility of relations to the US and to regional partners. However, in contrast to Germany, they conceive of the US as their most important partner and hence number one priority. The alliance relationship is seen as the backbone to Japan’s relations with neighboring countries. Above all, being a ‘reliable partner’ thus means maintaining strong relations with the US. As Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro stated in a press conference in November 2005, “There is no such thing as a US-Japan relationship [that is] too close. [...] the closer, more intimate it is, it is easier for us to [...] improve relations with China, with South Korea and other nations in Asia.” (Koizumi 2005d) Because his statement caused considerable controversy in the media, Koizumi elaborated this point further in the government’s public mail magazine *Cabi-Netto* in 2006. While he rejected allegations that his policy neglected neighboring countries, Koizumi acknowledged that for Tokyo “there is no *single relationship that is as important* as the one between the US and Japan” (nichibei kankei hodo jūyōna kankei wa nai). (Koizumi and Jijigahosha 'Cabi Netto' Henshubu 2006: 135)

Other foreign policy elites similarly describe Washington as Japan’s central partner. In 2008, Prime Minister Aso Taro contended that “the strengthening of the US-Japan Alliance [...] should *always come first*” (nichibei dōmei no kyōka [...] wa tsune ni dai ichi de arimasu), before considering relations with neighboring countries. (Aso 2008) In speeches, the importance of the US is reflected in the expressions used to describe the alliance relationship: “cornerstone” (kijiku), “linchpin” (yō), “basis” (kison), “foundation” (kiban), and “foundation stone” (ishizue). (Nakayama 1991b, Hata 1994b, Koizumi 2004a, Aso 2007, Fukuda 2007) The order by which politicians refer to other countries in their speeches further underlines the primacy of the US alliance in foreign policy thinking: In practically all general policy speeches analyzed in this study the US was mentioned *before* neighboring countries or multilateral regional security institutions.<sup>42</sup>

As the statements above illustrate, Japanese policymakers see a functioning security relationship with the US as the *prerequisite* and *platform* for good relations with neighboring countries. Japan’s conception of being a ‘reliable partner’ may be described as

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<sup>42</sup> A notable exception was a general policy speech by Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo in 2000, in which he touched upon relations with Asian countries first. This may reflect the importance Obuchi attached to Asia. Nevertheless, like other officials, he in spoke of the US relationship as a “cornerstone” in Japan’s foreign policy, pledging to strengthen relations. (Obuchi 2000)

a policy of ‘*US-bilateralism plus*,’<sup>43</sup> as decision-makers attach the highest priority to the US, while other relationships play a secondary – though nevertheless important – role. The reasons for Japan’s strong attachment to the US are similar to those of Germany. Policymakers emphasize the commonalities and links between the two countries: They share an attachment to universal values, both seek to contribute to international security and stability, and their economies are marked by a high degree of interdependence. (Miyazawa 1991) The alliance furthermore provides Tokyo’s leaders with the psychological assurance that Japan will remain integrated in the international community. (Koizumi 2001a, Klien 2002: 167) Above all, however, Japanese elites stress that the alliance fosters stability in East Asia by deterring potential aggressors. (Kawaguchi 2002a) This point will be considered in the next section on the role conception ‘regional stabilizer.’

#### *(5) Regional Stabilizer*

Both German and Japanese policymakers expect their respective country to play the role of a ‘regional stabilizer.’ Their objective is to foster steady and predictable relations among neighboring states. Despite sharing this overarching objective, German and Japanese politicians conceive of their roles in markedly different ways, based on distinct foreign policy perspectives and reasoning. As a result, differences clearly outweigh similarities in Germany’s and Japan’s role conceptions of ‘regional stabilizer.’

German politicians focus on the need for multilateralism and regional institutions, stressing two interrelated aspects. Firstly, they perceive an obligation to promote stability through the deepening and widening of multilateral regional institutions, especially the European Union as well as NATO. To them, integration provides the best means to overcome dangerous nationalist tendencies in Europe. As Defense Minister Volker R  he observed, integration in Europe “has been the most successful attempt to pacify nations that have been rivals for hundreds of years.” (R  he 1995b) Especially in the 1990s, German policymakers sought to support Eastern European countries in their reform efforts. Bonn soon emerged as one of the major proponents of enlarging the EU and NATO towards the

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<sup>43</sup> The term is adopted and slightly modified from a paper by Christopher Hughes and Akiko Fukushima. In their study, Hughes and Fukushima investigate the relationship between Japan’s bilateralism with the US and Tokyo’s involvement in regional security forums. They find that in Japanese security thinking multilateral institutions only play a supplementary function to the alliance, and they describe this as “bilateralism-plus.” (Hughes and Fukushima 2004: 56) Here, the term is modified by adding the prefix ‘US,’ to emphasize that of all its bilateral relationships, Japan attaches by far the greatest importance to the one with Washington.

East as a means of encouraging steady, peaceful development. As Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel proclaimed in 1994,

“We Germans see the future in the common European path. [...] It is about the molding (Gestaltung) of our continent – that is the deepening and widening of core Europe [...]. Today, we have a clear picture of the challenges that need to be tackled, which risks need to be curtailed and which ghosts of the past need to be banished. If there is a *special German foreign policy responsibility* based on our history, then it is: to build our desired Europe *together and jointly* (zusammen und gemeinsam) *with the new democracies in Middle and Eastern Europe*. [...] Like us, our partners know that the West cannot do well in the long term if the East is doing badly.” (Kinkel 1994c)

German enthusiasm for further geographic widening has weakened however since the enlargement rounds in 2004 and 2007. In speeches, politicians no longer describe their country as a staunch “advocate” (Anwalt) of countries seeking membership in the EU. (Schröder 2003a) The public has become increasingly critical of EU expansion, because Germany has had to finance a considerable portion of the accession process. Moreover, the enormous challenge of coordinating and cooperating in an EU of 25 members has become evident. Political elites recognize that further enlargements may undermine the achievements up to now and jeopardize prospects for making Europe a cohesive international actor.

Secondly, German decision-makers believe their country must make a determined effort to mediate multilaterally among regional states to prevent instability arising from unresolved clashes of interest. They seek to forge compromises that take into consideration and reconcile various national interests and needs. In speeches, decision-makers promise to demonstrate a “willingness to compromise” (Herzog 1995), to “build bridges between opposing positions” during multilateral negotiations (Kohl 1997a) and to refrain from “pushing through national maximum demands by hook or by crook” (nationale Maximalpositionen auf Biegen und Brechen durchsetzen). (Fischer 1999a) However, Germany’s policy of mediation and compromise is not without pitfalls – as decision-makers have realized. Especially in the EU of 25 members, there is a risk of becoming stuck with agreements reflecting only the lowest common denominator among various national positions. The difficulty of reaching compromises acceptable to all was demonstrated in the unsuccessful attempt to establish a Constitutional Treaty in the EU. After failed referenda in France and the Netherlands, Chancellor Angela Merkel commented in early 2007 that

Germany would “endeavor a compromise” on the issue, but warned that it would “not take a minimalist approach.” (Merkel 2007a)

In their policy of mediation and compromise, German policymakers place particular emphasis on the engagement of Russia. Speeches reveal concern about the possible reemergence of tensions between the US and Russia, based on old antagonisms and Cold War era habits of rivalry. Politicians advocate the development of cooperative security relations with Russia, in order to overcome traditional balance of power thinking and perceptions of exclusion. As Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel argued, “In the future, security must be defined more broadly and must be organized *not against one another but jointly*. [...] Security with and not against one another – above all that means acknowledging *Russia’s rightful and legitimate place* [in the European security architecture].” (Kinkel 1995b) German elites believe Moscow might feel isolated and perceive the EU as an ever-growing American sphere of influence, as it is itself not a candidate for membership in either the EU or NATO. Hoping to ease potential concerns in Moscow about the EU, Chancellor Schröder stated in 2001:

“We do not want to and must not forget those countries that are not part of the group of candidate countries [for EU membership]. [...] We must ensure that *no new Iron Curtain* develops at the external frontiers of the Community. We do not want new boundaries, which would in any case only endanger the stability and the success of European integration. Rather, we want to *overcome the thinking in terms of borders* (Denken in Grenzen überwinden).” (Schröder 2001a)

While the German conception of being a ‘regional stabilizer’ emphasizes multilateralism, Japanese policymakers in contrast focus primarily on the military balance of power as an essential determinant of peace and stability. In their view, Japan’s contribution to a favorable balance of power is twofold. Firstly, Japan’s position as a US ally is considered a key aspect of Japan’s stabilizer role. In the words of Foreign Minister Aso Taro, Japan’s position as a “built-in stabilizer” in regional security “clearly stems from the ‘weight’ that the Japan-US military alliance holds” (*nichibei dōmei ga motsu ‘omoshi’ toshite no yakuwari ni yotte, jimei de aru*). (Aso 2005) Washington’s commitment to Asia is seen as a decisive factor in securing peace and stability in Asia in political and military terms. The “forward deployment” (*zenpō tenkai*) of US troops in Asia is indispensable, according to Japanese politicians, as it demonstrates the alliance’s credibility and “deterrence power” (*yokuseiryoku*). (Komura 1999a, Koizumi 2005b, Kakizawa 1992, Kaifu 1990c: 32) Japan helps to maintain and reinforce the alliance through close

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cooperation and coordination as well as generous ‘host-nation support.’ (Kakizawa 1992, Tanaka 2001b) In most speeches, officials refrain from identifying regional threats against which deterrence is needed. The top security concerns seem to be North Korea and China. Indeed, Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Shiozaki Yasuhisa displayed apprehension about North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons and missiles and about China’s possession of “just over 11% of the world’s entire military manpower” in his speech at the Munich Conference on Security in 2006. (Shiozaki 2006) The Defense Ministry’s 2004 National Defense Policy Outline also proclaimed Japanese concern over North Korea’s and China’s military buildup. (Hook et al. 2005: 167)

In most speeches, however, politicians avoid naming specific regional threats. Instead, they describe the alliance as “a public good” (*kōkyōzai*) for the nations in the Asia-Pacific region. (Aso 2006a) As Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo explains, the “Japan-US alliance is now not only a means for ensuring the security of Japan, but it serves as an instrument for the stability of Asia-Pacific.” (Fukuda 2008) While attaching fundamental importance to the alliance, security dialogue among regional countries is only attributed a supplementary function in ensuring stability in East Asia. This was reflected in a statement by Vice Foreign Minister Abe Masatoshi in 2004, who observed that “although there have been efforts” towards establishing multilateral security mechanisms including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), regional stability continued to be primarily “maintained through bilateral security agreements centered on the United States.” (Abe 2004)

Secondly, politicians view the pledge never to become a military great power as an important contribution to the stability of East Asia. Especially in speeches of the early 1990s, decision-makers maintain that Tokyo’s non-threatening posture helps to prevent arms races otherwise triggered by the fear of Japanese power. (Watanabe 1992a) The bilateral alliance to the US with its guarantee for Japanese security heightens the credibility of Tokyo’s pledge to never become a military power, they argue. From around the mid-1990s, statements focusing on the stabilizing effect of Japan’s rejection of a threatening military capability declined somewhat. Many official documents published by the Ministry of Defense (MoD) in recent years have instead called more attention to the idea of a balance of power. The 2007 White Paper for example argues that although Japan should maintain its policy of ‘defensive defense’ with only a minimum of necessary defense capability, it must ensure that the country “does not itself become a power vacuum that would be a destabilizing factor in our [...] regional environment” (*mizukara chikara no*

kūhaku to natte wa ga kuni shūhen chiiki no fuantei yōin to naranai yō). (Ministry of Defense Japan 2007) This expression – first used officially by the government in the 1976 National Defense Program Outline (Taikō) – implies that a military build-up by another country may leave Tokyo with little choice but to respond by improving its own defensive capabilities. (Hitoshi 2006: 26–27) The growing use of the term ‘power vacuum’ in MoD documents points to an attentiveness to shifts in the regional balance of power and threat perceptions regarding North Korea and China. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the expression is not commonly used in speeches by political elites.

Aside from the military dimension, Japan’s conception of being a ‘regional stabilizer’ also has economic and normative dimensions. In the Japanese view, economic disparities are a major cause of international disputes and conflicts, and thus decision-makers perceive a responsibility for Japan as the region’s economically most advanced country to foster development. (Kakizawa 1992) By helping to lower the economic disparities in the region through official development aid programs, Japanese politicians hope to contribute to regional stability in the traditional security area. Moreover, decision-makers also maintain that Japan’s promotion of democratic values and of the rule of law in East Asia will reinforce stability and peace. (Aso 2005)

Overall, the preceding discussion shows that though German and Japanese lawmakers seek to stabilize their respective region, the specific content of their role conceptions differs significantly. Politicians in the two countries envision distinct policy strategies and means to achieve regional stability, with German elites focusing on multilateralism and Japanese elites stressing the balance of power.

#### *(6) Contributor to Regional Cooperation*

The role conception ‘contributor to regional cooperation’ refers to Germany’s and Japan’s willingness to actively shape regional multilateral cooperation. Policymakers in both countries emphasize the importance of fostering security dialogue and cooperation among regional countries. However, speeches reveal considerable differences between German and Japanese conceptions with regard to *three aspects*: the *priority* attached to the promotion of cooperation, the *type* of multilateral framework envisioned, and the *specific role* Berlin, respectively Tokyo, should play therein. The following sections will discuss

these aspects for each of the two countries, highlighting the different perceptions and rationales among policymakers.

German politicians reveal a remarkable consensus on the need to actively expand and intensify regional cooperation and European integration. In promoting cooperation, German elites envision a network of overlapping and interlocking multilateral institutions with three main pillars constituted by the EU, NATO, and the Conference (or later Organization) for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE/ OSCE). (Kinkel 1994f) These institutions, they stress, should be seen as complementary and mutually supporting. The overall German goal is to establish a European peace order encompassing Europe and North America and built on a web of interdependencies that will make belligerent state behavior irrational. German elites seek to overcome division and confrontation by promoting dialogue and trust-building, while spreading the idea of interdependent interests. In the words of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Germany aspires to the “replacement of confrontational politics by cooperative politics in Europe.” (Genscher 1992)

In the early 1990s, German politicians were hopeful that the CSCE/ OSCE – as the only multilateral organization to which “all states in the cooperative region between Vancouver and Vladivostok” belong to – would become the basis of the all-embracing European peace order. (Kinkel 1993a) By the mid-1990s, the initial enthusiasm about the OSCE made way for a more pragmatic assessment about the organization’s potential, however. It became clear that the OSCE was unable to play a substantial role in stabilizing regional conflicts such as in former Yugoslavia and that Eastern European countries were primarily interested in security assurances from the EU and NATO. The goal of building an extensive cooperative security order in Europe continued as an important theme in German speeches, however. For example, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer stated in 1999 that Germany sought to establish a “pan-European peace order (gesamteuropäische Friedensordnung) that bans war as an instrument of politics permanently (dauerhaft) from our continent and ensures equal cooperative security for all.” (Fischer 1999b)<sup>44</sup> Nearly a decade later, Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier explained that Germany’s initial hopes for a quick establishment of a regional peace order had proven overly optimistic, as the “long shadow of the Cold War” with its confrontational policies still lingered.

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<sup>44</sup> For a similar statement, see (Scharping 1999b).

Nevertheless, Germany remained committed to the idea of a “pan-European peace order,” he insisted. (Steinmeier 2008b)

Regarding the second aspect – the type of multilateral framework envisioned by policymakers – German thinking is characterized by a notable preference for enduring, formal and legally-binding supranational structures. This inclination is most evident in discussions on the European Union. Supranationalism is seen as an essential means to make the European integration process irreversible, thereby ensuring long-term stability and peace. The desire for institutional permanency was reflected in the repeatedly used metaphor of seeking to “build the house of Europe.” (Süssmuth 1990) As Chancellor Kohl stated, “The building of the ‘house of Europe’ (Haus Europa) is the decisive prerequisite for peace and freedom in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Europe. [...] The federal government that I lead does its utmost [...] to further advance the European unification (Einigung) – I deliberately say: to make it irreversible (unumkehrbar).” (Kohl 1996b)

The ‘house’ metaphor was also used by politicians from the subsequent Red-Green government. For example, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer declared that the Schröder government would continue Germany’s traditional European integration policy by “building new floors for the house of Europe” through the deepening and widening of the EU. (Fischer 1998) In their conception of building this house, German policymakers accept and indeed advocate institutional integration that involves sacrificing important aspects of state sovereignty. Their proposals for supranationalism often go far beyond the ideas for intergovernmental cooperation voiced by partner countries such as France and Great Britain. (Aggestam 2004)

The German preference for supranational integration rests on two key considerations. Firstly, as mentioned above, this mode of cooperation is seen as an effective assurance against the reemergence of nationalistic tendencies in Europe. (Fischer 2000b) Secondly, through the promotion of supranationalism, Germany could – paradoxically – also expand its international influence and room to maneuver. (Fischer 2000a) As John Duffield observes, after World War II the occupied Germany “began as a country deprived of many traditional prerequisites of sovereignty” and it had to “overcome the mistrust of neighbors before it could be politically rehabilitated.” (Duffield 2003: 268) Integration served post-war Germany well, because – embedded in multilateral and supranational institutions – the expansion of Bonn’s power and influence was more acceptable to neighbors. Helga Haftendorn calls this foreign policy strategy the “method of winning [70]

sovereignty through the relinquishment of sovereignty” (Methode des Souveränitätsgewinns durch Souveränitätsverzicht). (Haftendorn 2001: 436)

Regarding the third point, German politicians perceive a special responsibility for their country to play a leading role in advancing and promoting European integration together with France, as seen in the above discussion on the role conception of ‘reliable partner.’ They reject a unilateral or exclusive leadership role for their country. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel evokes the notion of Germany as a “good team player” (guter Mannschaftsspieler), declaring: “In the future we will leave it at this role [of a good team player] – without the captain’s armband (Kapitänsbinde) – but let’s say as a *player with special responsibility*.” (Kinkel 1994b) In light of the activism reflected in German thinking about their function in regional cooperation, the country’s role conception may perhaps be more accurately termed ‘*promoter of regional cooperation*’ rather than just ‘*contributor*.’

Overall, German speeches reflect remarkable continuity in the stated *goal* of building a ‘pan-European peace order’ and an institutionalized and supranational ‘house of Europe.’ However, the *motives* that are cited for this policy of promoting regional cooperation have unmistakably *shifted* from predominantly emotional and history-focused reasoning in the early 1990s to more practical and ‘rational’ arguments beginning with the Schröder government and continuing with the Merkel government. In the early 1990s, leading politicians and especially Chancellor Kohl himself repeatedly declared that European unification was a “question of war and peace” (eine Frage von Krieg und Frieden), implying that if the integration project failed, Europe would revert to the dangerous pre-war patterns of antagonism and nationalism. (Kohl 1996c) In contrast, politicians in the Schröder and Merkel governments did not display such existential fears regarding integration. Instead, they focused on the need to tackle transnational security challenges and the forces of globalization through regional cooperation. In particular, politicians from both governments argued that closer integration was vital so that European nations together could raise their voice in international politics. (Steinmeier 2007c, Schröder 2004b) At the same time, Chancellor Schröder openly acknowledged resenting the widespread view that European integration was needed as a straightjacket to bind the German “Gulliver.” (Haftendorn 1994) In a 1998 interview with the Financial Times, he stated,

“The new German foreign policy won’t be unhistorical. But I believe we have shown in the past fifty years that there is no reason to tie down the Germans, out of fear of the *furum teutonicus*

[...]. My generation and those following are *Europeans because we want to be, not because we must be*. That makes us freer in dealing with others.” (Miskimmon 2001: 92, latter emphasis added)

European integration policies are thus increasingly portrayed as a conscious and rational choice rather than an inescapable destiny or obligation. History-focused arguments that dominated under Kohl have moved to the background, although they are mentioned as an additional motivation. (Fischer 2000b, Merkel 2008b) Undoubtedly, this more ‘forward-looking’ reasoning caters to the growing post-war generation of voters, as suggested in the quote by Schröder above.

Japanese policymakers also conceive of the role conception of ‘contributor to regional cooperation’ as an important foreign policy element. However, as was seen in previous sections, regional security dialogue is only accorded a supplementary function in ensuring peace and stability. By stressing that the alliance is an indispensable platform for regional efforts, Japanese political elites display little confidence in security cooperation as a viable *alternative* for ensuring stability. (Obuchi 1998d) Compared to their German counterparts, Japanese policymakers refrain from articulating an ambitious goal like building a pan-Asian multilateral peace order based on cooperative security. This more reserved attitude may have several reasons. Firstly, Japanese policymakers fear that declaring the desire for an alternative security order would raise suspicions in Washington and hence jeopardize good alliance relations. Secondly, many elites in Tokyo have qualms about their country playing a leading role in regional integration due to Japan’s negative legacy of Asianism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thirdly, Japanese elites explicitly articulate reservation about the potential for regional security cooperation. In referring to the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) – the most prominent regional institution for security dialogue – Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro revealed his cautious attitude in 1997 when he remarked that “we shall have to see how effective the ARF process is.” (Hashimoto 1997b) That is not to say that regional cooperation is rejected as futile and ineffective by Japanese elites – indeed they stress it as an important foreign policy objective to foster dialogue and “enhance the sense of mutual reassurance” (*otagai no anshinkan o takameru*) between neighboring countries. (Miyazawa 1992d) But overall, as Christopher Hughes and Akiko Fukushima observe, regional security frameworks “have been accorded, at best [...] a role that is secondary, supplementary, or subordinate to the primacy of the US-Japan security arrangements.” (Hughes and Fukushima 2004: 56)

On the second aspect, the type of regional framework envisioned, Japanese policymakers exhibit preferences that are markedly different from those of their German counterparts: They seek informal, flexible, and consensus-oriented forms of cooperation or ad-hoc regional initiatives that deal with specific security problems. Unlike German politicians, Japanese elites do not openly consider a transfer of sovereignty rights to supranational institutions, favoring instead intergovernmental forms of cooperation. Speeches reveal three motivations for the preference of soft and flexible approaches to regional cooperation. Firstly, policymakers frequently cite Asia's diversity in terms of culture, ideology, political systems and economic development as an impediment to supranational integration. (Miyazawa 1993a, Koizumi 2002f) As was seen above, Japanese decision-makers are reluctant to engage in security dialogue with countries that do not share the attachment to universal values. Moreover, they emphasize that formal regional frameworks cannot accommodate Asia's diversity and that some countries may find it difficult to accept the rigidities created by formal institutional settings. As Vice Foreign Minister Sugiura Seiken explained in 2001, in light of "Asia's rich diversity" (*hijō ni tayōsei ni tonda chiiki*), Japan is making efforts to achieve better "cooperation through stratified and *soft* multilateral frameworks, with bilateral relationships as the foundation" (*nikoku kankei o kihon toshite, jūshōteki de yuruyakana takokukan wakugumi o tsūjita renkei*). (Sugiura 2001)<sup>45</sup>

Secondly, Japanese policymakers believe that an approach based on sub-regional and ad-hoc frameworks may be well suited to deal with many of the security issues that need to be addressed in Asia. In order to settle specific disputes and conflicts, the concerned countries should strive for the establishment of flexible and individual mechanisms for cooperation. Politicians point out the need to deal with such wide-ranging issues as North Korea, Taiwan and territorial disputes between various countries. Region-wide cooperation, on the other hand, is seen only as an additional instrument that enhances the sense of mutual reassurance between neighbors. (Miyazawa 1992d)

Thirdly, Japanese leaders prefer soft and informal frameworks of regional dialogue, because they do not draw such stark lines between members and non-members. In particular, elites display unease about the possibility that Asian regionalism may exclude the US, which could cause frictions between Tokyo and Washington. Japanese

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<sup>45</sup> For some policymakers diversity initially seemed like an insurmountable obstacle to cooperation. In 1994 Foreign Minister Kono Yohei admitted that a commonly accepted view had previously been that "unlike the situation in Europe, it would be very hard (*konnan*) to institute region-wide dialogue, because of Asia-Pacific's diversity in ethnicity, religion and ideologies and the various existing threat perceptions." (Kono 1994b)

policymakers thus stress the need to design regional cooperation that is “open” (hirakareta) to countries located outside a narrowly defined Asian region. (Watanabe 1992b) For example Prime Minister Koizumi advocated regional cooperation that is “founded upon the close partnership with those outside the region” and that should “by no means be an exclusive entity” (haitatekina mono to natte wa narimasen). In doing so, he explicitly pointed to the importance of the US for the region. (Koizumi 2002e) The emphasis on inclusiveness and on the involvement of the US is also reflected in speeches through the common labeling of Japan’s region as the “Asia-Pacific” – which includes the US. (Hashimoto 1997a)

Regarding the third point, Tokyo’s specific role in regional cooperation, Japanese leaders – like their German counterparts – reject a unilateral leadership position in regional cooperation. In comparison, however, Tokyo’s elites envision a more low-profile role, deferring key initiatives to others. This self-restraint reflects policymakers’ strong awareness of the lingering concerns in neighboring countries about Japanese leadership. Politicians openly declare their rejection of regional cooperation in which more powerful countries “such as the US, China, or Japan” dominate smaller and weaker countries. (Kono 1995a) In describing Japan’s role, elites furthermore emphasize that Tokyo seeks to act in tandem with others and engage with neighbors based on “the consciousness as equal peers” (taitō no nakama ishiki), while refraining to view others “as above it or below it” (jōge gainen o mochikomanai). (Aso 2005)

The Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is attributed particular importance as an institution that exercises political leadership and that promotes cooperation in all of East Asia. In accordance with the ‘Fukuda Doctrine,’ the policy-line introduced by Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo in the late 1970s, decision-makers seek to establish good relations with Southeast Asian countries and with their regional organization, ASEAN. Politicians in Tokyo state their support for ASEAN in fostering sub-regional and region-wide dialogue. Japan’s decision-makers envision a deliberately low-profile role for their own country vis-à-vis the Southeast Asian organization. As Senior Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Shiozaki Yasuhisa argues, ASEAN is perceived to be in the “driver’s seat.” (Shiozaki 2006) At the same time, Japan seeks to play the role a constructive sparring partner, “thinking and acting together” with the Southeast Asian countries. (Kakizawa 1992, Koizumi 2002e, Fukuda 2008) By acting chiefly as a supporter of ASEAN initiatives,

Japanese policymakers contribute to regional cooperation, while at the same time remaining attentive to regional suspicions about Japanese unilateral leadership.

Despite generally favoring an inconspicuous role for their country, Tokyo's decision-makers began to voice more concrete proposals and ideas regarding multilateral security cooperation from around the mid- to late-1990s. In these proposals, politicians have attached priority to initiating functional cooperation regarding concrete security problems, while the establishment of formal institutions is attributed less importance. As Prime Minister Koizumi states, "In a region like East Asia where there is a great deal of diversity, I believe functional cooperation itself can be more effective [than setting up regional organizations and institutions]. We will do by doing. Acts of cooperation in themselves will create a sense of community." (Koizumi 2002f)

In particular, Koizumi and other leaders have proposed cooperation and joint efforts in the area of economic development, and on transnational security problems such as human trafficking, terrorism, and piracy. The growing interest in regional affairs among Japanese leaders is doubtlessly related to the deterioration in the Asian security environment starting with the first Korean nuclear crisis in 1993-1994. In public discussions, Japanese leaders express particular concern about the rise and growing assertiveness of China and stress the need to ensure that Japan is not being sidelined by China in regional initiatives. (Ito 2005: 1) Nevertheless, Japanese conceptions of a more active regional role still lag behind the commitment to regional cooperation expressed by Berlin's elites. In contrast to the German expectations of acting as a 'promoter of cooperation,' Japanese leaders continue to see their country play a largely supportive role in regional cooperation and thus Japan's role conception may be more accurately termed 'supporter of regional cooperation.'

#### *(7) Respected and Trusted Country (Japan Only)*

The final role conception "respected and trusted country" was found only in Japanese speeches. Policymakers express their desire for Japan to be a country treated with admiration and recognition by other states. The analysis of speeches reveals that this conception is closely linked to Japan's historical and current regional foreign policy relations. The conception reflects a long-held aspiration to rehabilitate and rebuild the country's post-war reputation, coupled with a widespread perception that Tokyo's

international efforts and contributions have so far received insufficient credit from the international community. The desire for respect was for example articulated by Prime Minister Hata Tsutomu in 1994, when he stated that he sought to make Japan a country that is “trusted and loved by international society” (*nihon o kokusai shakai no naka de shinrui sare, ai sareru kuni to suru*). (Hata 1994b) In referring to this role conception, many Japanese elites cite the Preamble of the Constitution, which stipulates that Japan shall strive to “occupy an honored place in international society” (*kokusai shakai no naka de, meiyō aru chii o uranaitai*). (Watanabe 1992a, Mori 2000c, Koizumi 2003c, Koizumi 2004a)

Most decision-makers focus on the perceived lack of respect from *other* countries, but some politicians also voice dissatisfaction about what they see as insufficient *self-esteem* and *self-confidence*. Most prominently, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo in his 2006 book stated his intention to make Japan a ‘beautiful country,’ admired and respected by people in the world” and a country “our children’s generations can have self-confidence and pride in” (*sekai no hitobito ga akogare to sonkei o idaki, kodomo-tachi no sedai ga jishin to hokori o moteru ‘utsukushii kuni, nihon’*). (Abe 2006b)

Below, three aspects regarding Japan’s role conception of ‘respected and trusted country’ will be discussed. Firstly, the analysis will consider in more detail how politicians seek to earn trust and respect for their country regionally and globally. This is done by examining the textual context in which policymakers voice their goal in speeches. Secondly, the analysis seeks to answer the question why Japanese elites perceive a lack of international recognition for Japan, identifying four key issues. Lastly, the analysis turns to the German case, highlighting reasons why politicians in Berlin generally do not express a role conception comparable to Japan’s, even though the immediate post-war time period was characterized by a similar desire to rebuild Germany’s international reputation.

The content analysis revealed that two related ideas dominate in Japanese thinking about how to gain international respect. Decision-makers first of all call on Japan to expand its involvement in initiatives for international stability and peace. This idea is linked with the above discussed role conception of ‘exporter of security.’ Politicians voice the hope that Tokyo will earn international recognition by making contributions “commensurate with its economic power.” (Obuchi 1999b) To many elites in Tokyo, a stronger commitment to participate in regional and global security initiatives is thus essential. In a 2004 speech, Prime Minister Koizumi referred explicitly to the need for an active foreign policy that contributes to international stability in order to be treated with respect:

“It is natural that a country should *act for world peace* by helping those people and countries that are struggling to overcome difficulties. Surely that is the *kind of attitude that will allow us to occupy ‘an honored place* in international society’ as described in the Preamble to the Constitution of Japan.” (Koizumi 2004a)

The second, related idea for gaining international respect is to establish Japan as a *role model* for other states, especially for Asian neighbors. In this view, Japan ought to be a country that others try to emulate and look to for guidance. As Foreign Minister Aso explained in 2005, Japan is in a unique position to advise and help others as the region’s oldest democracy and most advanced economy. (Aso 2005) Tokyo has had to grapple with various problems and issues including pollution, nationalism, or economic recession at an earlier time than other Asian countries. (Fukuda 2008) As a role model, Japan is thus able to “impart to other Asian countries its experiences and convey the benefits of democracy and market economy.” (Aso 2006e)

Despite efforts to establish Japan as a ‘respected and trusted country,’ decision-makers in Tokyo appear dissatisfied about the current level of international recognition for their country. Ever since 1945, a key goal for political elites in Tokyo has been to gain acceptance in the international community and build a positive reputation for Japan. The leadership in post-war Germany shared this fundamental desire to raise their country’s international standing. Above all, this had practical reasons for both countries. Politicians in Tokyo and Bonn hoped to increase their leeway in foreign policy-making by gradually dispelling prejudices and suspicions in the international community.<sup>46</sup> Yet unlike their German counterparts, Japanese elites today reveal frustration about their country not receiving the international respect it deserves. In the following sections, four interrelated causes of this frustration are identified. Because Japanese policymakers tend to avoid addressing these issues explicitly in formal speeches, the analysis also draws on public statements and interviews by policymakers as well as Japanese academic literature.

Firstly, in the post-Cold War era it became clear that Tokyo had failed to instill trust and respect for Japan in the international community by adhering to a pacifist policy based on the concept of ‘defensive defense’ (*senshu bōei*). As political scientist Iokibe Makoto observes, after 1945 “the Japanese thought that their stance of not fighting against another country and not becoming involved in a conflict between other countries would receive

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<sup>46</sup> Richard Samuels argues that post-war Japan continued to hold on to the goal of Meiji era Japan of “catching up and surpassing the West.” (Samuels 1994: 31, 45) This commitment by the political leadership may have been an additional reason for the focus on respect in this role conception.

praise (*shōsan sareru*) by international society as good pacifist behavior.” (Iokibe 2006b: 237) However, rather than earning respect from other countries, Japan faced severe criticism during the Gulf War of 1990-1991 for its passivity and refusal to send troops to the conflict. The Gulf War demonstrated to the Japanese that there was a significant gap between their own conceptions of international contribution and the view held by the US and other Western countries. A growing number of Japanese politicians and opinion leaders criticized Tokyo’s security policy as overly idealistic. They argued that the self-imposed limitations on the use of force prevented Japan from playing an active security role, thereby feeding a general “perception that Japan was exploiting the negative aspects of its history in order to claim a free ride under the US military security umbrella.” (Inoguchi 2005: 113)<sup>47</sup> A number of observers furthermore maintained that Japan’s stance was hypocritical because Tokyo claimed to be pacifist, while indeed relying on the US military deterrent to provide for its security. (Tamamoto 2003: 195) The frustration over Japan’s inability to respond adequately to international criticism was clearly reflected in speeches, as was seen in the discussion above on the role conception of ‘exporter of security.’ The dissatisfaction among Japanese elites further grew in view of the apparent mistrust among Asian neighbors. A number of countries in the region expressed concern and suspicion when Japan began to expand its military contributions to UN missions in the early 1990s. These reactions from the region were further confirmation that Tokyo’s purely defensive security policy had failed to engender trust and confidence among former victims of Japanese aggression.<sup>48</sup>

Secondly, the enduring recession following the burst of the bubble economy in the early 1990s has seriously damaged self-confidence in Japan, a country that has above all prided itself with its economic achievements since 1945. International attention has shifted to the rising economic power China – pushing Japan to the sidelines. With some resignation, this phenomenon is referred to as ‘Japan passing’ in the domestic debate. Due to the economic stagnation, Tokyo has also been forced to cut back on its foreign development aid – another source of national pride for many policymakers. The budget for official development aid (ODA) has been cut continually since its peak in 1989. Foreign Ministry official Oe Hiroshi notes with concern that as a result, Tokyo has had to relinquish its

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<sup>47</sup> Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru himself has admitted that Japan’s minimalist security strategy was “rather sneaky” – an assessment that politician Ozawa Ichiro also agrees with. (Green 1998: 10–11)

<sup>48</sup> Reflecting a mixture of pride and frustration, Foreign Minister Aso Taro stated in a 2006 speech: “[...] since the end of the war, Japan has been making achievements in pacifism, such that no one can possibly point a contemptuous finger at Japan behind its back (*dare kara mo mataku ushiro yubi o sasarenai*). Find for me even one other country that has an organization like Japan's Self-Defense Forces that for sixty years has shot neither a single round of artillery nor a single bullet from a gun.” (Aso 2006c)

position as the world's number one provider of aid, with the US surpassing Japan in 2001 and England taking second place in 2007. (Oe 2007: 237–38) The economic recession has thus contributed to a further loss of self-confidence and a decline in international attention to Japan's achievements.

Thirdly, Japanese politicians are frustrated that Tokyo's handling of its militarist past continues to attract widespread criticism regionally and globally. Many Japanese decision-makers especially of the post-war generation seek to move beyond the humiliating memory of war, questioning the need for new apologies and redemption. However, recurrent controversies over the treatment of history undermine Tokyo's international reputation. In a 2001 speech, Foreign Minister Kono Yohei therefore warned that "relationships of trust" could only develop with an attitude "that does not turn its eye's away from [historical] facts" and is based on a "feeling of humility." (Kono 2001a) A clear consensus on the treatment of history has not emerged among Tokyo's lawmakers, however. Frustration about foreign criticism was particularly evident in June 2007, when the US House of Representatives passed a resolution calling on Japan to apologize for the exploitation of thousands of 'comfort women' – women forced to act as prostitutes for Japanese soldiers before 1945.<sup>49</sup> The resolution caused resentment among many lawmakers in Tokyo, and a number of LDP and DPJ party members posted an ad of protest in the Washington Post in response.<sup>50</sup>

Fourthly, decision-makers appear frustrated about Japan's subservient role in the alliance with the US, which they see as a further reason for the general lack of trust and respect by other countries. (Tanaka 2008b, Interview by A. Sakaki) As Mori Takeo, Chief of the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau at the Foreign Ministry, observed in early 2009: "There exists an unmistakable criticism or frustration within Japan that [this country] is not really independent and acting too subserviently towards the US (taibei tsuijū)." (Akita et al. 2009: 48) Political elites rarely express their discontent about the lopsided relationship openly in speeches, because such remarks could easily be misconstrued in Washington as an indication of Tokyo's weakening alliance commitment. Nevertheless, some speeches allude to the desire for a more balanced relationship. The

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<sup>49</sup> The resolution came after Prime Minister Abe Shinzo caused a firestorm in Asia and the United States when he said in March 2007 that there was "no proof" that women were forced into brothels in and outside Japan by the Japanese military. (Clifton 2007)

<sup>50</sup> 44 Japanese Diet members – mostly from the LDP and the DPJ – and a number of opinion leaders posted the ad on June 14, protesting the US resolution and arguing that the comfort women engaged in "licensed prostitution that was commonplace around the world at the time." (Komurata 2007)

vision of a less subservient Japan is reflected in the frequent calls for Tokyo to take its own “subjective” (*shutaiteki*) foreign policy initiatives (Miyazawa 1992a, Ikeda 1997, Koizumi 2001a) and the demands for establishing a “global partnership” with the US (Kaifu 1990a, Miyazawa 1992b, Machimura 2005a).<sup>51</sup>

In publications or interviews, policymakers are more explicit about their frustration about the imbalanced relationship. In his 2006 book, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo for example declared the goal to make Japan an “independent country” (*jiritsu suru kokka*). (Abe 2006: 43) He emphasized that due to the strict limitations on Japan’s military capability under the Constitution, the “conditions for being an independent country have been lacking” (*dokuritsu kokka toshite no yōken o kaku koto ni natta*). (Abe 2006: 123) Fellow LDP party member Ishiba Shigeru similarly argued in 2005 that Tokyo was in a “follower” position vis-à-vis its alliance partner, because of the unrequited US defense pledge for Japan, symbolizing the one-sidedness of the relationship. (Ishiba 2005: 17) The uneasiness about the subordinate dependence on the US was expressed most clearly by Ozawa Ichiro, at the time the leader of the opposition party Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). During a meeting with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in January 2009, Ozawa stated that although he has always supported close bilateral relations, the “US-Japan alliance relationship must not be a subservient relationship in which one side always obeys the other” (*Nichibei dōmei kankei wa ippō ga ippō ni shitagau jūzokutekina kankei de ate wa naranai*). (Tokyo Shinbun 2009)

As reflected in Ozawa’s remark, Japanese decision-makers are worried that Japan – as a US junior partner – lacks the ability to influence international affairs independently and on its own initiative. Particularly with regard to North Korea, political elites fear a divergence of US and Japanese interests. In recent years, policymakers in Tokyo have repeatedly protested against US policies that in their view do not adequately take into account Japan’s interests and are too soft on Pyongyang. (Iokibe, Itō, and Yakushiji 2007: 144, Maehara 2006: 32–33, Green 2001: 23–24) In its foreign policy, Tokyo has thus sought to gain an independent voice in regional and international affairs, thereby overcoming the image of a subservient country. As Gilbert Rozman demonstrates, Japan has launched a series of foreign policy initiatives, including Prime Minister Koizumi’s North Korea trip in 2002, with the goal of gaining leverage. (Rozman 2004, Rozman 2002,

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<sup>51</sup> The National Defense Policy Outline 2005 of the Ministry of Defense also highlighted the importance of ensuring a measure of independence. It stated that Japan must provide the ultimate security guarantee of its people and safeguard its own “independence” so that it could “determine its political, economic and social directions on its own initiative.” (Defense Agency Japan 2005: 92)

Rozman 2003) Rozman concludes, “we can identify a streak of failed breakout strategies aimed at giving Japan an independent voice on the global stage.” (Rozman 2003: 529)<sup>52</sup>

While Japanese policymakers strive to lessen the reliance on the US, it is crucial to note that the vast majority do not seek genuine independence including an abrogation of the alliance. Political elites seek to “equalize” the US-Japan alliance by creating a more independent policy-line, but they simultaneously advocate continued cooperation with the US. (Hughes 2004a: 51) In their view, Japan ought to be treated as a mature and respected partner that is at ‘eye level’ with the US. Of course Japan also has a small vocal minority of radical nationalists, who – driven by a sense of humiliation over Japanese dependence – seek the abandonment of the alliance.<sup>53</sup> However, they do not make up a critical mass in Japanese politics. The majority of decision-makers – including moderate nationalists – do not perceive a contradiction between loyalty to the US and the desire to gain an independent voice in international affairs. Ozawa’s statement cited above, which emphasizes the importance of equality *within* the alliance mechanism is representative of the widespread stance among lawmakers. Even the rightist-nationalist governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintaro, seems to subscribe to this view. In his 1991 book, he asserted that while Japan should abandon its unquestioning followership and “[drop] the role of yes-man” in order to “win the respect of other nations,” the alliance with the US ought be preserved. (Ishihara 1991: 62 and 104) Japanese elites believe that their country must assert its own ideas and contribute internationally rather than engaging only in “karaoke diplomacy,” in which the US makes the essential policy choices and Japan is restricted to influencing the implementation. (Inoguchi and Jain 2000)<sup>54</sup> By taking a more proactive stance, decision-makers thus hope to shift the US-Japan alliance from a focus on “burden sharing” to a mutual commitment in “power sharing.” (Yamaoka and Shiozaki 2000: 29)<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Indeed attempts to combat the subservient image and to elevate Japan’s international standing have a long history. Post-war Japan used its vast economic power to hedge against overdependence on the US. (Hughes 2005: 108) Furthermore, the claim to a ‘UN-centered’ foreign policy in the late 1950s served the purpose of counterbalancing US influence and reducing the impression of Japanese overreliance on its alliance partner. As Kitaoka Shinichi, former permanent representative to the United Nations (2004-06) argued, the expression ‘UN-centrism’ (kokuren chūshin shugi) was used with the aim of guarding Japan against “overwhelming US influence,” but it did not reflect actual circumstances, for Tokyo “has in no instance been UN-centered.” (Kitaoka 2007: iii) For a more detailed discussion, see Wittig 2008.

<sup>53</sup> See for example the arguments by Diet member Nishimura Shingo, who is not affiliated with a party. He calls for Japan to obtain its independent nuclear deterrent to protect its “independence” (dokuritsu). (Nishimura 2007)

<sup>54</sup> In Inoguchi and Jain’s concept of ‘karaoke diplomacy,’ the US chooses the background music (corresponding to the essential policy choices), while Japan influences only the style of delivery by the singer (referring to the implementation of policy).

<sup>55</sup> A similar argument is made by Democratic Party member Maehara Seiji. He calls for balance in the US-Japan relationship, contending that this balance should be achieved not only on the lower level of burden sharing through the

Given the importance of the Japanese role conception ‘respected and trusted country’ with its emphasis on equality and the desire for an independent role, one may ask whether there is any analogous notion in German political thinking. Overall, the analysis of German speeches did not yield a comparable role conception widely shared among elites. Nevertheless, arguments corresponding to some aspects of Japanese thinking can be found in speeches and statements by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. The comparison thus warrants some more attention and reflection. During his chancellorship, Schröder repeatedly declared that Germany was a “self-confident country” (selbstbewusstes Land) and a “great power” (große Macht) that would not unquestioningly follow others but that would assert its own interests and ideas. (Hellmann 2004: 32, Le Gloannec 2004: 34, Rittberger 2001: 12) In his first general policy speech before parliament in 1998, Schröder observed that Germans take great pride in their country, stating: “It is the *self-confidence* of a grown-up nation (erwachsenen Nation) that *does not have to feel inferior or superior to anyone else*. [It is a nation] that *confronts its history* and responsibility, but that *looks forward* in the process.” (Schröder 1998b) Similar to many policymakers in Japan, Schröder sought to project an image of Germany as an influential international power that does not have to feel subordinate to others or overly constrained by the past. Schröder also voiced resentment against too much US interference and pressure in another speech that he gave in the lead up to the US-led war on Iraq in September 2002, at a time when Washington was pushing allies to dispatch troops in case of conflict. He contended that the “existential questions of the German nation” would be decided in Berlin “and nowhere else.” (Schöllgen 2005: 5)<sup>56</sup> The statement made it clear that Germany would not bend to US pressure – similar to Japanese declarations that Tokyo would take its decisions ‘independently.’<sup>57</sup>

Overall, however, the analysis of German speeches shows that the majority of German policymakers do not agree with Schröder’s call for Germany to act as a ‘self-confident nation’ that asserts national interests more forcefully. In fact Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer explicitly rejected Schröder’s notion in an interview in November 1998. He explained:

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“sympathy budget” (omoiyari yosan) that Japan pays for US troops in its country, but also on a broader level, with both countries sharing the responsibility of maintaining international security. (Nishimoto et al. 2004: 59)

<sup>56</sup> Egon Bahr has made a similar call for equality through a “mature partnership” (mündige Partnerschaft) between Germany and the US in place of the “cozy tutelage” (bequeme Vormundschaft). (Bahr 1999)

<sup>57</sup> Amid an election campaign, Schröder’s remark catered to popular preferences for pacifism. (Stahl et al. 2004: 435) It should be noted that despite his criticism of Washington’s Iraq policy, Schröder emphasized the importance of relations to the US in several speeches. See for example, (Schröder 2004c)

“A stronger attention to our own ego, to our own prestige, would only harm our interests and generate mistrust. [...] Germany has benefitted much from the integration of our interests into the European network of interests (Einbindung unserer Interessen in das europäische Interessengeflecht). We should continue to adhere to this [policy].” (Fischer 1998)

Furthermore, it seems that German policymakers on the whole feel content with the respect and trust Germany receives from other countries and the leeway and influence that Berlin has in international circles. Even Chancellor Schröder himself acknowledged that Germany receives considerable international respect in an article he wrote for the newspaper Bild in August 2002. He observed, “Our Germany *enjoys respect and esteem* in the world. Because we are partner and role model. Because we are building the Europe of the people and help to secure and protect peace and human rights globally.” (Baumann 2006: 185)<sup>58</sup>

Why then have German policymakers – compared to their Japanese counterparts – generally felt more satisfied with the level of trust and respect their country receives? Three important reasons can be deduced from the discussion in this chapter. Firstly, post-war Germany has been successful in gradually establishing itself as an equal partner to its European neighbors. (Risse 2001: 209) In its integration policy, Bonn – later Berlin – was willing to relinquish control over traditionally domestic aspects of policy-making to the supranational level, as long as other European states did likewise. Gerhard Wettig observes, as “the restrictions on sovereignty were carried out *mutually*, they *lost their discriminating character*” and thus ensured equality between Germany and its neighbors. (Wettig 1977: 326) Multilateral European cooperation furthermore gave Germany ample opportunity to confront lingering suspicions among neighbors and build relationships of mutual trust. The Federal Republic also gained considerable influence as a privileged link and mediator between the US and France, as discussed above. Japan, on the other hand, did not develop a comparable strategy for gaining influence and equality through the mutual relinquishment of sovereignty. The US policy focus on bilateralism in Asia further limited Tokyo’s breathing room and scope for independent action.

Secondly, German post-war foreign policy initiatives have generally met with international approval and even praise – a fact that has not gone unnoticed among lawmakers. The Federal Republic is recognized as an indispensable contributor to the European integration process. Furthermore, Germany has won acclaim for its humble and

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<sup>58</sup> The article received widespread attention because Schröder spoke of his vision of a “German way,” a notion that for many observers carried the connotation of an ominous German *Sonderweg* (special path). However, as Rainer Baumann rightly observes, Schröder repeatedly rejected the notion of a German unilateral special path in his speeches. (Baumann 2006: 185) See also Schröder’s 1998 speech before the Diplomatic Corps. (Schröder 1998a)

reflected post-war policy of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the history of Nazism and aggression), offering unambiguous apologies and compensating former victims of aggression. In contrast, Japan has been repeatedly criticized by the international community regarding its treatment of the past.

Thirdly, compared to their Japanese counterparts, German policy-makers have been more successful in establishing *forward-looking* justifications for traditional policies of self-restraint. This has likely affected policymakers' self-perception of the degree to which their country is respected internationally. As discussed above, German post-war policy of self-restraint focused on the dedication to multilateralism and the rejection of a pursuit of narrow national interests, while Japan's policy emphasized the absolute limits on the use of military force. After 1945, political elites in Germany and Japan justified these policies with the apparent need to cope with their own and foreign countries' suspicions and mistrust. However, from around the mid-1990s, German politicians increasingly began to cite practical reasons – such as the necessity to cooperate in a globalized world – to explain their policies of multilateralism and institutional binding. Rather than focusing on their country's negative historical legacy, they relied on such forward-looking arguments, thereby projecting a *more positive and self-confident image* of Germany. In Japan by contrast, policies of self-restraint continue to be justified mainly with the 'traditional' logic of providing reassurance to neighbors. Sticking to this highly self-critical argument, the Japanese have failed to establish a transformed, forward-looking and positive image as a country that projects responsibility and earns trust and respect in return.

### **Overall Comparison of the German and Japanese Role Sets**

The German and Japanese role conceptions found in this study are characterized by a number of broad similarities in the goals formulated by policymakers. The analysis suggests that neither country aspires to a unilaterally dominating leadership position in their region focused on maximizing national power, as realist scholars had suggested in the early 1990s. Both countries perceive a historical and moral responsibility as former aggressors in World War II and a duty as two of the largest economies worldwide to contribute to international and particularly regional security. They both seek to do so by contributing to cooperation and dialogue among neighbors and helping to foster stability in their respective region. Policymakers in both countries emphasize the importance of non-military

instruments for conflict resolution and the need to act together with partners. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of universal values in their foreign policy.

Despite these similarities in the stated policy goals, the analysis of German and Japanese speeches reveals significant differences in the specific behavioral expectations held by decision-makers. The greatest discrepancy was found in the way politicians from both countries seek to ensure stability in their respective region. Japanese speeches stress the deterrence function of the US presence in the region as the key to regional security and stability. In contrast, German policymakers emphasize the need to establish and expand formal multilateral institutions as a way to transcend narrow-minded nationalism and balance of power thinking. They particularly seek to mediate multilaterally to find compromises that are acceptable to all neighbors. On the whole, the German role set indicates a conviction among policymakers that the traditional security dilemma between sovereign states can be overcome through multilateral institution-building. Germany's decision to provide global support to military missions under UN or NATO command reflects this German faith in multilateral institutions. The results of the content analysis suggest that the German role set is based largely on a "transformationalist" understanding of international relations (Aggestam 2004: 241), in which political elites seek to transform the security dilemma rather than accepting it as a given. In comparison, the Japanese role set reflects more of a "traditionalist" mindset regarding international relations (Aggestam 2004: 241), as decision-makers pay more attention to realist concepts such as the balance of power and deterrence. However, some aspects in the Japanese conception do not fit traditional realist behavioral prescriptions focused on power maximization. In particular, policymakers attach much importance to universal values, suggesting a certain degree of idealism based on the hope of establishing a more peaceful international world order. Furthermore, political elites seek to minimize the risks posed by the security dilemma by exercising self-restraint in the maintenance of military capability. Overall, the Japanese role set thus seems to be based on a mixture of traditionalist and transformationalist thinking.

These results allow some reflection on the degree to which Germany and Japan may be characterized as 'civilian powers.' In the early 1990s, Hanns W. Maull formulated the hypothesis that the two countries bore many similarities to the ideal type of a 'civilian power.' He characterized the behavior of a civilian power in various dimensions, including a general willingness to shape international relations, a focus on absolute rather than relative gains in economic affairs, a tendency to promote regime and institution building

including a partial transfer of sovereignty, the avoidance of unilateral action, the promotion of universal values, and a reticence to the use of military force. (Frenkler et al. 1997: 22ff)

The civilian power ideal type was formulated as a general role concept against which the national role conceptions of specific countries can be compared. The results of this study do not allow to make an ultimate judgment on the civilian power orientation of Germany and Japan, as the content analysis only considered statements that refer to a regional context and fall into the traditional narrow definition of security studies, two limitations that do not apply to the civilian power concept. Nevertheless, the comparison of the two role sets does provide an indication about the civilian power orientation of the two countries. The German transformative role set exhibits a remarkably close resemblance with the civilian power ideal. Politicians state that they are willing to transfer sovereignty to multilateral institutions and seek to mediate among partner countries to achieve compromises. Furthermore, they express a willingness to provide military support to multilateral missions to solve conflicts, if other measures have failed. At least on the declaratory level, Germany's role set is by and large consistent to the civilian power ideal type. The Japanese role set on the other hand bears some, but not all the characteristic of a civilian power. The transformationalist elements, such as the emphasis on universal values and the need to act with partners, suggest some similarity to the civilian power ideal type. However, the traditionalist components in Japan's role set indicate limitations in the country's civilian power orientation. In particular, the attachment to the US alliance and the focus on deterrence and the balance of power do not fit the civilian power ideal as formulated by Maull. Furthermore, Japanese policymakers do not display a willingness to delegate sovereignty to the supranational level, one of the characteristics of a civilian power. Japan's role set also diverges from Maull's concept regarding the use of military force as a last resort in settling disputes, as a civilian power would be expected to lend active support to multilateral missions in order to put pressure on the quarreling parties.

The analysis of speeches furthermore finds that German and Japanese role sets since the end of the Cold War are characterized by strong continuity, coupled with minor modifications and adjustments in some role conceptions. The most perceptible change in both countries took place with regard to the role conception of 'non-militarist country,' as policymakers sought to make a more active contribution to UN missions to keep or enforce peace in crisis areas. Nevertheless, decision-makers remained wedded to existing norms and values in considering possible changes in the role conception. German politicians thus focused on the importance of international institutions as a framework for their country's

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military support, while Japanese elites retained the notion of Japan as an ‘exclusively defense-oriented country’ that could not participate in peace-enforcing missions, in which soldiers would have to use military force for purposes other than pure self-defense.

Despite overwhelming continuity in the role conceptions of Germany and Japan, further changes and adjustments are conceivable in both countries. In the face of economic difficulties and fiscal constraints, the German public is increasingly wary about the government’s fixation on multilateral solutions and compromises, and many demand that Berlin pursue the national interest more assertively instead. Public and budgetary pressure could thus presage a German foreign policy that is “weaker, leaner, [and] meaner” in the context of regional institutions. (Harnisch and Schieder 2006: 95) Such a tendency was discernable to some degree during the Schröder government, which sought to reduce Germany’s fiscal contribution to the EU budget in 1999, although the initiative eventually failed due to the resistance of France and Spain. On the Japanese side, domestic pressure is building to reevaluate Japan’s stance as an exclusively defense-oriented country, a notion that is seen as placing severe limits on Tokyo’s contribution to both the UN and to the bilateral alliance with the US. Though rapid shifts in policy goals and shared norms remain unlikely in either Germany or Japan, gradual and incremental change will thus continue.

# CHAPTER 3

## GERMAN AND JAPANESE MISSILE DEFENSE POLICIES

### Part 1: Introduction and Background

In a March 1983 speech, US President Ronald Reagan proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) – popularly known as Star Wars – to protect the United States and allies from nuclear ballistic missile attacks using a missile defense system comprising both ground- and space-based devices for interception. The plan was revolutionary, as previous US missile defense programs had been designed only for limited geographic coverage with ground-based systems. The scale and strategic implications of Reagan’s proposal and the subsequent invitation to allies to participate in the research and development of SDI forced Germany and Japan respond and consider joining the effort. Since Reagan’s 1983 speech, US missile defense policy has shifted in terms of focus and commitment, but the quest for a more effective and comprehensive system has persisted until today.

Germany and Japan have thus been pressed to assess their own need for such a system, determining its technological feasibility, the costs, and the desirability given their particular foreign policy goals. Focusing on the post-Cold War era, this chapter examines the two countries’ missile defense (MD) policies in three areas of potential use: (1) territorial protection of Germany’s – respectively Japan’s – *homeland*, (2) protection of German – respectively Japanese – *soldiers abroad*, and (3) *assistance to other countries* in defending territory or troops through loan or lease of MD equipment.

The analysis reveals consistent differences in how decision-makers in Berlin and Tokyo perceive these three policy areas. Despite a growing Iranian missile threat, German politicians have been strikingly reluctant to consider the strategic requirements for territorial defense. They emphasize instead the need to consider Russian security interests and concerns. Their Japanese counterparts reflect confidence in the benefits of a territorial MD shield. The immediacy of the North Korean threat has of course affected Japanese thinking, but normative factors play an equally important role in the evaluation of policy choices, as the chapter will demonstrate. Compared to the first policy area, attitudes with regard to the protection of soldiers abroad are reverse: While Berlin has been highly supportive of building a missile defense system for its troops deployed abroad, political elites in Tokyo have not discussed the need for such protection publicly. Normative factors [88]

again play a key role in these different outlooks. In the third policy area, decision-makers in the two countries are faced by similar quandaries. Political elites feel obligated to assist allies and partner countries with their MD equipment, but given their desire to be ‘non-militarist countries,’ they are selective about providing such support, especially in Japan’s case. In sum, the chapter argues that each country’s distinct approaches to the three policy areas can be best understood by considering the relevant role conceptions.

This chapter is divided into eight parts. The remainder of this introductory part provides a background on US missile defense policy during and after the Cold War. The first section briefly outlines Washington’s policy during the Cold War, beginning with the famous ‘Star Wars’ speech. It focuses on German and Japanese reactions to the US proposal. The second section summarizes Washington’s MD strategy after the Cold War, as the US continues to play the pivotal role in this policy area for Germany and Japan. The following six parts of the chapter analyze Berlin’s and Tokyo’s post-Cold War policies with respect to the three potential uses of MD, as specified above. The chapter begins with a discussion of Germany (parts 2-4), and then examines and compares Japan (parts 5-7). The analysis pinpoints important characteristics in lawmakers’ attitudes and evaluations. Where appropriate, it identifies key phases in the domestic debates. The final section of each part evaluates whether role conceptions can help explain the approach of each country. The last part of this chapter (part 8) concludes by assessing the overall explanatory power of role conceptions in German and Japanese MD policies. It also discusses the two countries’ coping strategies when faced with role conflicts.

### **US Missile Defense during the Cold War and German and Japanese Reactions**

In his March 1983 speech, US President Ronald Reagan outlined his plan for building a system that could “intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they [reach] our own soil or that of our allies.” He argued that this defensive system would be morally superior to classic deterrence based on mutually assured destruction, stating that the “human spirit must be capable of rising above dealing with other nations and human beings by threatening their existence.” (Reagan 1983) At that time, US allies including Germany and Japan had already deployed ground-based anti-missile systems able to shoot down missiles in the terminal phase, thus providing a limited area protection for important strategic assets in the homeland. However, Reagan’s proposal was radical, because he suggested a missile defense system of global reach providing not only point protection, but

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complete territorial coverage. The US planned to devise a layered missile defense system, with interception devices for each of the three flight phases of a ballistic missile: (1) the boost phase, which begins immediately after launch while the rocket motor is burning and before the missile has reached space, (2) the midcourse phase, when the missile flies in space, and (3) the terminal or reentry phase, when the missile reenters the atmosphere before impact on the target.

Initially, Reagan's plan was met with suspicion and caution, as allies feared the US might upset the strategic balance with the Soviet Union and breach the ABM-Treaty. Furthermore, US allies, especially in Western Europe, were concerned that once the US achieved full protection for its homeland, it might be less committed to defend allies in a conventional military attack by the Soviet Union. However, as a result of a tactical shift in the promotion of the concept, opposition to the SDI project gradually abated among US allies. Reagan first described his idea as a strategic plan to build a space shield that would render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete." (Reagan 1983) Amid allied opposition against a strategic shift away from nuclear deterrence, the US recast Reagan's proposal as a big research program in which both industry and civilian scientific research could benefit. (Miller 1985) In March 1985, US Defense Secretary Casper W. Weinberger officially invited US allies to participate in the research for missile defense. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 263) Germany and Japan as well as other US allies indicated interest, while emphasizing the importance of maintaining a strategic balance between the US and the Soviet Union and adhering to the ABM-Treaty. However, both Bonn and Tokyo had to negotiate a possible participation in the project cautiously. In both countries, the topic was highly sensitive among the public, which feared that the project would set off a new round of arms build-up.

Germany first sought consultations and agreement with other Western European countries, in accordance to its traditional multilateral inclination. However, it soon became clear that these countries were deeply divided, with Great Britain fully supporting US policy and France having serious misgivings about the project. (Xinhua News Agency 1985, Filipiak 2006: 91–92) After failing efforts to stake out a common European position on SDI, Bonn decided to hold bilateral negotiations with Washington. An agreement was reached in March 1986, stating that German private companies and research institutions would be allowed to participate in US research activities, while the German government would remain uninvolved.

Tokyo concluded that the compromise solution of letting private companies participate in SDI was an attractive option for Japan as well. (Jiji Press 1986a) In September 1986, it announced its plan to let private firms participate, formalizing its policy in a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Washington in July 1987, in which it approved a joint research project between Japanese and US companies, called Western Pacific Missile Defense Architecture Study (WESTPAC), which began in December 1988. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 87–88)

Both Germany and Japan were confined in their SDI policy options by the strong anti-militarist sentiments in their populations. Thus, unconditional support for the project was ruled out. Furthermore, critics in both countries doubted the technological feasibility and denounced the project as science fiction fantasy. But at the same time, Bonn and Tokyo deemed good alliance relations with the US extremely important and thus were inclined to give limited support to a project of such priority for Washington.<sup>59</sup> Germany and Japan also hoped to secure profitable SDI contracts for private companies and avoid falling behind in this innovative research area, which might lead to new technologies with potential for civilian application.<sup>60</sup> On the Japanese side, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone saw involvement in SDI as a chance to enhance Japan's negotiating position in talks with the Soviet Union. In September 1986, a high-level government official commented on Nakasone's desire to bolster Japan's position in future negotiations with Moscow by saying: "The Soviets will never talk seriously with Japan as long as they regard us as powerless." (Jiji Press 1986b)

## **US Missile Defense Policy after the Cold War**

After the Cold War, the US continued to push for the development of an MD shield. Differences between administrations existed regarding the approach to MD development and the stated rationale, resulting in shifts of focus regarding particular components of the layered system. While some administrations put more emphasis on the protection of partner

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<sup>59</sup> Editor for foreign affairs at the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* Josef Joffe, aptly summarized the German situation: "You simply don't hang up or say no when Washington calls if you are Chancellor Helmut Kohl." (Miller 1985) Similarly, Japan saw missile defense as a way to improve relations with the US, which had deteriorated since the early 1980s due to the bilateral trade deficit. As Hideaki Kaneda et al. observe, Japan's agreement for industry participation in SDI was motivated "more by the [need to] manage and strengthen the US-Japan alliance relationship than by [the need to] respond to a threat." (Kaneda et al. 2006: 88)

<sup>60</sup> Konrad Seitz, head of the West German Foreign Ministry's Policy Planning Staff, described his country's decision to negotiate an arrangement as a means of "enhancing German industry's ability to compete for and secure SDI contracts." (Miller 1985) In the case of Japan, lobbying efforts by Japanese companies, especially Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, seem to have influenced the decision to allow participation by private companies.

countries and US facilities and troops abroad, others have stressed territorial defense for the US mainland as the primary concern. The distinction was reflected in President Bill Clinton's definition of national missile defense (NMD) and theater missile defense (TMD). NMD was to intercept long-range missiles targeted at the United States, while TMD was for shorter, 'theater'-range missiles aimed at deployed troops or US overseas facilities. For Clinton, this distinction was particularly important, because the TMD program he promoted was compatible with the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM)-Treaty signed between the US and the Soviet Union in 1972, whereas NMD was more problematic. Because of technological overlap between NMD and TMD, the George W. Bush administration abandoned this division. Nevertheless, shifts of emphasis in the declared rationale continued. While the Bush Junior administration stressed national defense, President Barack Obama – like Clinton – attached greater priority to the protection of partner countries and US overseas facilities. As will be seen in later parts, the shifts in US policy had important effects on perceptions of MD in Germany and Japan.

#### *The Early 1990s: The George Bush and Bill Clinton Administrations*

The George Bush (Senior) government, coming into office in January 1989, announced its intention to continue research on the SDI project. However, with the winding up of Cold War tensions, the project lost some importance, as reflected in the substantial reduction of the missile defense budget. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 28–29) In 1991-1992, the Gulf War stimulated anew the discussion on missile defense, when Iraq fired Scud missiles at Israel in the hope of drawing the Jewish state into the war and thereby causing a rift among coalition forces. In response to the assault, Bush shifted the priority of SDI from the defense of North America against large scale missile strikes to theater missile defense, calling his project 'Global Protection against Limited Strikes' (GPALS).

In 1993, the Clinton administration reviewed US anti-missile policy, announcing continued focus on theater missile defense with the intention to develop ground-based interceptor missiles to protect US overseas personnel and facilities as well as allied countries. Compared to his predecessor, Clinton called for more involvement of US allies in the research and development of missile defense systems, and thus summoned Germany and Japan to participate. Furthermore, Clinton pursued bilateral talks on missile defense with the Soviet Union's successor, Russia. These talks led to several agreements and declarations, including the May 1995 agreement in which both stated neither country would [92]

develop a TMD system potentially neutralizing the strategic nuclear capabilities of the other. (Matsui 2000: 51)

However, Clinton's policy came under pressure from the Republican Party, which in the November 1994 elections won the majority of seats in both houses of congress. The Republicans called for a shift in priority towards NMD, threatening to defeat budgetary proposals for TMD programs. Developments in 1998 cast doubts on Clinton's focus on TMD. In July 1998, an independent commission with former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as chairman issued a report evaluating the ballistic missile threat posed to the US. The commission's report, later called 'Rumsfeld Report,' warned of the growing threat of ballistic missiles by countries such as China, Russia, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, which already did or soon would possess nuclear warheads and the capability to strike the US. Shortly thereafter, Iran in late July tested its new medium-range Shahab-3 missile for the first time, and a month later North Korea test-launched its medium-range Taepodong-1 missile. These developments confirmed the Rumsfeld Report's warnings. A September 1999 CIA report also cautioned against a growing threat. It observed that Russia's and China's inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) were capable of reaching the US and estimated that North Korea, Iran and Iraq could develop such capabilities within the next 15 years. (Matsui 2000: 50) In spite of these developments, President Clinton remained cautious about the US NMD program. In September 2000, he deferred a decision on whether the US should deploy an initial MD capability to protect its territory, citing technological problems and other reasons.

#### *The George W. Bush Administration*

His successor, Republican George W. Bush (Junior) accelerated the development of a missile defense system, especially for the protection of US homeland. (Kubbig 2005b: 416) Although his policy focused on building a territorial missile defense shield, he announced in May 2001 that he would no longer distinguish between NMD and TMD programs. One of the reasons to eliminate this distinction was that Bush hoped to assuage European fears of a 'de-coupling' of US and European security. (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 318–19)

Although no missiles were used, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks provided an opportunity for Bush to accelerate the development of MD technology. With congress

united behind him, the president decided to withdraw from the ABM Treaty on December 13, 2001, thus eliminating one of the hurdles to a territorial missile defense shield. In June 2002, six months after the notification to Russia, the US unilaterally withdrew from the Treaty. Signing the National Security Presidential Directive No. 23 on December 16, 2002, Bush promoted preparations for a US missile defense system. The directive stated the US would begin with the initial deployment of the system in 2004-2005.

After completing the installation of more than ten interceptors in Alaska and California, the Bush administration in early 2007 officially embarked on bilateral negotiations with Poland and the Czech Republic on stationing missile defense components on their territories. The US proposed to place a radar system in the Brdy district in the Czech Republic and ten missile interceptors near Koszalin, Poland, in order to counter a potential threat from longer-range Iranian missiles aimed at the US East Coast and parts of Western Europe.<sup>61</sup> Both countries gave their consent to the plan, with Washington formally signing an agreement with Prague on July 8, 2008, followed by an agreement with Warsaw on August 20, 2008. (Shanker and Kulish 2008)

### *The Barack Obama Administration*

Following a review of missile defense plans, President Obama decided to shift the program's primary focus back towards protecting targets abroad, at least as a first step. In September 2009, Obama announced he would prioritize the development of components designed to shoot down short- and medium-range missiles, which presented the most immediate concern for partner countries and US facilities abroad.<sup>62</sup> His policy recalibration, he explained, was based on new threat assessments by the intelligence community, which did not see an immediate threat to the US from intercontinental ballistic missiles of such states as Iran or North Korea. (Harvey 2009) David Altwegg, executive director of the US Missile Defense Agency confirmed in February 2010: "We have shifted our emphasis from

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<sup>61</sup> Although Washington argued the ground-based interceptors in Poland could be used to protect parts of Western Europe, the primary rationale for the placement of the MD equipment seems to have been concern over US territorial defense. This point is reflected in a 2007 US Missile Defense Agency report, which highlights the importance of the interceptors for defending radars in the UK and in Greenland, which in turn are essential for territorial protection. (Lange 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) The document argues, "Because we must protect these radars [in Thule, Greenland and Fylingdales, UK] or risk losing the 'eyes' of our system, we are planning to field ground-based interceptors and an associated ground-based midcourse radar site in Europe." (US Department of Defense 2007: 5) I would like to thank Sascha Lange of the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) for bringing this point to my attention and furnishing me with the relevant material from the US Department of State.

<sup>62</sup> Obama's policy focus on protecting Europe (rather than the US homeland) has come under fire from the Republican Party. Especially if the Republicans win more congressional seats in the November 2010 midterm elections, Obama may be forced to put more emphasis on US national interests. (Keller 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

the ground-based defense against intercontinental ballistic missiles to the regional threat, short- and medium-range missiles, which comprise about 99% of the ballistic missile threat extant.” (Collina 2010)

Obama’s new approach was also based on his administration’s reassessment regarding the development state of MD technology. The president advocated what he called a ‘phased adaptive approach,’ in which his government would deploy those MD components, which had a proven track record in interception tests. Bush’s planned installation of ground-based interceptors in Poland was judged to be premature, as this technology had failed in numerous tests. (Lange 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Instead, the administration announced its plan to deploy the more successfully tested Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) land-based interceptors in Romania in 2015 and in Poland in 2018.<sup>63</sup> US officials argued that the installation in Romania would help extend the area of missile defense coverage into southern Europe. (Kaufman 2010)

Compared to his predecessor, Obama stressed the need for multilateral cooperation on missile defense, calling for more extensive NATO consultations. He furthermore sought to mend relations with Russia, which had deteriorated amid Bush’s unilateral MD policy and especially his plans for MD installations in Poland and the Czech Republic.<sup>64</sup> In February 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton remarked that the Obama administration sought to make Moscow a “partner in [...] efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation and missile defense” and therefore “invite[s] Russia to join NATO in developing a missile defense system” together. (Collina 2010) Bilateral relations significantly improved, culminating in the signing of a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) on April 8, 2010, in which both countries agreed on limits on the number of nuclear warheads. Obama’s goal of reducing US reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence was closely connected to the missile defense program, as the Nuclear Posture Review Report of April 2010 shows. According to the report, changes in the international security environment – including “major improvements in missile defense” enable the US to fulfill its security objectives “at significantly lower nuclear force levels and with reduced reliance on nuclear

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<sup>63</sup> Many politicians in Poland and the Czech Republic were shocked by Obama’s announcement that he would not install the ground-based interceptors and radar. The installations had been viewed as confirmations of close US security ties. For the EU, the effect may have been a positive one, however: Both Warsaw and Prague recognized that they had to cooperate on security issues not only with the US, but also with EU partners. This realization accelerated the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by Poland and the Czech Republic. (Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

<sup>64</sup> Previously, Russia had signaled its opposition to Bush’s MD plans. On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008, one day after Obama’s election victory in the US, President Medvedev put pressure on Obama by announcing his intention to deploy Russian short-range missiles near the Polish border if the US stationed missile defense elements in Poland and the Czech Republic as planned by Bush. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 2008)

weapons.” (US Department of Defense 2010: 6) In sum, Obama continued to attach great significance to the MD program, although he put more emphasis on the defense from short- and medium-range ballistic missiles than Bush, while seeking to engage other countries through a cooperative approach.

## **Part 2: German Policy on Territorial Missile Defense**

### **Introduction**

Amid an increasingly fluid security environment and a growing number of countries with missile technology, Germany's protection from a potential attack has been an important strategic issue after the Cold War. A key question has been whether the country should seek to develop and acquire MD technology offering full territorial protection, rather than relying only on systems for point-defense. During the Cold War, the Federal Republic had already acquired a limited capability to defend important strategic points within its territory from missile attacks with the Hawk and Patriot systems.

This part of the case study will examine the evolution of German post-Cold War territorial MD policy. The following sections first identify three phases in the political debate: (1) the period from 1990 to 2000, characterized by a remarkable reluctance to consider the need for territorial MD, (2) the period from 2000 to 2006, during which politicians initially voiced strong opposition to US territorial MD plans, but then shifted to subdued reconsideration concerning Germany's strategic needs, and (3) the period from 2007 until 2010, when politicians in Berlin again shifted from opposition to US plans to further strategic reconsideration. Overall, the analysis finds that role conceptions provide a good explanation for the dominantly skeptical attitude regarding territorial MD in Germany.

### **1990-2000: Reluctance to Discuss Homeland Security**

In the early 1990s, numerous German government publications cautioned of a growing threat from weapons of mass destruction and missiles. Surprisingly however, politicians rarely considered the need for a territorial missile defense system. In part, this hesitant stance can be explained by the widespread skepticism about the system's technological feasibility among decision-makers. More importantly however, politicians feared to upset the regional balance of power, an anxiety stemming from the Cold War debate about Reagan's 'Star Wars' project.

### *The Growing Missile Threat*

In the early 1990s, spurred by the Bush Senior and Clinton administrations, NATO allies debated the need for missile defense in the post-Cold War strategic environment. Members of the alliance agreed that the proliferation and use of shorter range ballistic missiles and the potential development of missiles with longer ranges was a growing menace in the new strategic environment. Iraq's firing of roughly 90 Scud missiles during the Gulf War of 1990-1991 seemed to foreshadow this trend. (BBC 2002c) In formulating their new Strategic Concept in November 1991, NATO members thus noted the risks posed by the "buildup of military power and the proliferation of weapons technologies [...] including weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles capable of reaching the *territory of some member states of the Alliance.*" (Martin 1996, emphasis added)

In November 1995, A NATO Senior Defense Group on Proliferation observed that in addition to tactical ballistic missile defense for deployed forces, a territorial defense system might be required to protect alliance territory and population against longer-range tactical ballistic missiles. (Martin 1996) This assessment was essentially confirmed in an October 1999 report by the German Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachrichtendienst), warning that "several states in the Near East are working on missiles with a range of more than 1000 km," which can be classified as medium and long-range. (Scheffran and Hagen 2001)

### *Reluctance to Consider Missile Defense*

Nevertheless, both the Kohl and Schröder governments were highly reluctant to engage in discussions about the potential need for a missile defense shield for Germany and for NATO territory. (Krause 2000: 38) Other European countries, especially France, also displayed little interest in territorial missile defense, and thus no detailed discussions or concrete steps in this direction were pursued among NATO members. One French expert described the European attitude towards the changing strategic situation in the 1990s as "don't wake us up." (Cambone et al. 2000: 28–29) The only indication that the German government considered territorial missile defense was its participation in the development of a Medium Extended Air Defense System, MEADS, to which it committed in a May 1996 memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the United States and Italy. MEADS was to be designed as a mobile missile defense system that could ward off airplanes, helicopters

and cruise as well as tactical ballistic missiles with a range up to 1,000 kilometers. Although the system was primarily intended to protect troops deployed abroad (as will be discussed in more detail below), some supporters argued that MEADS – while incapable of providing full coverage for Germany – could be used for point-defense of vital assets within the country’s territory. Opponents objected however that Germany was surrounded by friendly countries up to a distance of 1,000 kilometers, and since MEADS was not designed to defend against missiles with greater ranges, point protection was useless. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 529)<sup>65</sup> Consequently, MEADS advocates laid more emphasis on the need for protecting troops.

Apart from these considerations on MEADS, German political elites – like most other European politicians – remained highly reluctant to discuss the potential need for territorial defense and to confront the strategic developments after the Cold War. In July 1998, Iran for the first time tested its Shahab-3 medium range ballistic missile with an estimated range of about 1,300 kilometers, demonstrating its ambition to develop missiles with longer ranges. (Federation of American Scientists 2008) However, this did not lead to a fundamental reconsideration of missile defense among German policymakers, who were confident that engagement policies would be successful in moderating the regime’s behavior.<sup>66</sup>

A senior British official characterized the general reluctance of Europeans in the late 1990s to discuss territorial missile defense as a “severe case of ostrichitis,” suggesting their stance resembled the behavior of an ostrich that hides its head in the sand when hunted, believing itself to be unseen. (Cambone et al. 2000: 15–16) In examining European attitudes on MD, a group of experts under the auspices of the Atlantic Council concluded in July 2000 that the German political elite in the late 1990s was the “least inclined” of the major European countries to engage in discussions on the strategic issues related to territorial missile defense. (Cambone et al. 2000: 29)<sup>67</sup> One reason for the German reluctance was that politicians were not wholly convinced of the technological feasibility of MD. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Furthermore, decision-makers after the

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<sup>65</sup> Foreign Ministry official Jürgen Schnappertz points out that a missile attack from the sea, for example the North Sea, would nevertheless be possible. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

<sup>66</sup> Germany’s stance on Iran paralleled the increasingly conciliatory posture taken by the EU. After the so-called Mykonos Affair, in which the Iranian government had allegedly ordered the assassination of four Iranian-Kurdish dissidents in Berlin in 1992, the EU in January 1998 lifted its ban on contacts with Iran imposed after the incident. In 1999, the EU furthermore moved from its policy of ‘critical dialogue’ to a more conciliatory policy of ‘constructive dialogue.’ (Tarzi 2004: 92)

<sup>67</sup> In a similar vein, security policy specialist Joachim Krause observed that for German policymakers in the 1990s, missile defense was a “virtually taboo” topic. (Krause 2001: 492)

Cold War continued to fear that a missile shield could disrupt the strategic balance between the US and Russia. This aspect will become clear in the sections below.

### **2000-2006: From Vocal Opposition to Subdued Reconsideration**

In 2000, an inquiry by the Free Democratic Party (FDP) in parliament sparked discussions about a territorial MD system in Germany. The majority of politicians was skeptical about US missile defense plans and cautioned that the planned system would likely trigger an arms race with Russia. However, Berlin's leaders rarely considered whether MD may be necessary to respond to the strategic changes after the Cold War, especially the proliferation of missile technology to so-called rogue states like Iran. Towards the end of the period from 2000 to 2006, Iran's steadfast pursuit of its nuclear and missile programs cooled German confidence in diplomatic efforts, triggering some reconsideration regarding the need for a territorial MD system.

#### *Initiating the Debate*

In parliament, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) called on the German government in 2000 to clarify its stance on territorial defense, thereby challenging the vagueness and aversion to engage in discussions on the topic. (Krause 2001: 478) The inquiry forced a more substantial debate on US National Missile Defense (NMD) plans in the Red-Green coalition government. In May 2000, security experts within Schröder's chancellery prepared an internal paper called 'US Plans to Build a Limited National Defense,' laying out some of the fundamental views of the coalition government on US NMD policy and on territorial missile defense in general. The paper was highly skeptical of the US plans, stating that "The cohesion of NATO could be affected; moreover such a system – even if technologically feasible – would not cover the entire spectrum of threats presented by risk states." (Spiegel 2007a)

In the following months, statements by the political elite further elucidated Germany's position on the issue. Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer of the Green Party took the lead in raising objections about the US plans. The German debate focused on three aspects with regard to NMD, namely (1) the need to ensure NATO cohesion, (2) concern

about an imminent arms race, and (3) the importance of continuing diplomatic efforts for non-proliferation.

(1) *NATO Cohesion*

German government leaders worried that the NMD issue might endanger cohesion within the NATO alliance. Declarations by government officials and political leaders repeatedly warned the alliance may weaken over the issue and urged consultations among NATO partners. (Adomeit 2001: 33) Such assertions reflected two fundamental and interrelated concerns. First, there was apprehension that the NMD debate in the US might indicate unilateral tendencies in the strategic thinking (Cambone et al. 2000: 16), a concern that spread with the inauguration of the George W. Bush administration. Politicians in Germany saw the US pursuit of NMD as a *fait accompli*, which left little to no room for consultations and compromises with US allies. Berlin was aware that such unilateralism could lead to serious rows within NATO, especially with France, which had long doubted Washington's willingness to cooperate with allies.

Secondly, German policymakers suspected that US unilateral and isolationist tendencies would further intensify with the deployment of a missile defense system. Foreign Minister Fischer reflected such fears of a 'Fortress America' taking little interest in events beyond its borders, when he warned at the Munich Security Conference in February 2001 that the US must remain a "European power." (Filipiak 2006: 272) As a result of such concerns, German politicians urged multilateral consultations on missile defense. At first, politicians like Fischer and Schröder advocated discussions among the EU countries in order to achieve a common position on missile defense,<sup>68</sup> but in the end, the majority favored using NATO as the primary channel for multilateral deliberations. Some pointed out that with EU-level negotiations preceding those with the US, policymakers in Washington might feel they were presented with a European *fait accompli*. To that end, Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping argued that "it is much more important to talk about [missile defense] in NATO" than to find a common European position. He continued: "It makes little sense if the Europeans sit down together and afterwards talk to the Americans. Right from the start, we have to do so in the Alliance." (Filipiak 2006: 277)

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<sup>68</sup> For example, on May 8, 2000, German Foreign Minister Fischer announced his intention to discuss the missile defense issue among the 15 EU countries, saying "We are looking forward to unifying a position." (Neuneck 2001: 163)

## *(2) Imminent Arms Race*

A number of German policymakers – most prominently among them Foreign Minister Fischer and Chancellor Schröder – resisted the US project on the grounds that NMD would endanger the global strategic stability and initiate a new arms race with Russia. In May 2000, Schröder dismissed the US missile defense program as politically dangerous, claiming that it was a “counterproductive containment policy against Russia” that is “anything but in the European interest.” (Spiegel 2007a) In June 2000 in the newspaper *Berliner Zeitung*, Schröder furthermore warned, “Neither economically nor politically can we afford a new round of arms race.” (Neuneck 2001: 165)

Many observers in the United States were baffled at the German alarm about an impending arms race. To them, the German stance was reminiscent of Cold War strategic thinking, when most people considered a war between the US and the Soviet Union a horrifying, real possibility. However, in their view, the German posture seemed inadequate for the post-Cold War strategic environment, in which the US and Russia were no longer strategic competitors. German concern about Russia was not unfounded, of course, as Moscow had protested US NMD plans, especially when the Bush administration revealed its intention of abrogating the ABM Treaty in order to expedite the development and deployment of missile defense capabilities. However, to most Americans such objections only reflected Russia’s position as a declining superpower, with policymakers frustrated about the loss of political leverage held during Cold War times. American observers generally assumed that Russia was neither willing nor capable of engaging in a new arms race with the United States. Moreover, the planned US missile defense system would for the foreseeable future not provide a credible shield against the thousands of nuclear missiles in the Russian arsenal, some pointed out.

German politicians nevertheless remained exceptionally attentive to Russian concerns and opposition to the US project. This was partially due to the fact that in 2000, Berlin was trying to patch up relations with Russia after bilateral ties had soured over contentious issues such as Russian actions in Chechnya and NATO’s involvement in Kosovo in the late 1990s. (BBC 2000) To some extent, Russian leaders took advantage of the German caution regarding Moscow’s objections on MD. In seeking German support for its position, Russia hoped to disarray NATO and gain influence over US and European policies. During a summit meeting with Schröder in June 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin warned of serious consequences if the US missile defense plans upset the balance of

power. He also floated the idea of establishing pan-European multinational intervention troops that would be rapidly deployable to provide point-defense against incoming missiles. In a joint press conference with Putin, Schröder evaluated the proposal highly, saying “We found the recommendations made by President [Putin] really worthy of consideration. [...] There cannot be lasting peace in Europe if Russia is not included.” (Lisagor 2000)

Encouraged by Schröder’s support, Putin decided to press his case further. In a speech on February 20, 2001 at the Munich Security Conference, he expanded on his idea of establishing a mobile missile defense squad, setting off another round of discussions about the US plans. Subsequently, a number of analysts queried whether Russia was sincere with its proposal, suggesting that Moscow mainly sought to increase its leverage in this policy area. (Adomeit 2001, Arnhold 2001) The US only expressed polite skepticism about the Russian idea, which was strategically rather different from the US plan for a permanent strategic missile shield intended to ward off unexpected attacks from ‘rogue’ states or terrorist groups.

In considering territorial missile defense, German policymakers focused on their fear of an impending arms race between the US and Russia. In contrast, officials rarely debated whether the developments in the strategic environment that the US was responding to were relevant for Germany as well. Those policymakers who did reflect on international strategic changes generally were optimistic about the possibility to discourage rogue states or terrorist groups from using their missile and WMD capabilities by diplomatic means. In this context, politicians warned against isolating the Iranian regime, with Foreign Minister Fischer advising in February 2000 that “Iran should be included in the international community.” (Neuneck 2001: 165) This comment was made well before the inauguration of the George W. Bush administration, which named Iran together with Iraq and North Korea an ‘axis of evil,’ triggering considerable concern about a potential military conflict between the US and Iran.

### *(3) Diplomatic Efforts for Non-Proliferation*

Lastly, the German discussion on US NMD plans concentrated on the importance of diplomatic efforts for non-proliferation. In particular, German politicians were concerned about the prospect of a US withdrawal from the ABM-Treaty. For them, the treaty had ensured strategic stability between the two superpowers during the Cold War, and it

retained a symbolic value in the post-Cold War era. The treaty stood for détente, cooperation, and international support for diplomatic and agreement-based variants of arms control. Confronted with the US intention to abrogate the treaty, German politicians initially reacted with shock. They perceived the decision as evidence that Washington would no longer pursue diplomatic non-proliferation policies once it had gained security through missile defense.<sup>69</sup>

### *Subdued Reconsideration*

German leaders hesitantly became more accepting of the US plans in the course of 2001. Several factors help explain this gradual change. First of all, the Bush administration, inaugurated in early 2001, left little doubt that it would pursue missile defense, despite protests from allies. The British government reacted by casting aside previously held doubts and demonstrated support to US plans. This move brought about some rethinking in Germany. (Scheffran and Hagen 2001: 436) Secondly, Bush's policy of merging the NMD and TMD programs lessened German fears of a Fortress America, whose security would be 'de-coupled' from European security. Thirdly, with its proposal to establish mobile squads for theater missile defense, Moscow seemed to replace its outright opposition to MD by a more constructive posture. In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, Russia sympathetically approached the US and barely objected when in December the US announced its intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. Lastly, the US decision to conclude a formal arms control 'equivalent' by signing the US-Russian Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) in May 2002 also encouraged the adjustment in the German position on the US plans. (Kubbig 2005c: 338)

First indications of a reassessment among the German political elites came in early 2001. On February 26, 2001, Schröder warned that considering its "imminent economic interest," Germany should "not be left out" of the missile defense plans. (Scheffran and Hagen 2001: 437) During his first meeting with President Bush in Washington in late March 2001, Schröder even conceded that missile defense in combination with other policies may help reduce nuclear arsenals. Thereby, he revoked his previous position that US plans would inevitably trigger an arms race. (Filipiak 2006: 280) Nevertheless, Schröder refrained from any commitment to participate in missile defense.

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<sup>69</sup> Some observers mused whether such criticism of US policy derived from the misunderstanding that NMD stood for 'No More Disarmament.' See Cambone et al. 2000: 26.

Although the domestic public debate faded in 2002, the German government helped initiate discussion on missile defense at NATO level, emphasizing the importance of multilateral consultations on the issue. At the November 2002 Prague summit, member states decided to conduct a feasibility study on missile defense for the NATO-territory and charged a consortium of industry representatives and experts with this task. The study, concluding that missile defense for the NATO territory was viable, was presented to alliance members at the November 2006 summit in Riga. Despite growing concern among NATO states about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Germany remained ambivalent on territorial missile defense and refrained from concrete decisions and policy steps. In the end, NATO leaders continued surveying the possibility of a territorial missile defense shield for Europe, while postponing an ultimate decision on the need for the system.

In the meantime, Iran alarmed the international community anew. Its second test-firing of its Shahab-3 missile in July 2000, astonishingly did not provoke a major debate in Germany. However, concern grew markedly amid a June 2003 report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) stating that Iran had failed to comply with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Germany together with Britain and France decided on negotiations with the regime to dissuade it from nuclear ambitions and urge cooperation with the IAEA. In the aftermath of the US decision to launch a ‘preemptive’ attack on Iraq in March 2003 accompanied by Germany’s vocal opposition, policymakers in Berlin sought to demonstrate effective multilateralism vis-à-vis Iran. The initiative led by the so-called EU-3 initially appeared to yield results with Iran pledging in October 2003 to suspend its enrichment activities. However, it quickly became clear the regime was not willing to follow words with deeds. Another diplomatic initiative was launched by the EU-3, leading to a second agreement with Iran in November 2004, but it similarly failed to bring about a substantial change in Teheran’s nuclear posture.

While discussions on the nuclear issue went on in the UN Security Council, tensions regarding Iran further heightened. In February 2006, German intelligence circles reported that Iran had received 18 Soviet-built BM-25 (SS-N-6) rockets from North Korea with a range of approximately 2,500 kilometers, equipped to carry nuclear warheads.<sup>70</sup> In April 2006, the Israeli intelligence agency also suspected that Iran had received such rockets. (Focus 2006) Although the German media did not take up the issue in detail, policymakers

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<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, a July 2005 joint intelligence study by Belgium, Great Britain, France and Germany warned of Iran’s efforts to build and field longer range ballistic missiles. It pointed out that Iranian attempts to buy technology and know-how for its WMD programs from other countries were being “registered almost daily.” (American Foreign Policy Council 2006)

were clearly concerned about this development, noting that the distance between Iran and the southern city of Munich was only 2,760 kilometers. (von Klaeden 2007) In mid-April 2006, Iran officially declared its success in enriching uranium. In consequences of this announcement, the UN Security Council passed two resolutions summoning Tehran to suspend its nuclear activities. However, Iran indicated that it had no intention to comply.

The persistent tensions over the Iranian programs for WMD may have been one reason why the German Ministry of Defense identified such weapons as a growing threat to Germany in its 2006 White Book, although Iran is not explicitly mentioned as a cause for concern. The document notes that “The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery [...] are increasingly developing into a potential threat for Germany [...]. State and non-state actors are trying to obtain high-tech for criminal purposes.” (Bundesministerium für Verteidigung 2006: 16) In subsequent passages, the document describes WMD as the “potentially greatest threat to global security” (Bundesministerium für Verteidigung 2006: 20), arguing that these threats must be countered not only by political and economic means and efforts by the police and intelligence services, but also through “credible deterrence, supplemented by purely defensive measures (defensive Abwehrmaßnahmen).” (Bundesministerium für Verteidigung 2006: 16) Despite the growing concern about WMD evident in official documents, German policymakers refrained from definitive steps in developing a territorial MD shield however.

### **2007-2010: From Vocal Opposition to a Gradual Reconsideration – a Re-run?**

After the 2000-2001 hype, public attention regarding homeland missile defense faded. A speech by Russian President Vladimir Putin during the Munich Conference on Security Policy in February 2007 reinvigorated the German debate. As during the time period from 2000 to 2006, decision-makers in Berlin were remarkably attentive to Russian concerns about the US MD shield, while largely neglecting strategic discussions regarding the Iranian threat. Nevertheless, compared to the previous time period, more politicians – particularly from the CDU-CSU – questioned Russian motives. With the heightening Iranian security crisis and the announcement in 2009 of the Obama administration’s new multilateral MD policy, German politicians began to take a more positive outlook on the US program.

### *Putin's Speech*

In late January 2007, shortly before Putin's speech, US Army Brigadier-General Patrick J O'Reilly, deputy director of the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, announced the US plan to deploy anti-ballistic missile defense elements in Poland and the Czech Republic by 2011. (Engdahl 2007) This project angered Moscow's leaders, who had assumed they would be consulted on such an important strategic issue in the immediate vicinity of their country. It heightened perceptions of the Bush administration pursuing an 'encirclement policy' vis-à-vis Russia, as reflected in Washington's push for an early NATO enlargement to Eastern Europe and its growing involvement in the Caucasus and Central Asian regions. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Bartels and Kröger 2007: 39) Putin denounced the US MD plan as a provocation against Russia. He asserted that "Plans to expand certain elements of the anti-missile defense system to Europe cannot help but disturb us. Who needs the next step of what would be, in this case, an inevitable arms race?" (Putin 2007) He maintained that Europe was not threatened by missiles for the time being or in the foreseeable future, and thus there was no need for missile defense elements in the Czech Republic and Poland.

### *German Reactions*

If Putin intended to cause a rift between NATO members, his strategy worked out well. His allegations fell on particularly fertile grounds in Germany. Policymakers in Berlin debated almost exclusively the prospect of an arms race, as Putin had suggested. Leading the debate, politicians from the Social Democratic Party vigorously backed the Russian assessment of an imminent arms race if the US realized its plans. Kurt Beck, chairman of the SPD, opposed the missile defense system with the words "We do not need more rockets, rather we need efforts to build trust and reduce distrust." He furthermore called for Germany to "do everything to prevent another arms race (Rüstungsspirale)." (Süddeutsche Zeitung 2007)<sup>71</sup> Fellow SPD member and foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, similarly expressed concern about a new arms race in Europe. He insisted that still dominant "old reflexes" stemming from Cold War era thinking had to be overcome, as

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<sup>71</sup> Karsten Voigt maintains that most of the security experts of the SPD disagreed with the view of an imminent arms race with Russia. These experts, he notes, were aware of the growing danger from Iranian WMD programs. (Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Hans-Ulrich Klose contends that such expert voices were largely sidelined in the debate by those following Russian arguments. (Klose 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) SPD members were in clear agreement, however, about the need for cooperation with Russia.

enduring peace was now no longer based on “military deterrence, but on the willingness for cooperation.” Steinmeier pointed out that not even the most highly sophisticated military defense system could provide total security, and thus “disarmament, not armament” should have priority in foreign policy. (Spiegel 2007f) In general, SPD members concurred that a missile shield would not contribute to an improved security environment in Europe as long as Russia felt threatened by this system. (Katsioulis 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Most members of the Green Party, including the party’s vice chairman Jürgen Trittin, shared the critical attitude of the SPD. (Stern 2007) The FDP took a more ambiguous stance, although party chairman Guido Westerwelle’s comments suggested that he also had misgivings about US missile defense policy. (Busse 2007)

Members of the CDU-CSU were generally more cautious about the Russian criticism of US missile defense.<sup>72</sup> Foreign policy spokesman of the CDU-CSU fraction Eckart von Klaeden, went so far as to denounce Putin’s allegations of the MD system being targeted at Russian missiles as “propaganda.” In an interview with the journal *Der Spiegel*, he argued that the planned ten interceptor missiles in Poland could never be an effective shield against the thousands of Russian nuclear-armed missiles, and thus Putin’s stance was untenable and should be ignored. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 2007) While not all members of the CDU-CSU were as outspoken in their criticism as von Klaeden, most doubted the likelihood of a new arms race. (Staff member of the CDU/CSU parliamentary grouping 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Keller 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) A few party members nevertheless sided with the SPD’s view about an imminent arms build-up. One of them, CDU party member and former Defense Minister Volker Rühle, expressed his dissatisfaction with the US missile defense plans, saying “We cannot continue with deterrence, like in the Cold War,” and called for greater diplomatic efforts to prevent the emergence of threats. (Spiegel 2007d)

Noteworthy is German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conduct in the German debate on US missile defense plans. Rather than stating clearly her opinion, she maintained a low profile, seeking to act as a mediator and reconciling the various views within Germany and in the international community. Using somewhat ambiguous rhetoric that occasionally left

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<sup>72</sup> Compared to 2000-2001, members from the CDU-CSU were more openly skeptical about Russian arguments. This had at least four reasons: (1) party members in 2007 were concerned about the increasingly authoritarian tendencies in Russia (Staff member of the CDU/CSU parliamentary grouping 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki), (2) the CDU-CSU was in the governing coalition in 2007, and thus felt a stronger need to react and consider German security interests (Keller 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Sinjen 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki), (3) MD was an even more unpopular topic around 2001, as the US was moving towards withdrawal from the ABM-Treaty, and (4) knowledge about MD among policymakers was even more shallow in the earlier phase, as the topic had not been debated intensely (Sinjen 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki).

open whether she was addressing fellow domestic politicians or the international community, Merkel stated that “everything must be done to avoid unilateral actions (Alleingänge) and to discuss issues concertedly.” (Spiegel 2007d) She also said she favored to solve the dispute within NATO and hoped for open talks with Russia.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, during a trip to Warsaw in March 2007, Merkel called on Poland to remain open for multilateral consultations on missile defense. She warned that “Only when Europe stands united, it can be more than the sum of its parts. Only then Europe will be taken seriously as an actor by its partners in the world.” (Spiegel 2007e)

### *Strategic Implications and Russian Power Politics*

The majority of policymakers and commentators failed to address key strategic questions such as whether the global proliferation of missile technology was a threat to German security and if so, how Berlin should react. Instead, officials debated whether the ten planned US interceptor missiles in Eastern Europe could render the vast quantities of Russian nuclear warheads ineffective. Furthermore, leaders like Kurt Beck portrayed the missile shield as an American provocation rather than a response to Iran’s nuclear drive.<sup>74</sup> As commentator Nikolas Busse noted in the newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, German politicians presented the issue to the public “as if it was primarily a problem of strategic balance between the US and Russia.” Busse criticized that virtually nothing was said about the developments that had prompted US policy, and that the central question of whether Germany needed a missile defense system was not raised. (Busse 2007)

Similarly, former NATO-General Klaus Naumann observed in an interview with the radio station *Deutschlandfunk* on March 20, 2007 that German politicians revealed in the debate “almost incredible ignorance” about the strategic environment. He reasoned that an arms race was out of the question since the few planned interception missiles were ineffective against the large quantities of sophisticated Russian missiles, including those with multiple reentry vehicle (MRV) technology. Moreover, Naumann pointed out that Russian rockets fired towards the US mainland traversed the North Pole, not Europe.

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<sup>73</sup> While Merkel skillfully avoided taking a clear stance on missile defense in 2007, she indicated her position in a July 2000 interview with the German news channel *N-TV*. At the time leader of the conservative party, she stated her personal opinion about the planned US missile defense system, saying “I am very much for it, and not just for the sake of Alaska and the United States.” (Spiegel 2007a)

<sup>74</sup> One Christian Democratic Party member charged that Kurt Beck and fellow SPD leaders were trying to “re-live” the 2002 ‘peace policy’ of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder by appealing to the public’s anti-Americanism and fear of a reemerging arms race. In 2002, Schröder had scored a narrow victory in the federal election by opposing US war plans against Iraq, the centerpiece of his campaign. (Vinocur 2007)

Therefore, interceptor missiles deployed in Eastern Europe were futile for defending US territory against Russian attacks. (Spiegel 2007b)

Naumann's observations raised doubts about Russian intentions for launching such vehement criticism against US MD plans. Indeed, a high-ranking Russian official admitted that Putin's opposition derived from shrewd power politics, not from strategic concerns about the interceptor missiles in Poland posing a threat to Russian capabilities. He explained that Moscow sought to be included in discussions about missile defense and gain leverage by taking advantage of the rift between NATO members. Observing the debate in Germany and other NATO countries following Putin's speech in Munich, the Russian official appeared pleased with the effect, noting: "Now, they listen to us" (Jetzt hört man uns zu). (Bittner 2008)

### *Gradual Reconsideration of Missile Defense*

Beginning in the spring of 2007, German decision-makers gradually shifted towards a more positive evaluation of the US MD program. Four key reasons for this change can be identified: (1) an escalation of tensions regarding Iran's nuclear and missile programs, (2) intensified consultations and growing support within NATO regarding MD, (3) the Obama administration's new policy approach, and (4) the positive reputation of Obama in Germany.

Firstly, the Iranian nuclear crisis intensified with the announcement by President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad on April 9, 2007 that his country was now enriching uranium on an industrial scale. (Stern 2007) In an Upper House hearing on July 20, 2007, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher R. Hill furthermore revealed that Iran had sent several representatives to North Korea to attend the firing of a long-range and several short-range missiles earlier that month. These news renewed concern about close cooperative ties between the two regimes on WMD technology. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 5) Diplomatic efforts to dissuade Iran from pursuing its nuclear and missile programs time and again failed in the following years. Particularly worrisome were Iran's recurrent test-firings of its Sejil-2 and improved Shahab-3 missiles, with estimated ranges of about 2,000 kilometers. (BBC 2009) The tests demonstrated the regime's success in developing multiple-stage technology, a prerequisite for further increasing missile ranges. The September 2009 revelation that Iran had secretly begun constructing a second uranium

enrichment facility was another serious blow to the international diplomatic efforts in the crisis.

A growing number of politicians, especially from the CDU-CSU, began speaking up more openly in favor of a missile defense shield for Germany and Europe. CDU member and Defense Minister Franz Josef Jung commented, “I think that the current developments confirm that it is prudent to decide for such a [missile] defense [system].” (Spiegel 2007c) Similarly, CDU-politician Ruprecht Polenz, chairman of the foreign committee in the German parliament, noted that Iran was “staunchly pursuing its nuclear program and missile build-up,” and urged NATO to expedite discussion on the possibility for the development of a joint missile defense shield. (Stern 2007) SPD members also began to evaluate territorial MD more positively. In an interview in June 2010, Rolf Mützenich admitted that he had shifted towards a cautiously supportive stance on missile defense, because Iran had made rapid progress in missile technology, as demonstrated by the development in late 2008 of a solid-fuel rocket with improved accuracy. (Mützenich 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) SPD member Hans-Ulrich Klose confirmed a general tendency among policymakers to reconsider the need for MD amid the growing Iranian threat. (Klose 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Nevertheless, several politicians from the SPD and Green Party continued to warn that MD could provoke a new arms race – perhaps even with Iran.<sup>75</sup>

Secondly, the gradual shift in German views on MD was influenced by a series of NATO consultations, leading to more support for the US project. At a special meeting of high-level representatives in April 2007, member states had agreed to back US plans, since the missile defense system did not present any danger to Russia in their view. (Deutsche Welle Online 2007) Moscow’s protests against the US missile shield lessened somewhat after the announcement. Furthermore, President Putin surprised the US in early June 2007 with the offer to build a joint anti-ballistic missile system in the former Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. The proposed system would guard against a missile attack from Iran. Thus, Putin acknowledged a potential threat from the regime. Despite US skepticism, the Azerbaijan proposal helped temporarily to lessen bilateral tensions between Washington and Moscow. Further NATO consultations on MD took place at the April 2008 Bukarest

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<sup>75</sup> The vice chairman of the Green Party, Jürgen Trittin, warned of an “escalating arms build-up in Europe and the Near East” as a result of US plans (Stern 2007) SPD member Rolf Mützenich furthermore warned that other countries may perceive MD as part of an offensive strategy in order to reduce an enemy’s second strike capability. Thus, countries such as Russia or Iran may feel compelled to build up their offensive capabilities if the US and its allies pursue MD. (Mützenich 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

summit. Members agreed on a positive evaluation of the US MD system, including the planned interceptors in Europe. The communiqué stated:

“Ballistic missile proliferation poses an increasing threat to allies’ forces, territory and populations. Missile defense forms part of a broader response to counter this threat. We therefore recognize the substantial contribution to the protection of allies from long-range ballistic missiles to be provided by the planned deployment of European-based United States missile defense assets.” (Bittner 2008)

By then, the communiqué was the clearest expression of NATO’s support for a missile defense shield.<sup>76</sup>

Thirdly, the new approach in US MD policy, announced by President Obama in September 2009, appealed to politicians from parties across the political spectrum in Germany. In particular, the emphasis on multilateral consultations and engagement with Russia met with support from both CDU-CSU and SPD politicians.<sup>77</sup> Chancellor Merkel greeted Obama’s policy shift as a “hopeful signal for overcoming the difficulties with Russia.” (Nassauer 2009) Foreign Minister Steinmeier similarly stated his hope that “the issue of missile defense in Europe can now be discussed anew with all partners.” (Focus 2009) As Moscow toned down its criticism of MD, German decision-makers felt reassured that the cooperative approach would prevent the emergence of an arms race based on new antagonisms.<sup>78</sup> Obama’s concurrent pursuit of nuclear disarmament with Russia reinforced this positive evaluation. Security experts furthermore emphasized that cooperation with Moscow on missile defense made strategic sense, since MD installations on Russian territory could intercept potential enemy missiles early on in their flight path, for example if launched from countries such as Pakistan. (Staff member of the CDU/CSU parliamentary grouping 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Politicians in Berlin were also pleased that the new US strategy would extend the area of MD coverage to countries in southern Europe. As Foreign Ministry official Jürgen Schnappertz explains, this helps to avoid zones of varying security in the region, and

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<sup>76</sup> Missile defense will also be an important topic in the discussions on a new strategic concept, to be submitted to NATO leaders at the November 2010 Lisbon summit.

<sup>77</sup> This was confirmed in a number of interviews: Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Bartels 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Katsioulis 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki.

<sup>78</sup> Russia’s positive response to Obama’s ‘phased adaptive approach’ apparently was politically motivated rather than based on strategic reasoning. As SWP expert Sascha Lange points out, Obama’s planned SM-3 interceptors in Romania and in Poland have a much higher interception success rate than the systems considered under the Bush administration (although the current version also is less capable in system terms, e.g. the SM-3 rockets cannot shoot down ICBMs yet). The upgraded SM-3 interception missiles with greater capabilities can be easily employed in the future. If anything, Russia should be more worried about the MD system envisioned by Obama. (Lange 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

therefore strengthens cohesion and facilitates cooperation within NATO and the EU. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Finally, German politicians supported Obama's policy of installing only those MD elements that had been tested successfully. They viewed this approach as more pragmatic than Bush's seemingly rushed deployment plan. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Fourthly, Obama's positive international reputation played an important role in German decision-makers' reconsideration of MD. In stark contrast to his predecessor, President Obama – as a Nobel Peace Prize winner – was perceived as a leader who would make more efforts in cooperation. Prior to his presidency, many German politicians expected him to abandon the MD project upon taking office. When Obama thus announced his intention to continue developing MD capabilities, German elites were more inclined to seriously deliberate the US project. (Sinjen 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Despite the trend towards a more positive evaluation of MD among German policymakers, the country's participation in the US-led project seems doubtful in the near future. Berlin's leaders will carefully observe the extent to which Washington and NATO succeed in developing cooperative ties on missile defense and other security issues with Moscow. Negotiations on the specific involvement of Russia in the MD project will likely face significant challenges.<sup>79</sup> (Sinjen 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) In May 2010, Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitri Rogosin voiced skepticism about cooperation, noting Washington's proposal was "too vague." (Hecking 2009)<sup>80</sup> Given the severe budgetary constraints, Berlin's politicians will also consider the potential costs of participating in MD. (Bartels 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) At the NATO summit in April 2008, a German representative expressed concern that his country would "probably [have to] contribute 20 Cents for every Euro spent," if it participated in the project. (Bittner 2008)<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Svenja Sinjen, researcher at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), notes that MD cooperation between NATO and Russia is complicated (among other issues) by the fact that there are several countries within the alliance who still feel threatened by Russia. (Sinjen 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Furthermore, US MD policy may undergo significant changes if the Republicans gain seats in Congress in the November 2010 election.

<sup>80</sup> SPD parliamentarian Hans-Peter Bartels is optimistic that the US and Russia can cooperate on MD, pointing out that the two countries have already established good cooperative relations in their space programs. (Bartels 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

<sup>81</sup> Hans-Ulrich Klose, Coordinator for German-American Cooperation, reckons that Germany in the end will not be able to evade participation in the MD project. However, it is unlikely to play a leading role in this project, he contends. (Klose 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Politicians and researchers disagree whether German participation in territorial MD may be linked to the question of continued US deployment of tactical nuclear weapons. Christos Katsioulis of the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation believes Berlin may decide to give up nuclear sharing, thereby saving about 300 million Euros otherwise needed to enable the Eurofighter to carry such weapons, and instead invest in a defensive MD shield. (Katsioulis 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

## Explaining German Policy

As was seen in the above analysis, German policymakers have been strikingly reluctant to deliberate the need for a comprehensive missile defense system. The public discourse has largely focused on the assumed negative aspects of an MD system. What accounts for the German aversion to engage in discussions? In seeking to answer this question, the following section will consider three key policy aspects: (1) decision-makers' assessment of a threat to their country, (2) their appraisal of the technological feasibility and costs of the proposed system, and (3) the relation between German role conceptions and the country's policy regarding territorial MD.<sup>82</sup>

### *(1) Threat Assessment*

An ambivalent picture emerges from public statements and documents assessing the ballistic missile threat to Germany. On the one hand, official documents such as the White Book and various NATO declarations have noted a growing threat from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery since the mid- to late-1990s. In particular, Iran's missile and nuclear programs, pursued with ambition and provocative rhetoric, have raised considerable unease and apprehension in Germany.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, the majority of politicians do not seem overly concerned about a potential missile threat to Germany when deliberating US MD plans. As discussed, Berlin's decision-makers avoided debates on the strategic changes that had induced US policy, both with regard to Iran and to other states of concern. The German public appears to share the view that Germany is safe from an external threat. In a spring 2006 public opinion survey, only 1% of respondents answered that they thought terrorism was an urgent topic for Germany. (European Commission 2006: 34)

Few missile defense opponents commented on a potential Iranian menace, but when they did, they were generally optimistic. Firstly, some politicians argued that Germany should refrain from participation in the US project and accept a certain amount of

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<sup>82</sup> These three areas are related, of course. The existence of particular role conceptions may influence policymakers' perceptions of threats, technological feasibility, and cost aspects. Nevertheless, separate consideration of each of these aspects helps clarify the reasons for the identified policy characteristics.

<sup>83</sup> Iran poses the most immediate threat to Germany, as it is believed to possess or at least work on missiles that may reach German territory. Another state of concern is Pakistan with an estimated arsenal of 60 nuclear warheads. However, located more than 5,000 kilometers from Pakistan, Germany lies well outside the 2,000 to 2,500 kilometers range of the Pakistani missile Shaheen-2. (Bitter 2007: 7) Besides states such as Iran or Pakistan, non-state actors in possession of WMD-armed missiles may pose a threat to Germany. However, in connection to missile defense policy, this diffuse threat is not much discussed in Germany.

vulnerability, thereby helping to establish a relationship of trust with Iran. SPD foreign policy expert Niels Annen for example argued that if the Federal Republic chose to participate in the MD program, “we would signal to Iran that we already now assume that the diplomatic efforts will fail.” (Spiegel 2007c) Secondly, several decision-makers argued that Iran did not possess missiles capable of reaching Germany at this stage. In April 2007, SPD spokesman for disarmament policy, Rolf Mützenich, claimed that the US system was geared towards missiles that Iran neither possessed nor would in all likelihood obtain within the next ten years. (Stern 2007) In February 2007 Foreign Minister Steinmeier similarly argued that Europe was not threatened “under the current state of Iranian weapons technology.” (Frühling and Sinjen 2007: 3)<sup>84</sup>

Even if Steinmeier and Mützenich assessed correctly and Iran did not yet have missiles capable of reaching German territory, two questions remain unanswered. Firstly, opponents of missile defense do not indicate what Germany should do if Iran possessed such weapons in the future. Given the long time span needed for development and operationalization of an MD system, this issue undoubtedly requires foresight. Secondly, politicians have not debated the strategic consequences of Iran possessing missiles capable of reaching the southern parts of the EU or NATO territory. Teheran might attempt to coerce and manipulate Berlin’s leaders by taking one of Germany’s regional partners hostage with nuclear missiles. This could confront Berlin with serious policy quandaries.<sup>85</sup>

## *(2) Technological Feasibility and Cost-Effectiveness*

German decision-makers do not give much consideration to the technological feasibility and the cost-effectiveness of a missile defense shield, two aspects that are interrelated. Politicians rather tend to reject such a system altogether, presuming Germany’s foreign policy goals would be ill served by participating. Nevertheless, some ambivalence in views regarding feasibility and cost can be discerned, similar to the diverging threat assessments discussed above. The official government position in communiqués or

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<sup>84</sup> Some experts might challenge this claim. At the very least, EU-member Cyprus and NATO-partner Turkey are believed to be within range of Iranian missiles. (von Klaeden 2007)

<sup>85</sup> It is furthermore noticeable that few German policymakers tried to gauge the rationale behind Tehran’s nuclear and missile programs. Undoubtedly, it is difficult to evaluate the intentions of a state seeking WMD. Nevertheless, Iran’s claim that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes appears highly doubtful. According to atomic energy specialist Thérèse Delpech, the credibility problem with Iran’s claim lies “in the long (20-year) secrecy surrounding such ‘peaceful’ nuclear expansion and in the size and variety of its nuclear fuel cycle. The 50,000 P1 centrifuges (manufactured in Pakistan) planned in Natanz appear grossly disproportionate to Iran’s only reactor under construction (Bushier), which will receive Russian fuel for the next 10 years. The kinds of imports that Iran has been engaged in also often make little sense in a civilian program.” (Delpech 2005: 287)

agreements seems to be that the entire range of MD technology could work and help increase Germany's security. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 522)<sup>86</sup>

On the other hand, individual German politicians are skeptical about technological aspects of MD systems. Several officials pointed out that no matter how good the system, 100% security was unattainable and a missile defense shield could never cover the entire spectrum of threats presented by risk states. These observers regard a condition of vulnerability and insecurity as normal and inevitable. German leaders also seemed to have qualms about the potential costs of an MD system, as seen in the above mentioned comment of a government representative, expressing fear of a hefty bill if Germany decided to participate.

### *(3) Policy Goals and Role Conceptions*

The contradictory threat perceptions and ambivalent assessments of technological feasibility and cost-effectiveness of an MD system may explain to some extent Germany's overall hesitant posture towards missile defense. Nevertheless, Berlin's inconsistent handling of the issue remains puzzling. Why did German policymakers criticize the US MD program so harshly when they perceived some benefits for German security? How come German policymakers were so susceptible to apparently unfounded Russian criticism about US missile defense policy? Why did they ignore strategic changes prompting the US to expedite its MD program? This section will determine whether and how far German role conceptions can explain Germany's evaluation and approach to the missile defense issue.

The two role conceptions 'regional stabilizer' and 'anti-militarist country' help to explain Germany's reluctant posture on MD and the sensitivity to Russian objections. Firstly, in accordance with the role conception of 'regional stabilizer,' decision-makers seek to mediate multilaterally between the interests of various partner countries, paying particular attention to Russian concerns and requests. As a result, Berlin strongly urged the US to consider carefully Putin's proposals for a pan-European mobile missile defense squad in 2000-2001 and for a joint missile interception base in Azerbaijan in 2007. However, focused on Russian criticism of US policy, Germany's leaders have failed to adjust their strategic thinking to the new security challenges after the Cold War. By

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<sup>86</sup> In April 2008, for example, Germany signed the NATO communiqué stating that the US interceptor missiles in Poland were a 'substantial contribution' to the protection of NATO allies from incoming missiles, reflecting a certain confidence in MD technology.

assuming that a new arms race could ensue, they underestimated the size of Russia's arsenal of nuclear missiles while overestimating the capability of the planned US defense system. At the same time, German lawmakers misconstrued Moscow's tactics. As seen above, Russian objections derived mainly from a widespread frustration over the country's declining international power and over US unilateralism. Putin thus hoped to stir a divisive debate within NATO in order to increase his international leverage. The role conception of 'regional stabilizer' triggered a reflex among German policymakers to pay heed to Russian criticism, especially after Reagan's SDI plans had already caused considerable controversy during the Cold War. (Schreer 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Katsioulis 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Secondly, the role conception of 'anti-militarist country' similarly led to a skeptical attitude regarding territorial MD in Germany. Lawmakers have displayed a profound faith in the effectiveness of diplomacy, seeking to achieve security through cooperation rather than through military means. The anti-militarist norms were clearly reflected in public discussions on MD, as political leaders emphasized diplomacy as ethically superior to military steps. Thomas Bauer observed that the term 'arms race' was "being referred to from a [...] moral point of view, describing the dominance of military actions over political or diplomatic solutions." (Bauer 2007: 6) According to SPD-member and former Coordinator for German-American Cooperation Karsten Voigt, deterrence is seen by politicians as a political problem, signifying distrust between countries. Mutual suspicion and insecurity between countries therefore requires efforts in cooperation, rather than a defensive capability build-up. (Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)<sup>87</sup> The faith in diplomacy explains why Germans were shocked when the Bush administration intended to abrogate the ABM Treaty with Russia. The Treaty was a symbol of US-Russian commitment to cooperate in security affairs, and Germans were sensitive to anything that might upset this cooperative ethos. Even with regard to Iran, Berlin's policymakers did not lose confidence in multilateral talks, despite the regime's continuously provocative rhetoric.

The role conceptions of 'contributor to regional cooperation' and 'regional stabilizer' furthermore explain Berlin's emphasis on multilateral consultations on MD within the EU and especially NATO. Both supporters and opponents of MD agreed on the need for regional negotiations to reduce tensions and to ensure the cohesion of NATO.

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<sup>87</sup> In a similar vein, Hans-Peter Bartels states in an article: „From a German perspective, the containment [of Iranian or North Korean missiles and other threats] should be pursued not technically, but politically, within the scope of NATO, EU, and UN.” (Bartels 2008)

When US plans to install radar equipment and interceptor missiles in Eastern Europe prompted protests in Russia and Europe in 2007, Chancellor Merkel strove to mediate multilaterally. The fact that she did not publicly state her opinion on missile defense gave her particular credence as a mediator.

However, aside from Merkel, politicians did not act entirely in compliance with the role conceptions ‘contributor to regional cooperation’ and ‘regional stabilizer.’ Despite professing to NATO solidarity, German policymakers plowed ahead with their criticism of missile defense, rather than exercising restraint and considering carefully each country’s opinions and interests first. By opposing the US so firmly from the start, Germany hampered a consensus within NATO and contributed to a rift among allies – apparently to Russia’s delight.

There are several reasons why political elites did not behave fully role-adequate. First, one may argue that the behavior did not completely break with the dominant norms of Germany’s role conceptions, since MD criticism was rooted in the anti-militarist foreign policy tradition, as explained above. Secondly, political leaders might have hoped to raise their public popularity by focusing on the dangerous consequences of a new arms race. Having witnessed the Cold War in a front line state, Germans tend to be highly skeptical about large military projects that could upset the regional balance of power. However, it is unclear how much such political considerations influenced policymakers, as there were no major upcoming federal or state elections in Germany when public discussions on missile defense peaked in 2000-2001 and in 2007. Thirdly, criticism of US MD plans arose from a widespread disappointment over Berlin’s marginal influence on Washington’s policy. After all, the US did not consult Germany on abrogating the ABM Treaty and on installing missile defense elements in Poland and the Czech Republic. Public criticism thus reflected frustration about dealing with a superpower that did not share Berlin’s inclination towards multilateral consultations. In fact, some policymakers admitted that they did not oppose missile defense per se, but objected to the US approach of the issue. (Howland and Stoyan Stoyanov 2007) Lastly, some German politicians might have worried that it could have consequences in the Russian leadership if its proposals on missile defense were completely ignored by West European countries and the US. It would not have been in the German interest if Russian hardliners gained the upper hand in the Kremlin as a result.

All in all, role theory offers a useful explanation to Germany’s hesitant stance in territorial MD and its handling of the issue. Berlin tended clearly towards multilateralism

and non-military means, consistent with traditional foreign policy norms. With regard to Russia, the effect of the German role conception of 'regional stabilizer' is particularly obvious, as policymakers responded reflexively to Moscow's criticism. The Federal Republic also seemed to face a role conflict, as politicians failed to advance NATO cohesion and solidarity by plowing ahead with their criticism of US policy. Consequently, German behavior deviated somewhat from the ideal of being an unprejudiced multilateral mediator and a dependable partner both within NATO and to the US. The balance appears to have tipped in favor of the swift critical response due to other considerations, such as the mounting frustration about US unilateralism.

## **Part 3: German Policy on Missile Defense for Soldiers Abroad**

### **Introduction**

Aside from discussions on a comprehensive territorial MD system, German policymakers in the post-Cold War era also debated whether to procure a mobile missile defense system for point-defense, especially for soldiers stationed abroad. This part of the case study will therefore explore the Federal Republic's policy in this area, identifying three phases in the debate: (1) the period from 1990 to 1999, when Germany quietly began to participate in a project called MEADS (Medium Extended Air Defense System) under US leadership, (2) the period from 2000 to 2004, when first doubts about the project emerged, but the government opted to continue its support, (3) the period from 2004 to now, when public criticism against MEADS peaked, but then fell again following two important parliamentary decisions in favor of developing MEADS.

The analysis finds that German policy since the mid-1990s is characterized by a remarkably high degree of support for the MEADS project, despite significant difficulties in the cooperation with the US and lingering doubts about the strategic need for this MD capability. As will be seen, Berlin's strong commitment can be well explained by the influence of several role conceptions, most importantly the roles of 'exporter of security' and 'reliable partner.'

### **1990-1999: A Quiet Start to Participation in the MEADS Project**

After assessing their country's future air defense needs, German defense specialists in the mid-1990s recommended participation in a US-led project developing a new MD system called MEADS. Political leaders were not entirely clear about the motivations for their support to the project, but two reasons appear crucial: first, decision-makers were encouraged by the wish to play a greater role in multilateral missions abroad, necessitating better defense systems for troops, and second, they hoped to strengthen transatlantic ties. Despite significant problems in the cooperation with the US in the late 1990s, German lawmakers continued to back the project.

### *Considering Air Defense Needs*

In the early 1990s, calls emerged among German policymakers on the need for a defense system that would not only provide point defense for German territory, but also help protect troops stationed abroad against incoming missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, or aircrafts. In 1987, the government had issued a decree calling for a definition of the requirements for a new tactical air defense system (Taktisches Luftverteidigungssystem, TLVS) for Germany. An industrial consortium was charged with the task of conducting an initial conceptual study to identify key requirements. These deliberations resulted in the proclamation of the ‘Military-Technical Objectives’ in 1992, which called for a mobile tactical anti-missile defense system that could protect German troops on missions abroad. (Schäfer 1996) The apparent German concern was doubtlessly influenced by Iraq’s use of Scud missiles against Israeli and Saudi Arabian targets during the Gulf War in 1990-1991, raising fears about the vulnerability of troops deployed abroad in conflict areas. The 1994 White Book by the Ministry of Defense asserted that a tactical anti-missile defense system was one of the “necessary military core capabilities” for Germany. (Kahler 2001: 50)

At around the same time, important partner countries of Germany were considering the introduction of similar new air defense systems. In the 1980s, the French and Italian government had begun studying the possibility of jointly developing mid-range surface-to-air interception missiles that could be launched from ships or from the ground. Since both countries concluded that they had similar operational requirements for their air defense systems, they began joint work on the ‘Famille de missiles Sol-Air Futurs’ (Future Surface-to-Air Family of missiles or FSAF) in 1989. The project included work on a land-based medium-range surface-to-air missile, called the ‘Sol-Air Moyenne Portée / Terrestre’, or SAMP-T. The specifications for this missile were comparable to the requirements stated in the German ‘Military-Technical Objectives’ of 1992, except that the German conception stipulated a defense capability against ballistic missiles in addition to cruise missiles or aircrafts. (Grams 2003: 52)

From around 1987, the United States also explored the need for a new air defense system, as it needed a replacement of its outdated anti-air missile, the HAWK (Homing All-the-Way to Kill). In 1990, it initiated the Corps Surface-to-Air Missile (Corps-SAM) program, in which it began to conduct conceptual studies for the development of an interception system that was to be rapidly deployable, highly mobile, and effective against a range of targets. However, because of the potentially high development costs of such a

system, the US Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology declared that the Army needed a draft agreement for allied participation before the development of the system could be approved. (Pike)

Amid the large overlap between US and German conceptions for air defense systems, US specialists approached policymakers in Bonn in February 1994 about the possibility of a collaborative effort. Talks were held between experts of both countries, and by the summer of 1994, officials from the German Defense Ministry signaled their support for the idea of a joint development program. (Covault and Morocco 1994) However, they insisted that rather than proceeding on a bilateral basis the project should be multilateralized, so that interested European partner countries could participate. German politicians were concerned that their country's good relations with France may be jeopardized if they agreed to an exclusive bilateral project with the US. French leaders had indicated a strong interest since 1993 for German participation in the French-Italian project. (Covault and Morocco 1994) US officials accepted the German demand for involvement of its partners and invited France, Italy as well as other interested countries to participate in the collaborative effort. As a result, the US, Germany, France, and Italy signed a statement of intent on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1995 in Paris to cooperate on the development of a mobile air defense system, which they called Medium Extended Air Defense System, or MEADS. The four parties agreed that MEADS would be designed as a mobile system that could ward off aircrafts, unmanned aerial vehicles, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles with a range of about 100 to 1,000 kilometers.

### *German Reasons for Participation*

German politicians were somewhat ambiguous about their rationale for participating in the development of MEADS. The German Ministry of Defense commented in February 1995 that MEADS was needed "for point defense of vital assets and the protection of maneuver forces against the ever increasing threat in the field of tactical ballistic missiles and other targets including cruise missiles." (Boehmer 1995) However, this declaration seemed to contradict common wisdom about the security problems Germany faced. Firstly, the threat to German territory of missiles with a range of 100 to 1,000 kilometers was decreasing rapidly, as Eastern European countries – which presented a security risk during the Cold War – were strengthening their relations with West European countries including Germany. Secondly, the number of German soldiers deployed abroad in the mid-1990s was [122]

small, calling into question the rationality of embarking on an expensive air defense project for the protection of troops, even if the threat from missiles was increasing.

Germany's interest in MEADS was not groundless, of course. From around the mid-1990s, there seems to have emerged a tacit awareness among decision-makers that Germany would need to increase its contribution to multilateral missions abroad and thus a growing number of soldiers would be exposed to missile threats. (Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Staff member of the CDU/CSU parliamentary grouping 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Officials concurred that public opinion could present a significant obstacle in expanding the role of the *Bundeswehr*, especially if troops deployed abroad faced overt security risks, such as from missiles. The development and procurement of MEADS would thus not only increase the security of troops, but also help to overcome public opposition to a larger international role in multilateral missions.

German policymakers generally avoided explicitly drawing the connection between MEADS and their intention to expand the role of the *Bundeswehr*, however. Representatives of the Defense Ministry acknowledged that they sought to prevent extensive public discussions about the future of the *Bundeswehr* and its potential role as an international "intervention force" in the context of MEADS. (Kahler 2001: 51) An official report of an experts' seminar organized by the Defense Ministry warned in February 1995, "An emphasis on [the] capability [of MEADS in the context of international military missions] could obstruct efforts for establishing a more mobile German armed forces culture (*Streitkräftekultur*)." (Kahler 2001: 51) The need to deemphasize the use of MEADS in international deployments may have been one reason why policymakers argued that the system could be used for point defense within German territory – even though there was no indication of a growing missile threat within 1,000 kilometers proximity.

German politicians also saw MEADS as a key project between Europe and the United States serving to strengthen cooperative relations between the participants and providing a transatlantic security link. (Schreer 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Katsioulis 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki, Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) In April 1996, German Defense Minister Volker Rühle praised MEADS as "an important program between Europe and the United States," underlining that it was one of the few transatlantic military projects in the post-Cold War era. (Muradian 2000a) German officials insisted that MEADS should be managed by NATO to ensure that the project remained open for potential future participants and to accentuate its multilateral character. Policymakers were

thus pleased when the NATO-MEADS Management Agency (NAMEADSMA) was established in Huntsville, Alabama, in the US in July 1996, making MEADS the first NATO program ever to be managed from US soil.

German policymakers emphasized that the institutional framework meant that MEADS would be managed on “full equality” based on the “one country, one vote system,” regardless of the financial contributions made by each member. (Kahler 2001: 54, Filipiak 2006: 262) This aspect was particularly important in order to convince French politicians to participate in the joint project. On numerous occasions, French officials had displayed skepticism about whether a true partnership was achievable, arguing that it was likely that the US would dominate decision-making.

Despite German efforts to convince French policymakers to participate however, France opted not to sign the memorandum of understanding on MEADS in May 1996. Officials cited various reasons for their decision to drop out of the project, including the high expected development costs and diverging requirements for their air defense system. Furthermore, some French observers stated that they were unconvinced of the US willingness to share technological insights and engage in the project on an equal basis. (Grams 2003: 56) The US, Italy, and Germany were thus the only signatories of the 1996 Memorandum of Understanding, in which the three agreed to jointly begin a project definition and validation phase for MEADS. Furthermore, they decided that the US would bear 60% of the project’s costs, while Germany would contribute 25% and Italy 15% of the total budget. At the time, experts estimated that the total development costs of MEADS would be around two billion US Dollars. (Boehmer 1995)

### *Emergence of First Problems in Cooperation*

After a quiet start to the trilateral project, first problems in the cooperation for MEADS emerged in 1998. The conservative majority in US Congress increasingly challenged President Clinton’s focus on TMD over NMD, with serious repercussions on Washington’s MEADS policy. Opponents questioned the rationality of MEADS, pointing out that the project had a significant capability overlap with the Patriot PAC-3 missiles, another interception missile that was already under development as a fixed anti-aircraft and missile system for the US Army. (Aviation Week & Space Technology 1995) In mid-1998, Congress suspended funding and called for a reexamination of the project’s scope and

financial budget. German politicians displayed serious irritation with US policy and warned Washington of dropping out of the project. One senior German official cautioned,

“For Germany, and certainly [...] France, [US withdrawal from the project] would confirm the suspicions of those who have always had a distrust regarding the US sincerity to enter into truly collaborative arms cooperation alliances. [...] We view MEADS as a test case for defense cooperation between NATO allies.” (Armed Forces Newswire Service 1998)

In the fall of 1998, US policymakers signaled their willingness to continue with MEADS, but only on the condition that Germany and Italy agreed to one key change in the system’s features: Originally, the three countries had planned to develop a new interception missile for the MEADS project which would be particularly suitable for the tactical requirements of the system. However, the US now urged its partners to adopt a modified version of the US Patriot PAC-3 (Patriot Advanced Capability-3) interception missile, instead of developing a new joint missile. Policymakers in Washington reasoned that by relying on the PAC-3 missile they could significantly reduce their financial burden in MEADS. On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1999, US Secretary of Defense William Cohen promised that Washington would spend 150 million US Dollars on MEADS in the next three years, if Germany and Italy agreed to the US demand. (Kahler 2001: 61)

German politicians, who had hoped for a joint development of all technology needed for MEADS, were dismayed at the US posture and upset about not having been given a real choice, as Washington had made it clear that the only option for continued cooperation was to accept PAC-3 as a basis for MEADS. A German defense official angrily described US pressure as a case of extortion, saying it was like “having a pistol put to one’s head.” (Kubbig 2000: 5) Other defense experts questioned whether the MEADS project would still be a multinational project based on equality if Germany accepted US demands. As one official observed, MEADS “is a NATO system for the time being. The question is, will it be a NATO system with PAC-3 or is it a US program with minor shares for the allies?” (Kahler 2001: 61) Officials were particularly concerned that the US would not share key information on the technology of PAC-3 with Germany and Italy, since the missile was a US development project. They complained about strict Pentagon security guidelines that tightly restricted the amount of information available to non-American personnel. Some critics argued that the Pentagon wanted German and Italian officials to commit to a program based on PAC-3, while denying Europeans access to the very technical specifications needed to determine whether the new approach would satisfy European requirements. (Muradian 2000b)

In the end, Germany and Italy grudgingly gave in to US demands in order to ensure the continuation of the MEADS project. However, they made it clear that they would only continue their participation, if the US would lay out a plan for technology transfer regarding the PAC-3 interception missile – a request that Washington met in April 2000 with a proposal for a phased technology transfer plan. (Kahler 2001: 63) Germany and Italy also acquiesced in 1999 to a request for a new cost sharing agreement that would decrease the US financial burden. According to the new arrangement, the US contribution to the budget was decreased from 60 to 55%, while the German share was increased from 25 to 28% and the Italian from 15 to 17%. (Krause 2005: 18) With the two concessions by Germany and Italy, the MEADS project seemed to be back on track. In April 1999, the US, Germany, Italy, and their NATO partners reaffirmed the importance of the MEADS project in the jointly adopted Strategic Concept. In the document, the alliance members stated,

“The alliance’s defense posture against the risks and potential threats of the proliferation of NBC (nuclear, biological and chemical) weapons and their *means of delivery* must continue to be improved, including through work on *missile defenses*. As NATO forces may be called upon to operate beyond NATO’s borders, capabilities for dealing with proliferation risks must be *flexible, mobile, rapidly deployable and sustainable*.” (Rynning 2005: 118, emphasis added)

The first crisis in the MEADS project seemed to be surmounted without attracting much public attention or parliamentary debate.

### **2000-2004: Critical Voices Emerge**

While German officials had given in to US demands to make PAC-3 the principal interception missile for MEADS in 1999, doubts about the wisdom of this decision emerged the following year. Skepticism about the project in general mounted in 2000 and 2001, at one time bringing Germany close to withdrawal from the multilateral cooperation. However, following US pressure, the *Bundestag* approved the country’s continued participation, with the majority of parliamentarians showing only limited interest in the topic.

#### *Questioning MEADS Participation*

The renewed interest in MEADS among German defense officials was sparked by the final report of an independent commission charged with making recommendations to

the government on reforming the German *Bundeswehr*. The Commission ‘Shared Security and the Future of the Armed Forces’ – also called Weizsäcker-Commission after its chairman, former President Richard von Weizsäcker – issued its final report in May 2000. In the report, the commission acknowledged a growing danger to soldiers by missiles and airplanes, but voiced reservations about MEADS, particularly its cost and technological complexity. The report stated:

“The armed forces of the *Bundeswehr* must be able to protect themselves effectively from aerial threats during operations seeking to prevent or cope with crises. This calls for a mobile, extended aerial defense. This refers to technologically sophisticated defense systems whose complexity is growing further if they are to defend against ballistic missiles. The [complexity] involves unusually high technical and financial risks. The commission therefore deems it necessary to take decisions regarding extended aerial defense (erweiterte Luftverteidigung) by taking into account whether and to what degree an appropriate protection can be achieved at an acceptable cost.” (Nachtwei 2005: 3)

The commission’s cautious stance stirred discussion among Defense Ministry officials on whether to continue with MEADS and how to minimize risks associated with the project. Critics began to step forward and openly challenge the cost estimates for MEADS, arguing that the use of a modified PAC-3 missile would increase acquisition costs significantly. Some estimates by specialists suggested that the unit price of each modified PAC-3 missile could reach five million US Dollars – five times the amount the German government was prepared to pay for its missiles. (Muradian 2000a) With mounting doubts and qualms about MEADS among officials, Germany’s participation in the trilateral program suddenly seemed uncertain and shaky – only two years after the decision in US Congress had raised the specter of Washington’s withdrawal from MEADS. One German defense official commented in September 2000,

“We want to buy time to get firmer cost estimates, because based on what we see today this program is too expensive. More time also would let us find funding somewhere. The situation is desperate. We were the ones who [...] fought so hard to keep this program alive, for us to drop out now would do so much political damage.” (Muradian 2000a)

### *Considering Withdrawal*

Indeed, by November 2000, German policymakers were on the verge of withdrawing from the joint project with the US and Italy. In addition to skepticism about the apparently immense costs, leading defense officials voiced frustration once again about

the US information sharing policy regarding technical details of the PAC-3 missile. In particular, the Pentagon was refusing to disclose critical technical information on subcomponents developed for the MEADS system. (Muradian 2000b) This, in the German view, would force European contractors into a subordinate role in the project, preventing the companies to take part in the sophisticated engineering work that had originally attracted them to the program.

Discontent and frustration among German policymakers about the unbalanced relationship among the three MEADS participants and Berlin's inability to resist US demands escalated in November 2000. The culmination was a letter written by Undersecretary of State of the Defense Ministry Walter Stütze on November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2000, in which Stütze gave notice of Germany's intention to withdraw from MEADS. Stütze justified the decision by arguing that it remained unclear whether the system would answer the nation's future air defense needs and that the ballistic missile threat facing Germany remained limited. Specifically, he maintained that the MEADS concept did "not [...] satisfy the requirements for coping with the future spectrum of emerging threats in national defense and international military operations." (Hagen and Scheffran 2001) He furthermore pointed out that the Kosovo war had shown that radar sensors used in missile defense systems could easily be rendered ineffective by enemies using missiles with an anti-radar function.

Stuetze's letter prompted a furious response from Pentagon officials who reminded the German official that they had fought a series of internal battles with the US Army and the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization to ensure the survival of the program and secure adequate funding. US officials put intense pressure on Stütze's superior, German Minister of Defense Rudolf Scharping, to revoke the decision. In a major reversal of policy, Scharping overruled the decision announced by Stuetze in early December 2000, promising US Defense Secretary William Cohen that Germany would join the US and Italy in the next phase of the MEADS effort. The accord was reached during a meeting of NATO defense ministers in Brussels. Prior to the meeting, Cohen had sent a letter to Scharping threatening that if Germany backed out of the program, there would be no way back in. (Muradian 2000b) Scharping pledged to contribute 50 million German Marks to the planned risk reduction phase of MEADS, in which more detailed cost estimates and technical specifications would be developed. (Filipiak 2006: 266) This was the maximum financial contribution that he could promise, since a German law stipulated to obtain

approval of the *Bundestag*'s Finance Committee before committing to any spending plan exceeding this amount.

*Decision for Continued Participation amid Limited Debate*

In order to ensure that Germany could provide further funds to MEADS during the risk reduction phase, the German *Bundestag* voted on the project in June 2001. In the debates preceding the vote, some parliamentarians, particularly the two SPD members Volker Kröning and Verena Wohlleben, criticized the trilateral project by pointing out the difficulty of cooperating with the US. Kröning also stressed that MEADS did not seem rational in the strategic-military sense, since it would not provide significantly better protection than the Patriot system and the Eurofighter together – two systems that Germany already owned. (Kubbig 2005a: 3) Apart from Kröning and Wohlleben, few parliamentarians seemed to take a deeper interest in MEADS. (Landmann 2005: 5) Chancellor Schröder sought to dispel lingering doubts among the members of parliament by highlighting the potential benefits of participation. He maintained that Germany needed to continue with MEADS to avoid missing out on the “material” gains and on the “technological know-how” in the NATO project. (Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg Online 2003)

Although some parliamentarians remained doubtful, the *Bundestag* approved Germany's continued participation in MEADS, allotting a budget of 145.5 million German Marks to the risk reduction phase. (Krause 2005: 19) Several conditions were attached to the approval however, including a requirement for the government to seek another parliamentary decision before moving on to the development phase. Furthermore, the parliamentarians put new pressure on the government to make efforts to reduce the expected costs of the MEADS interception missile. When Germany signed the memorandum of understanding for the risk reduction phase shortly after the vote in parliament, a sideletter was thus attached stating that the US, Italy, and Germany would search for cost-effective alternatives to the PAC-3 missile during the next project phase. However, US policymakers made it clear to German officials that they did not interpret the sideletter as an expression of their willingness to give up the PAC-3 as the centerpiece in the MEADS architecture. They argued the letter only meant that Germany was free to develop and produce a separate interception missile, using its own resources. (Krause 2005:

19) After the German parliamentary approval, the three year risk reduction phase proceeded relatively quietly with few public discussion on MEADS.

### **2004-2008: Vivid Debates about MEADS**

As MEADS moved towards the design and development phase, the project finally received extensive public attention in 2004-2005, following a critical report by Bernd Kubbig, a research fellow at the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt. Parliamentarians vigorously debated the rationale for participation. Despite widespread doubts among politicians, the *Bundestag* approved the continuation of MEADS in April 2005 as well as a related development project in January 2007. The analysis of the debates shows that the importance of MEADS for the transatlantic relationship was a key reason for supporting participation.

#### *MEADS in the Spotlight*

The risk reduction phase was concluded in July 2004 with a final report and summary of recommendations that would enable the US, Italy, and Germany to reduce various financial and technological risks in the design and development phase. Policymakers in Washington and Rome quickly signaled their readiness to begin with the next phase of the joint project, signing a memorandum of understanding on continued participation at the end of September 2004. Due to established project rules and regulations for MEADS, Germany was given a time limit of six months to decide on its participation in the design and development phase. A deadline was set for March 26, 2005 for Berlin to receive parliamentary approval for continued involvement.

In order to prepare and facilitate the impending decision on the next MEADS phase, the Defense Committee of the German Parliament established a rapporteurs group called “Ground-based Air Defense” in November 2003. The group was charged with discussing the modernization of German ground-based air defense systems and evaluating MEADS based on hearings and discussions with experts. (Berichterstattergruppe Bodengebundene Luftverteidigung 2004) Seven parliamentarians, one civil officer and five air force officers from the German Ministry of Defense formed the rapporteurs group. After nine meetings, the seven parliamentarians in the group issued their final report on October 19, 2004, based

on a “virtually identical” draft that had previously been prepared by the group’s members from the Ministry of Defense. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 528)<sup>88</sup> After receiving the report, the Parliament’s Defense Committee, in turn accepted the final report unanimously on November 10, 2004. This report, which later leaked through to the public, observed the threat from ballistic missiles and aerial vehicles was growing globally and recommended to go ahead with the MEADS project. It stated that “From a technical and programmatic perspective, all conditions are met in order to develop MEADS according to the trilateral requirements [...] at an acceptable residual risk.” (Berichterstattergruppe Bodengebundene Luftverteidigung 2004: 10)

The report itself did not stir a major debate among experts and parliamentarians. But a critique on the MEADS project, published by Bernd Kubbig of the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt on December 21, 2004, provoked a fierce public debate on the trilateral defense project. Kubbig cast severe doubts about MEADS in his report, arguing that the project was too expensive and strategically irrational. He observed that although the Defense Committee had estimated the German financial contribution for the development of MEADS at 995 million Euros and procurement costs at 2.85 billion Euros, the figures were intransparent, as the Committee had failed to release publicly information on the number of systems it sought. He argued that depending on the scope, the costs of procuring MEADS could easily reach a double digit billion Euro sum. (Kubbig 2005a: 5) Furthermore, Kubbig questioned the focus of MEADS on missiles with a range of up to 1,000 kilometers. He observed that the main problem in global proliferation was not ‘horizontal proliferation,’ i.e. the spreading of missiles to an increasing number of countries, but rather ‘vertical proliferation,’ in which countries that already own missiles seek to improve the range of their arsenals. (Kubbig 2005a: 10) In addition, the greatest security threat to soldiers deployed abroad emanated from small weapons and artillery and not from missiles.

### *The Political Debate*

Kubbig’s report was followed by an intense debate about the pros and cons of MEADS between parliamentarians, governmental leaders, and defense experts. Some SPD

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<sup>88</sup> In an interview, the chair of the rapporteurs group, Hans-Peter Bartels (SPD) explained that the parliamentarians had charged the members from the Defense Ministry to take minutes on the results from their meetings, which later served as a first draft for the report. He insists that the structure and content of both documents were determined by the parliamentarians. (Bartels 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

politicians and a number of Green Party and FDP members backed Kubbig's assessment and strongly criticized the trilateral project. The disarmament expert in the SPD, Rolf Mützenich, was a particularly vocal opponent of MEADS within his party. In January 2005, he contended, "Abroad, we are confronted with non-state actors, with gangs that threaten our soldiers with small weaponry. MEADS neither provides protection against this [threat] nor against the proliferation of missiles." (Welt 2005b)<sup>89</sup> Green Party members were also highly critical of the MEADS project, keeping in line with their traditional skepticism about armament projects and military missions abroad. (Dempsey 2005) Winfried Nachtwei, the spokesman of the Green Party on defense issues stated that MEADS was "not an appropriate reaction to the alleged threat" and was "exceptionally expensive." (Agüera 2007: 127)

Green Party members were confronted with a quandary in formulating their position on MEADS, however. Despite their ideological opposition to MEADS, they also had to consider the political implications if they opposed the project in the parliamentary vote. They were in a governing coalition with the Social Democrats at the federal level, and leading politicians of the SPD had made it clear that they were keenly interested in continuing participation in the defense project – even if some party members disagreed. Strong opposition by the Green Party vis-à-vis its bigger coalition partner thus threatened to cause a significant rift between the two parties. This was particularly problematic since the SPD and Greens were trying to present a strong and united front ahead of state elections in May 2005 in Northrhine-Westphalia, where they were fighting hard against the opposing Christian Democrats. On the other hand, critics of MEADS received high-level backing when the German Federal Accounting Office (Bundesrechnungshof) issued a report on the cost-related aspects of MEADS on March 1, 2005. In this classified report, which leaked out to the media, the Accounting Office argued that cost estimates were intransparent and that actual costs were likely to exceed the estimated budget. In particular, it criticized that no spending caps had been included in the MEADS plan. (Kubbig 2005d: 11)

Proponents of the MEADS project could be found among members of the SPD and CDU-CSU, and they generally stressed three aspects in justifying their stance. Firstly, supporters reasoned that MEADS was important for the transatlantic relationship and for

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<sup>89</sup> Rolf Mützenich notes that many fellow politicians were not fully aware of the actual risks faced by soldiers abroad at this time. The security situation for NATO troops in Afghanistan was only beginning to deteriorate, and thus many politicians had not given in-depth consideration to the needs of soldiers. With the worsening security situation in Afghanistan in the following years, the general awareness grew, however. (Mützenich 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

NATO. They maintained that if Germany dropped out of the project, relations with the US and Italy would be severely damaged. For example, in January 2005, Defense Minister Peter Struck asserted, “[...] MEADS is indispensable for Germany’s reputation in NATO, and of course also for our relationship with our large partner, the United States, and our partner Italy.” (BBC 2005) In a similar vein, Social Democrat Elke Leonhard in March 2005 insisted that MEADS was “about the trans-Atlantic relationship.” (Dempsey 2005) In the aftermath of the bilateral dispute over the US invasion in Iraq, politicians in Berlin were sensitive about the state of US-German relations. Many seemed to believe that another dispute could send the already damaged relationship into a tailspin. As a result, the most commonly employed argument for MEADS used by supporters was that withdrawal from the project could harm US-German relations. (Mützenich 2004)<sup>90</sup>

Secondly, proponents contradicted claims that MEADS was strategically inadequate, arguing that it was a necessary defense system, particularly for ensuring the safety of German troops deployed abroad. Jürgen Hermann of the CDU, who had participated in the rapporteurs group, argued that MEADS was necessary because German soldiers had the “right to be equipped adequately.” (NGO Online 2006) Similarly, an SPD expert for defense issues stated in March 2005 that Germany would acquire the capability to “defend peace” and assume international responsibility through MEADS. (Agüera 2007: 139) Although some supporters pointed out that MEADS could protect at-risk objects in Germany in addition to increasing the security for soldiers, this was not a major point in the debate. Thirdly, some politicians highlighted that Germany could gain technological knowhow through participation in this sophisticated defense project. SPD member Leonhard for example argued that the project was providing Germany with “high-tech jobs.” (Arbeitsgruppe Friedensforschung an der Universität Kassel 2005)

### *Moving Forward with MEADS*

Both supporters and opponents in the political establishment received backing by scholars and experts who participated in the debate. A number of reports and articles were

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<sup>90</sup> SPD member and Coordinator for German-American Cooperation, Hans-Ulrich Klose agrees that German withdrawal from MEADS would damage the bilateral relationship. (Klose 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) SPD parliamentarian Rolf Mützenich disputes this argument. He maintains that US-German relations would not be harmed, stating: “The bilateral relationship rests on other aspects.” (Mützenich 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

published in early 2005 both criticizing and defending MEADS.<sup>91</sup> Because of the intensity of public discussions, the German government was forced to request an extension of the deadline for its decision on participation in the development phase, and with the agreement by the US and Italy, a new deadline was set for the end of April 2005. With growing urgency, supporters in the SPD called on their coalition partner, the Green Party, to support MEADS. Defense Minister Peter Struck asked whether the coalition needed another politically damaged minister – alluding to the already weakened Foreign Minister Fischer. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 539)

In the end, the potential impact on the governing coalition tipped the scales. On April 19, 2005, the leader of the parliamentary group of the Green Party, Katrin Göring-Eckard announced that the party's parliamentarians would vote for MEADS, as the "balance of forces in the coalition was such that the project could not be averted." (Spiegel 2005) As a result, the Budget Committee of the Parliament unanimously accepted the MEADS plan on April 20, 2005, and two days later the majority of the *Bundestag* voted in favor of the project. However, in giving their approval, parliamentarians imposed several conditions to ensure greater transparency, accountability, and parliamentary control. For example, it was decided that the Ministry of Defense would have to report to the *Bundestag*'s Budget Committee annually on the state of development and the costs of MEADS. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 535)

After the 2004-2005 clash between MEADS supporters and opponents, parliamentary interest regarding the project evaporated. A funding request to the parliament for the development of a secondary missile for MEADS, the IRIS-T (Infra Red Imaging System Tail) missile, as a less sophisticated and allegedly cheaper missile in January 2007 elicited little parliamentary debate – in stark contrast to the April 2005 MEADS decision. The planned IRIS-T missile had been severely criticized by the Federal Court of Auditors in 2004 for its high costs, and the Court had demanded that the development of the IRIS-T be deliberated together with the full MEADS plan in parliament in April 2005, since the missile was an integral part of the German project plan. However, supporters of MEADS apparently feared complications if IRIS-T was included in the initial funding request, and thus succeeded in delaying the decision until 2007. The *Bundestag*'s Budgetary Committee

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<sup>91</sup> For example, papers critical of MEADS include Landmann 2005 and Lange 2005. Papers in support of the project include Krause 2005, Grams 2005 and Bauer and Agüera 2005.

approved the development of the secondary missile worth 123 million Euros in January 2007, without attracting significant public attention.<sup>92</sup>

Soon after the decision, suspicion emerged about whether important information had been withheld from parliamentarians by the Ministry of Defense (MoD). On February 8, 2007, only eight days after the German decision on IRIS-T, US acquisition chief for military equipment Kenneth Krieg officially informed Germany and Italy that budgetary pressures forced the US to scale back its funding for MEADS. The resulting changes and adjustments in the MEADS project would likely mean delays and cost increases in the overall project, including the planned German secondary missile IRIS-T.

Since the German parliamentary decision and the US notification followed in quick succession, some observers suggested that officials of the German MoD had pushed IRIS-T through parliament knowing of the US budget problems. The Green Party's Alexander Bonde for example was suspicious, stating that "we lawmakers have been told that MEADS is on budget and on time, but the dates of parliamentary approval and the official U.S. letter are [chronologically] too close and therefore suggest that the problems [were] known before." (Inside Missile Defense 2007) On the other hand, Germany's Deputy Defense Secretary for Armaments, Peter Eickenboom, rejected such doubts, contending that his ministry had "no information about possible budgetary problems of the US Army" until early February. (Inside Missile Defense 2007) Regardless of potential future changes in the costs and time plan for MEADS and IRIS-T, the German government signed a contract for the development of the secondary missile with the German company Diehl BGT Defense on May 11, 2007. (Deagel 2007)

Despite Germany's decision to move ahead with the development of MEADS, the system's deployment, planned to begin around 2016, remains uncertain. In the spring of 2010, a planned financial austerity package prompted new debates about the need for MEADS. At the time, the Merkel government was shaping a major savings program, designed to bring the budget deficit under control and comply with a legal ruling whereby Germany is bound by the 'Schuldenbremse,' or debt-brake, which parliament passed into

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<sup>92</sup> According to insiders, the decision to develop Iris-T was based less on strategic rationale than on political considerations: Since defense industry giant EADS had received the contract for the MEADS project, the other major company involved in missile technology, Diehl, was given the contract for Iris-T. In this context, it is interesting to note that MD expert Sascha Lange has calculated that Iris-T is unlikely to be cheaper than the Patriot interception missile. More specifically, the Iris-T project only makes financial sense, if these rockets (instead of the PAC-3) are used to such an extent that the development and procurement costs for Iris-T are amortized. (Lange 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

law in 2009. Under pressure to identify items for cost cuts, FDP representatives proposed to discontinue the MEADS project. (Katsioulis 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) They criticized the project as strategically irrational and pointed out that it faced major delays and a cost overrun in the development phase. (Aachener Nachrichten 2010)<sup>93</sup> The German government is likely to be discouraged from dropping out during the development phase due to treaty obligations, however: Washington, Rome and Berlin previously agreed that if one of them withdraws unilaterally during this phase, that country would have to continue paying its share of the cost. (Fasse 2010, Welt 2010)<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, German politician will also consider the potential negative impact of a withdrawal on transatlantic relations. Hans-Ulrich Klose, Coordinator for German-American Cooperation, observed that leaders in Washington were already doubtful about Germany's reliability as a partner, voicing frustration about Berlin's diverging views on economic and fiscal policies. (Klose 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

### **Explaining German Policy**

A striking feature of German MEADS policy since the mid-1990s has been the high level of support for the trilateral project among decision-makers, despite growing frustration about the difficulty of cooperating with the US. On numerous occasions Germany's commitment to MEADS was put to the test, as US policymakers downgraded the importance of the project and cut funding or changed important project parameters. For Berlin's political leaders, coordination with Washington has been a challenging and often frustrating experience, and it is not surprising that doubts about MEADS have grown over the years. However, it is remarkable that German policymakers have consistently decided to make significant concessions to the US and continued the commitment to the joint project.

For Germany, this compromising policy has been costly – at first politicians consented to an increase in Berlin's share in the project funding from 25 to 28%, then they gave in to US demands to use the US-produced Patriot missile as the primary missile for

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<sup>93</sup> The newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) also speculated that MEADS had been downgraded in priority by the Defense Ministry. (Lohse 2010) Debates about the need for MEADS are likely to occur again in the late summer of 2010, when the project reaches a major milestone by conducting several live-fire tests.

<sup>94</sup> Note, however, that MEADS has also come under scrutiny in the US: In March 2010, the Army tried to cancel the project, arguing it had become too expensive, it was taking too long, and it had limited military usefulness. Nevertheless, the Pentagon resisted the attempt to withdraw, arguing that the US would have to pay high penalties. (Whitlock 2010)

MEADS, and finally they quietly accepted that Germany would have to develop the secondary, less sophisticated missile on its own, without US participation and financial support. German political leaders gained little in return for their concessions – except Washington’s continued participation in MEADS. Although US policymakers pledged to transfer technological know-how regarding the Patriot missile to Germany and Italy, frictions regarding the timing and extent of this transfer have continued, reflecting the lopsided power relationship between the US and the two European partners in the project. The following sections seek to explain why German lawmakers have been so committed to MEADS. As in the previous part, the analysis considers three aspects: (1) politicians’ threat assessments, (2) their evaluation of the technological feasibility and cost-effectiveness, and (3) the relation between German role conceptions and the country’s MEADS policy.

### *(1) Threat Assessment*

In contrast to the ambivalent assessment regarding a territorial missile threat, there seems to be a widely shared consensus among German policymakers that soldiers deployed abroad face a danger from ballistic missiles and other aerial vehicles. Until the 2004-2005 debate, even those experts and politicians critical of the MEADS project hardly ever challenged the assumption that German soldiers were confronted with a growing threat on their missions. For example, the Weizsäcker Report of 2000 noted that the *Bundeswehr* must be capable to defend against aerial vehicles and missiles, although it criticized the technological and financial risks inherent in MEADS. The threat assessment by German elites was apparently influenced by their perceptions of the post-Cold War security environment. Based on the experience from the Gulf War of 1990-1991, German politicians assumed that multilateral forces in crisis areas would be exposed to a growing threat from short- and medium-range missile technology.

The 2004 Kubbig report for the first time fundamentally challenged the notion that missiles and aerial vehicles presented a considerable threat to soldiers. Kubbig’s claim that small conventional weapons and artillery were a considerably greater danger for troops during deployment than missiles was picked up by critics in the political leadership, including members of the SPD and the Green Party as mentioned above.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless,

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<sup>95</sup> Recent experience by *Bundeswehr* troops deployed abroad seem to confirm this view. In the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, for example, opponents from the Taliban have used missiles in their strikes, but by far the gravest threat to the *Bundeswehr* has emanated from suicide bombers using primitive devices in their deadly attacks. (Klein 2008)

MEADS supporters defended their view that missile technology was spreading both horizontally and vertically. If *Bundeswehr* forces are deployed in the Middle East, according to SPD member Elke Leonhard, it should be taken into account that there is “no country in that region, which does not possess missile technology.” (Arbeitsgruppe Friedensforschung an der Universität Kassel 2005)

Inspector General of the *Bundeswehr* (Generalinspekteur) Wolfgang Schneiderhan also argued that MEADS might be needed in the future against threats closer to Germany’s territory. Responding to criticism that MEADS only had a range of 1,000 kilometers and that within this range Germany was surrounded by friends, Schneiderhan stated in March 2005 that new dangers within the close vicinity of Germany may quickly emerge. He asserted that “One cannot say that just because something does not exist as a threat today, it will not exist in the next thirty years. We need MEADS as an insurance for the future.” (Schneiderhan 2005) In a similar vein, Foreign Ministry official Jürgen Schnappertz maintained that attacks on German territory from ships located for example in the North Sea, were a conceivable threat. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

## *(2) Technological Feasibility and Cost-Effectiveness*

As discussed above in the section on territorial defense, German politicians generally seem to believe that the entire range of MD systems is technologically feasible in principle. However, in specific deliberations on MEADS, supporters and opponents alike hardly ever consider the question of whether the MEADS architecture is viable. Undoubtedly, the complexity of the system makes it extremely difficult for officials to judge and comment on the technological capability and setup. Furthermore, politicians may have felt encouraged to support MEADS without knowledge of technical details by the 2004 rapporteur group’s report, originally drafted by experts from the Defense Ministry. The report points out that the improvements in decoy and radar absorption technology by potential ‘enemy’ states present a challenge and necessitate a continuous effort to develop effective interception technology. Simultaneously, its authors seek to alleviate concerns about potential technological hurdles in the project. The report depicts the technological risks inherent in MEADS as minor and uses reassuring language to describe the capability of the system. For example, the report argues that the system’s ‘hit-to-kill’ capability is “necessary to ensure” that multiple warheads can be “effectively combated.” The resulting system “will have the capability [to defend] against the whole range of expected aerial [138]

threats in the lower tier.” (Berichterstattergruppe Bodengebundene Luftverteidigung 2004: 7) Policymakers may thus have avoided the question whether MEADS will be technological feasible and effective, although some researchers have expressed their doubts. (Grams 2003: 23)

The question of the cost-effectiveness of the MEADS project has presented a similar challenge for German policymakers. Without in-depth knowledge about the technology used in MEADS, officials apparently find it difficult to judge whether cost estimates submitted by the Defense Ministry are adequate and realistic. As seen in the analysis above, policymakers increasingly focused on the budgetary question when the US was insisting on the use of the Patriot missile from the late 1990s. German officials voiced considerable concern that this change in the project would lead to a skyrocketing budget – an issue that was to be addressed in the risk reduction phase beginning in 2001. According to the report by the rapporteur group in 2004, this project phase helped to establish firmer cost estimates that would eliminate major financial risks for the participants. Again, the report in reassuring language stated that Germany’s financial contribution to the development of MEADS would be “limited to a total of 847 million Euros.” (Berichterstattergruppe Bodengebundene Luftverteidigung 2004: 11, Kubbig 2005d: 10)

Nevertheless, Kubbig and other critics voiced considerable concern about the costs of MEADS, as the report did not include any figures on the necessary procurement budget. Under heavy public pressure, the Ministry of Defense released an assessment of acquisition expenses. According to the spending plan submitted to parliament on March 3, 2005, the MoD planned to procure 12 MEADS batteries, 216 PAC-3 missiles and 504 Iris-T missiles, at a total estimated cost of 2.85 billion Euros. (Agüera 2005) Skeptics and critics were unconvinced by the official estimate, arguing that the cost figure had been understated to avoid going beyond the politically sensitive amount of 3 billion Euros for procurement costs. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 530) They pointed out that the MoD calculations were based on figures different from originally stated needs. Even supporters of MEADS voiced frustration that the MoD was deducing its procurement amounts from finances rather than making a strategic needs-based analysis. (Bauer and Agüera 2005) The MoD was furthermore challenged by the Federal Court of Auditors, which estimated expenditures would amount to 6 billion Euros, assuming the same procurement figures as the MoD. (Agüera 2007: 137) Kubbig pointed out that the costs could even reach between 10 and 12 billion Euros, and cautioned that the MoD had not included running costs like maintenance

and system operation in any of its assessments – even though this would likely be a considerable chunk in the overall budget. (Dehéz 2005: 4)

As seen in the above discussion, budgetary pressures on defense spending have recently spurred new discussion about MEADS. It is likely that public debates on the project will persist, casting uncertainty about Germany's continued participation in the future.

### *(3) Policy Goals and Role Conceptions*

German policy demonstrates that the assessment of the strategic need for MEADS has been linked to foreign policy goals and hence the role conceptions held by decision-makers. At the time when Bonn began to negotiate cooperation on the project in the 1990s, Germany did not have a sizable contingent of troops deployed abroad that would have justified participation in this costly project, aimed primarily at increasing the security for soldiers.

In line with the role conception of 'exporter of security', German MEADS participation was driven by politicians' aspiration to contribute more actively to international security. Firstly, officials sought to enhance the aerial defense capabilities for NATO troops by cooperating in this multilateral project. After all, German decision-makers saw a special responsibility to assume a leadership role in improving these capabilities, since Germany had been one of the main benefactors of NATO's integrated air defense system during the Cold War. (Krause 2005: 7) Secondly, officials apparently hoped to facilitate future deployment decisions by raising the level of security for soldiers abroad. Thus, they sought to overcome the considerable reluctance in the population about expanding Germany's military role. Politicians reasoned that some of the public opposition to international dispatches may be overcome by providing soldiers with better defense equipment.

However, the role conception of 'exporter of security' does not provide a full explanation for German policy. There is a striking inconsistency in how policymakers evaluate the utility of comprehensive territorial missile defense and of MEADS. Officials opposed territorial MD, pointing out that complete security was unattainable, as the full range of threats could not be covered. Germany would have to live with a certain level of vulnerability, they maintained. This reasoning could have been applied with regards to the

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security of soldiers deployed abroad, but the majority of politicians did not consider this viewpoint. The gap in how policymakers conceived of the utility of missile defense for soldiers and for territorial protection suggests that other factors influenced the assessment.

Reflecting the importance of the role conception of 'reliable partner,' policymakers contended that MEADS would serve to strengthen transatlantic relations between the US and European countries within NATO. This argument often dominated debates, with the protection of soldiers playing a secondary role. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 537) As seen in the analysis above, German policymakers perceived the project as a 'test case' for cooperation between the US and Europe. Through NATO, they sought to keep the US involved in multilateral fora and in European security in particular. Germany's willingness to make a number of concessions in order to ensure continuation of the MEADS project attests to the importance attached to transatlantic cooperation. Officials in Berlin never seriously considered the option of pursuing a similar MD system without the US, and with other European countries instead. Rather, policymakers insisted on cooperation with the US, while providing France the opportunity to join the effort.

Particularly in the mid-1990s, German leaders actively sought to involve France and other European countries in the joint project. In doing so, German officials followed the traditional 'sowohl-als-auch' (as-well-as) approach of mediating between the contrasting interests of the US and France. Officials consciously pursued MEADS under NATO auspices, which helped to deflect criticism of exclusivity from non-participants. Furthermore, this setup allowed them to keep the door open for France – at least symbolically – to re-join the project after dropping out in 1996. Germany's emphasis on a multilateral, inclusive approach to MEADS was thus in line with traditional foreign policy norms that are reflected in the role conceptions 'reliable partner,' 'regional stabilizer,' and 'contributor to regional cooperation.' At the same time, the multilateral approach matched budgetary needs for financing such an expensive military project jointly with as many partner countries as possible.

Even though German politicians praised MEADS as a multilateral project within NATO, in reality it seems questionable whether it may be called a truly collaborative venture. In fact, even among some of Germany's strongest supporters of MEADS, doubts have emerged about the extent to which the project could be called a NATO project, as US policymakers took advantage of their dominant position in financial and technological terms. Officially, decisions among the three participating nations were taken under the

NATO principle of ‘one country, one vote,’ but the analysis of German policy demonstrates the significant US pressure on its two partners to acquiesce to various demands. In 2003, US leaders went so far as to float the idea of eliminating the NATO MEADS Management Agency in Huntsville, Alabama – a proposal that was vigorously opposed and thwarted by German officials. (Agüera 2003) Although Berlin’s leadership maintains that MEADS serves as a showcase for future transatlantic cooperation in military development projects, skeptics, for example in France, are unlikely to consider it a suitable model for future participation.

Given that MEADS is an armament project, it seems surprising that German policymakers have rarely made references to the possible tensions with the role conception ‘non-militarist country.’ Strikingly, the government was able to begin participation in MEADS without stirring a major controversy in the mid-1990s – at a time when there was considerable concern within Germany about expanding the military’s role overseas. Several factors help to explain the fact that officials did not exhibit more reluctance to join the project. Firstly, MEADS possesses two important qualities that correspond to the German conception of ‘non-militarist country:’ the project is a multilateral project under a formal institution, and the system is a defensive rather than offensive military system. MEADS has been less contested compared to armament projects such as the Eurofighter, which may be classified as an offensive system. Secondly, especially during the early phases of the MEADS project, the ruling coalition was careful not to overemphasize the utility of the missile defense system for German troops on overseas deployment. They argued that MEADS could be used both for point protection of German territory and for the defense of NATO troops, two points that were uncontroversial. By the time the fierce public debate on MEADS broke out in 2004-2005, policymakers had gained considerable confidence about Germany’s role in international military missions.

Overall, the influence of Germany’s role conceptions is clearly reflected in German foreign policy on MEADS. The roles of ‘exporter of security’ and ‘reliable partner’ strongly affected the evaluation of the joint project by decision-makers. However, other factors also impacted German behavior. As the analysis shows, the stance by Green Party members in the April 2005 vote on MEADS was significantly influenced by domestic consideration about the coalition with the SPD and the need to avoid a rift between the two parties before the election in Northrhine-Westphalia. Furthermore, German MEADS policy was driven by material interests, as politicians sought to gain access to technological know-

how and to secure contracts for Germany's defense industry.<sup>96</sup> Major defense companies involved in the development of MEADS have also made massive financial donations to all major parties in Germany, possibly in the hope of receiving favorable treatment by politicians in return. For example, one study estimates that in 2002, the defense company EADS and its major shareholder Daimler Chrysler donated about half a million Euros to political parties. (Arbeitsgruppe Friedensforschung an der Universität Kassel 2005) Such financial backing may have provided policymakers with an important incentive to participate in MEADS.

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<sup>96</sup> The economic interest may be explained by the traditional self-concept of Germany as a 'trading power,' an aspect that was not considered in the coding of role conceptions. See for example, Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 536.

## **Part 4: German Policy on Assisting other Countries with MD**

### **Introduction**

Aside from cases of individual self-defense, missile defense systems can be used to assist other countries in protecting their troops or territory. Foreign requests for German MD capabilities may raise difficult policy questions, especially when there is no UN or NATO resolution justifying such support. Because of the high mobility of MEADS, which allows Berlin to deploy the interception batteries rapidly in crisis areas, it likely will face lending requests once the systems come into use. However, Germany already had to respond to similar demands for its Patriot MD systems. Both in the Gulf War of 1990-1991 and in the Iraq War of 2003 Germany was asked to supply Patriot MD batteries, which are not as light and mobile as MEADS systems but nevertheless can be transported to strategically important points for protection.

This part examines how Berlin's policymakers reacted in four request cases: the Israeli call for Patriot systems during the 1990-1991 Gulf War, and similar demands for MD protection of Israel, Turkey, and the US in the run-up to the Iraq War of 2003. The analysis finds that the Federal Republic has selectively provided MD capabilities, due to a role conflict between the conceptions of 'exporter of security' and 'anti-militarist country.' While German leaders sought to aid allies and partners in their defense needs, they were concerned about becoming involved in potential offensive moves by partner countries. Since the US attack on Iraq was not legitimized through a UN resolution, Berlin's politicians sought to avoid the impression that they were endorsing war plans. Hence, they rejected the US call for Patriots in late 2002 and consented to the Turkish request only after controversial debates.

Israel's demands for Patriot systems were fulfilled swiftly in both the 1990-1991 Gulf War and the Iraq War. The perceived German historical responsibility vis-à-vis the state of Israel played an important role in speeding deliberations in these cases. Nevertheless, the analysis of political debates shows that Berlin's leaders were still concerned about a potential involvement with offensive and perhaps unjust wars. The analysis finds that role conceptions provide a convincing explanation for Germany's selective provision of MD capabilities to partner countries.

## **The 1990-1991 Gulf War: Patriot Request for the Protection of Israel**

### *The War's Evolution*

After the invasion of Kuwait by Iraqi troops in August 1990, the international community led by the United States sought to pressure Iraq's withdrawal through a series of UN resolutions and economic sanctions. Resolution number 678 was passed on November 29th, 1990. It set a January 15, 1991 deadline for Iraqi troops to leave Kuwaiti territory while authorizing the use of military means by UN troops to enforce the withdrawal if Baghdad did not comply. As it became clear that Iraq was not going to respond to international pressure, a coalition of forces to liberate Kuwait was formed under Washington's leadership. On January 16, the day after the deadline, the coalition launched a massive air campaign on Iraq under the codename "Operation Desert Storm."

In retaliation, Iraq began firing Scud missiles on Israel in the hope of turning the course of events in its own favor. It hoped to draw Israel into the war and thereby prompt the US' Arab allies to retract from the coalition forces out of reluctance to fight alongside the Jewish State. However, amid strong pressure from the US to remain out of the conflict, Israel decided to refrain from any retaliatory measures.

### *Israel's Request for Patriots and German Reasons for Support*

Because of the low accuracy, the Scud missiles targeting Israel were not very effective. Still, a total of 39 missiles landed in Israel, causing extensive property damage, two direct deaths, and injuring a number of people. (Freedman and Karsh 1993: 331ff) By late January 1991, leaders in Germany increasingly felt the need to help Israel in protecting its territory from missile attacks. The perceived duty to provide support was based on several interrelated considerations. Firstly, German policymakers felt a special historic responsibility to defend Israel from missiles. The sense of urgency to act grew when a Scud missile hit the city of Ramat Gan near Tel Aviv, injuring more than 90 people on January 22, 1991. (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1991) German politicians – like their counterparts in the US – worried that serious harm and damage by Scud missiles would provoke the Israeli government into retaliation, causing a possible escalation of the conflict.

Secondly, leaders in Berlin felt particularly uncomfortable to stand by in the conflict without offering support to Israel after newspapers reported that German companies had

been involved in helping Iraq build up its chemical weapons industry. When Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher paid a visit to Israel on January 23, he was warmly received by Israeli government leaders, but the news of the involvement of German companies cast a shadow over the bilateral relationship. Some Israelis condemned German behavior, comparing the chemical gas threat they faced to the deadly gas used in concentration camps by the Nazi government. (Brinkley 1991a) On his visit, Genscher toured several of the sites hit by Iraqi missiles in and around Tel Aviv and asked Israeli leaders how his country could help. (Brinkley 1991b) In response, Israel drew up a list of military equipment, including additional anti-Scud Patriot batteries to supplement those provided by the US.

A third consideration behind Genscher's offer to aid Israel was the need to respond to growing criticism by members of the coalition forces about Germany's limited support in the conflict. During the Cold War, German leaders had interpreted the Constitution as banning the dispatch of the *Bundeswehr* to combat zones outside the NATO domain, and thus Berlin had rejected US calls for sending troops to the conflict area. Instead, Germany had opted for providing financial assistance to the coalition effort – a policy that was denounced as 'checkbook diplomacy' by some US decision-makers. In seeking to counter this criticism, Chancellor Kohl promised that the Federal Republic would pay a fair share of war costs and would provide increased military aid to Israel. (Kinzer 1991) In late January, the government pledged 670 million US Dollars in military aid to Israel, and German military-transport aircrafts began delivering the equipment including Patriot batteries on February 1. (Brinkley 1991b) However, Bonn sustained its policy of not sending soldiers to conflict areas, and thus the Patriot batteries were sent without a German squadron for operation.

#### *Controversy in the Green Party: Concerns about Contributing to War*

In general, policymakers in Germany supported the decision to assist Israel – particularly those in the ruling conservative coalition. The high level of consensus among politicians helps explain the quick delivery of the military aid. Even the majority of Green Party politicians backed the provision of support to Israel, despite the strong pacifist sentiments among members. The spokesman for the Green Party's executive committee, Hans-Christian Ströbele, caused a major controversy within his party when he voiced disagreement in an interview, first published in the Jerusalem Post. Ströbele described [146]

Israeli policies as overly provocative vis-à-vis the Palestinians and all Arab states, including Iraq, and spoke out against German assistance using the Green Party anti-proliferation and disarmament rationale of the pre-1990s. In opposing the provision of Patriot air defense missiles, he asserted that no weapon was purely defensive in nature. (Luppés 2005: 9)

However, Ströbele's comments infuriated many fellow party members, including rising star and key player in later intervention debates Joschka Fischer. Fischer warned that Ströbele's stance would weaken the position of Germany's peace movement and do great damage to the Green Party. Furthermore, he emphasized that the Federal Republic had a special obligation towards Israel because of the Holocaust. Fischer was soon joined by other Green Party members denouncing Ströbele, forcing him to step down in the aftermath of the Gulf War. Despite favoring support to Israel however, Fischer and other Green Party members never gave up their principled opposition to the US-led attack on Iraq. In February 1991, the party even labeled a continuation of the hostilities a "war crime" and implored the government to distance itself from the "murderous policies of the Bush administration" and end all financial support of the war effort. (Luppés 2005: 9)

### **The Iraq War of 2003: Patriot Requests for Protection of Israel, Turkey and US**

#### *The Evolution of the War*

In late 2002 and early 2003, Washington accused Iraq of possessing weapons of mass destruction that posed a serious and imminent threat to the national security of the US, its allies and partner countries. Some US officials also maintained that Saddam Hussein supported and harbored terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda. Repeatedly, President Bush demanded a complete end to the alleged Iraqi production of WMD and full compliance with UN resolutions requiring international weapons inspectors unrestricted access to suspected weapons production facilities. On February 5, 2003, US Secretary of State Colin Powell presented further evidence to the UN Security Council that Iraq had the means of attacking the East Coast of the US with biological or chemical weapons delivered by unmanned aerial vehicles, arguing that the regime was ready to launch an attack at any time. Despite widespread doubts within US military and intelligence circles and the international community about the immediate danger posed by Iraq, the US government announced in March 2003 that diplomacy had failed and therefore it would proceed with a coalition of

allied countries to rid Iraq of its alleged weapons of mass destruction. The military campaign against Iraq began on March 20, 2003 by coalition forces from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Denmark, Poland and other nations.

In keeping with his promise made during the federal election campaign in the spring and summer of 2002, German Chancellor Schröder remained adamantly opposed to the war, refusing to send *Bundeswehr* troops to Iraq.<sup>97</sup> He argued that further efforts in disarmament through diplomacy should have been made and voiced doubts about the accuracy of US intelligence estimates about Iraq's WMD program. At the same time, Berlin's leadership was faced with the question of whether to supply Patriot missile defense systems to countries located in the immediate neighborhood of Iraq or involved in the conflict. With the looming US-led war on Iraq in late 2002 to early 2003, the governments of Israel, Turkey, and the US sought the deployment of German Patriot missile defense batteries against potential strikes by Iraq. The following paragraphs will detail German policy responses to each of these requests.

### **(1) Patriot Request for Protection of Israel**

#### *Israel's Request and Reasons for German Support*

Israel, which was particularly concerned about possible attacks by Iraqi missiles based on its experience in the Gulf War of 1990-1991, officially requested the provision of a Patriot system on November 26, 2002. Among the German political elite, an overwhelming majority favored the assistance to Israel. Two arguments dominated the discourse among proponents: first, the historic responsibility to Israel and second, the purely defensive nature of providing the system to a state that was not directly involved in the war.

In an interview with the newspaper *Die Zeit*, German Chancellor Schröder stated that he would be happy to help Israel with a system that was not used for attacks but protected against incoming missiles. He declared "If the Israeli Government feels it needs this added security, we will help - and [do so] promptly." Alluding to Germany's Nazi past, Schröder furthermore maintained that "The security of the Israeli state and its citizens is of utmost importance to us." (BBC 2002b) Green Party members echoed such sentiments

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<sup>97</sup> According to rumors, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer played an important role in convincing Schröder to announce the government's firm opposition to the planned US war on Iraq. (Klose 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

about the moral duty to help Israel, while sustaining their firm opposition to the US-led war. The executive of the Green Party Fraction (Geschäftsführer der Grünen Fraktion) Volker Beck acknowledged that Germany could “not principally turn down security requests by Israel,” especially since the Patriot system was a defensive weapons system. (Spiegel 2002a)

#### *Anti-Militarist Sentiments: Concerns about Contributing to War*

Although the support to Israel generally drew widespread backing, some German politicians including left-wing SPD members pointed out potential inconsistencies that such a policy-line entailed. (Landler 2002) The main problem was that the assistance to Israel could be seen as contradicting Schröder’s election promise not to join the US-led war on Iraq – a promise that is widely believed to have won Schröder his second term in office. The chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in the *Bundestag* Michael Müller argued that Germany’s provision of Patriot systems to Israel might signify an indirect contribution to the US-led war. He reasoned the situation could be particularly problematic if the US withdrew some of its missile defense systems stationed in Israel to use them in the war against Iraq, for example to protect important strategic points like airfields. Such a rearrangement would mean that German equipment in Israel served as a replacement for US systems and thus contributed to the US-led war. (Spiegel 2002a) Similarly, Prime Minister Edmund Stoiber criticized Schröder’s stance in supporting Israel as the “greatest election lie,” since it contradicted the promise of non-participation in the war. (Zettel 2003: 7)

Those in the SPD however, who wished to assist Israel, maintained that the delivery of Patriot systems did not signify an involvement in the war. Foreign policy expert Gernot Erler reasoned, “Israel is not a participant in the war, but would be a third country, that might possibly be affected by the war.” (Spiegel 2002a) This argument was obviously based on the assumption that Israel would again behave as it did in the Gulf War in 1991, when it stayed out of the conflict. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 525)

On the whole, an overwhelming majority of German policymakers favored the assistance to Israel. Hence, the Federal Security Council (Bundessicherheitsrat) decided to approve the lease of a pair of Patriot missile defense batteries to Israel on January 16, 2003.<sup>98</sup> As discussed earlier, Patriots could be viewed as a purely defensive system, which

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<sup>98</sup> The financial terms of the deal were not disclosed. (New York Times 2003)

was the main argument in favor of the lease. The importance to German politicians of distinguishing between defensive and potentially offensive military equipment became particularly evident in a parallel discussion of whether the Federal Republic should deliver so-called 'Fuchs' tanks to Israel. Strong opposition quickly formed among politicians against the provision of such tanks, since they could easily be used in an offensive rather than defensive way. In the end, Berlin declared that it could not provide such tanks, although Defense Minister Struck justified the decision by stating that Germany itself needed the tanks in its *Bundeswehr* missions abroad. (Zettel 2003: 9)

## **(2) Patriot Request for the Protection of Turkey**

### *The Problematic US Request for War Preparations and the Defense of Turkey*

US defense specialists anticipated that in the looming US-led war on Iraq in 2003, Turkey would be critical in military terms because they hoped to open a second front in Northern Iraq, using Turkey as a base for the attack. Consequently, the country was assumed to be a likely target of retaliatory attacks by Iraq. (Bernstein 2003, Bender 2003) Because of the potential risk to Turkey, US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz in December 2002 called on NATO members to provide support to ensure the country's security. (Zettel 2003: 10) In mid-January 2003, the US made an official request to NATO for alliance preparations for war. It called on members to make preparations to defend Turkey, to allow the US to use military bases and air space in Europe, to dispatch alliance troops in order to increase security at US military bases across Europe, and to replace US peacekeepers in the Balkans in the event they were needed in Iraq. (Bender 2003, Zettel 2003: 10) One of the key demands was that Germany should provide Patriot missile defense systems along with AWACS airplanes for the security of Turkey.

Compared to the Israeli case, the question of whether to send Patriot missiles to Turkey was more problematic for German decision-makers. The matter was particularly touchy, since it had been Washington – not Ankara – that had requested assistance. (Overhaus 2005: 29) Political leaders worried that the acceptance of US demands and the planning for war by NATO allies would send the wrong signal. The decision might give the impression that diplomatic efforts for a solution in the Iraq conflict had been abandoned and that the alliance would readily endorse Washington's plan to topple the Hussein regime.

Chancellor Schröder in particular feared an acceptance of US demands would be criticized as a break of his election promise not to contribute to a war in Iraq.

On the other hand, Berlin's leadership felt that Germany had to meet its alliance obligations to ensure the security of fellow NATO member Turkey. In formulating their policy response, politicians sought to skirt this underlying contradiction in policy goals. Initially, Berlin did not respond to the request in NATO directly, adopting a wait-and-see posture while continuing to oppose the US confrontational course with Iraq. But when in late January and early February a number of European countries publicly declared their solidarity with Washington in the Iraq conflict, German leaders came under growing pressure to clarify their position. On January 30, eight EU members and candidate countries – including Great Britain and Spain – published an 'Open Letter of the Eight', stating their backing for the US. A week later, on February 6, a similar letter was signed by ten states of the so-called Vilnius group, including Slovenia, Croatia and Romania.

#### *Germany's Difficult Balancing Act: Alliance Obligations and Anti-Militarist Sentiments*

With the support from these countries, an imminent US-led war on Iraq became more likely, forcing German leaders to take position on whether they would aid Turkey. In a surprise move, German Defense Minister Peter Struck announced at the Munich Security Conference on February 8 that Berlin would deliver Patriot missiles to Turkey via the Netherlands. Struck emphasized that Germany was responding to a demand for the missiles by the Netherlands rather than to the request by the US. (Stern 2003, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2003a) Furthermore, he pointed out that Dutch troops would operate the Patriot systems and thus no German soldiers would be involved.

Despite signaling their willingness to provide Patriot missiles to Turkey, German politicians continued to oppose US war planning and the demand for NATO allies to launch preparations for an armed conflict with Iraq. Germany's resistance culminated in a declaration on February 10, that Berlin, along with the governments of France and Belgium would veto a decision in NATO in favor of the US request. The three states argued that they wanted to avoid providing the US with an indirect legitimization for attacking Iraq and insisted that the UN Security Council should be given more time to debate the issue.

Germany's seemingly contradictory policy caused bewilderment and confusion among other countries, as it was initially not clear whether Germany was backing away

from Struck's promise to supply Turkey with Patriot missiles via the Netherlands. However, politicians in Berlin rejected such allegations and pledged unequivocal German support to Turkey. In a policy speech in parliament, Chancellor Schröder stated on February 13, "For us, solidarity with Turkey and our solidarity within the alliance are beyond question." He furthermore defended the trilateral veto decision by arguing that "together with our French and Belgian friends, we consider it inappropriate to have a formal NATO decision [at the beginning] of planning for a war before the discussions of the Security Council." (Bernstein 2003)

In Washington, the German veto caused considerable irritation. US officials portrayed the veto decision as a denial of assistance to Turkey and criticized the three countries for evading alliance obligations to defend NATO members. US Ambassador to NATO Nicholas Burns denounced the trilateral blockade, saying "This is a very unfortunate decision by the three allies to prevent NATO from supporting Turkey with its legitimate defense needs. [...] Because of this behavior, NATO is facing a credibility crisis." (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2003a)

Despite such US criticism and allegations, German policymakers generally did not challenge the policy-line taken by Schröder and Struck. The relative silence on the issue of Patriot rockets was partly due to the fact that opposition to the government's policy concentrated on the parallel issue of whether Germany should provide AWACS planes with German crews to Turkey – a step, which the FDP parliamentary group vehemently opposed. (Zettel 2003: 9) More general criticism of the federal government's veto on the NATO decision was brought forth by Bavarian Prime Minister Edmund Stoiber, however. He argued that Germany was risking a weakening of the alliance and a further deterioration in Berlin's relationship with Washington. He warned that Schröder was pushing Germany towards "isolation" in foreign policy. (Spiegel 2003)

#### *NATO Compromise and Delivery of Patriot Batteries to Turkey*

US officials insisted on taking a decision within NATO, but they were willing to make significant concessions to Germany, France and Belgium. On February 12, US negotiators proposed a compromise that would focus solely on NATO assistance to defend Turkey and drop other requests that had initially been made. (Bender 2003) German policymakers responded positively and indicated that they would not oppose such a request,

although they would wait till after the report by UN weapons inspectors to the Security Council on February 14. Defense Minister Struck stated that he expected the deadlock in NATO to be resolved quickly and that a resolution would “absolutely satisfy Turkey’s interests.” (Bernstein 2003) The NATO declaration that was agreed upon on February 16 clearly reflected the stance of the three veto countries, as it stated “We continue to *support efforts in the United Nations to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. This decision relates only to the defense of Turkey*, and is without prejudice to any other military operation by NATO, and future decisions by NATO or the UN Security Council.”<sup>99</sup> (NATO 2003, emphasis added) The compromise was a face-saving tactic that allowed the US and European countries to signal a basic agreement and alliance cohesion amid diverging views on the looming US-led war.

Following the NATO agreement, Germany supplied 46 Patriot interceptor missiles to Turkey via the Netherlands on March 1. In accordance with earlier plans, the missile defense systems were operated by Dutch troops, and political leaders in Berlin continued to stress that the Patriots were intended for defensive purposes only. German decision-makers threatened to withdraw the missiles in case Turkey became directly involved in the war, since the weapons would then be part of an offensive strategy. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005) Although the US and NATO requested additional Patriot missiles in late February, German policymakers rejected such demands, with Struck stating that Germany had “done enough” already. (BBC 2003)

### **(3) Patriot Request for Protection of US Troops**

#### *The US Request and the Initial German Reaction*

In mid-November 2002, the US administration issued an inquiry about support in a possible war with Iraq through its embassies in roughly fifty allied and partner countries, among them Germany. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 525) The US requested Patriot missile defense systems in addition to logistical support, humanitarian help, access to airspace and freedom to move troops around using US bases in Germany.

In contrast to the Israeli and Turkish cases, German politicians concurred from the start that providing any direct aid to the US was virtually impossible, since this would

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<sup>99</sup> The compromise was reached in NATO’s Defense Planning Committee, where France was not represented. (Overhaus 2005: 30)

amount to participation in an offensive military strategy. On the other hand, policymakers worried about the precarious state of bilateral ties to the US in the aftermath of Schröder's election campaign that had focused on his opposition to a war in Iraq. The first reaction of the German government was thus cautious, with a spokesman stating in Berlin, "We will examine [the request] carefully on the [...] basis of German non-participation in a possible military campaign in Iraq, our alliance duties, and [our] legal options and obligations." (Spiegel 2002b)

### *Germany's Response: Anti-Militarist Sentiments amid Alliance Concerns*

On November 28, Chancellor Schröder made public the government's stance regarding the US request. He announced that Berlin would grant the US unrestricted freedom to use German airspace and to shuttle troops in and out of American military bases. However, he rejected other requests, including the delivery of German Patriot missile defense systems. The Chancellor explained that he was "clear as a glass" in his stance against a war and insisted the Federal Republic would not take part in a US preemptive strike. (Landler 2002) Schröder also warned against giving the impression that there was no hope of implementing United Nations resolutions on Iraq without resorting to war. (BBC 2002a)

The ambivalent response by Schröder – giving the US access to German airspace while denying other support – triggered strong criticism from opposition parties, who saw Schröder backtracking on his anti-war stance. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 525–26) Others defended Schröder's policy, arguing that the Chancellor had little room for maneuver on the question of airspace, as legal agreements gave the US broad latitude in such matters. Nevertheless, a senior German official conceded that Schröder might have had legal grounds to restrict American access. He explained that the Chancellor had not considered this option however, given his desire to heal the rift in the bilateral relationship. (Landler 2002)

## **Explaining German Policy: Policy Goals and Role Conceptions**

### *Summary of Cases and Consideration of Role Conflicts*

The analysis of the four cases in which political leaders faced the question of whether to provide missile defense capabilities to partner countries, shows Germany as a “selective exporter” of security. (Kubbig and Nitsche 2005: 526) Officials strove to fulfill their perceived responsibilities for aiding allies and partners in their defense needs. At the same time however, they sought to delineate German support from any potential offensive military strategies by partners. In this respect, the question of whether to deliver Patriot systems to Israel during the Gulf War of 1990-1991 was the least controversial in the eyes of German politicians. Iraq was clearly the aggressor in the conflict as it had breached Kuwaiti sovereignty by annexing the country in 1990, and the immediate danger to Israel from Iraqi Scud missiles was undisputed. Embarrassment about the involvement of German companies in Iraq’s weapon programs, coupled with a perceived historical responsibility, prompted Berlin’s leadership to quickly decide in favor of sending the Patriot systems to Israel.

On the other end of the spectrum, the request for support by the US in 2002 was the most problematic for German politicians. In this case, the policy goal of being a ‘reliable partner’ collided with deeply entrenched norms reflected in the role conception of ‘anti-militarist country.’ In contrast to the Gulf War of 1990-91, the planned US-led war on Iraq could not be justified as a direct multinational response to the conquest of a sovereign state and it was also not legitimized by a UN resolution. Schröder’s government thus clearly sought to distance itself from making any obvious contribution to the looming military strike, emphasizing the need for diplomatic efforts. As a result, Berlin rejected direct aid including the provision of Patriots. However, in accordance with the role conception of ‘reliable partner,’ the government decided to permit US use of German airspace in its planned attack on Iraq in order to prevent bilateral relations from plummeting further.

The requests for support to protect Israel and Turkey amid the looming Iraq conflict in 2002-3 were answered affirmatively, with policymakers arguing that missile defense equipment would be used in a “purely defensive” manner. In essence, politicians insisted that the Patriot provision was consistent not only with the role conceptions of ‘exporter of security’ and ‘reliable partner’ but also with that of a ‘non-militarist country.’ Chancellor Schröder asserted that although he had approved the delivery to both Israel and Turkey in order to increase their security in the looming Iraq conflict, this did not constitute German

support to Washington's offensive strategy. He maintained, "there will be no direct or indirect [German] participation in a war." (Spiegel 2003)

*Walking a Tight Rope in the Iraq War of 2003: Clear Non-Participation?*

However, it is questionable whether in reality the distinction between non-participation and participation in the conflict was as clear as Berlin's leadership pretended. In making preparations for an attack on Iraq, the US doubtlessly saw the need to enhance the security of Israel and Turkey, and thus Germany's support was arguably an indirect contribution to US war plans. The decision in favor of providing support despite this quandary was likely influenced by considerations not only about the duty to be a reliable partner and ally for Israel and Turkey, but also about the need to patch up relations with the US. As the deputy director of the German Council on Foreign Relations, Bernhard May, observed regarding the support for Israel, "This helps to get the German government out of a corner. They [the Germans] can help without changing their language on Iraq. Schröder will have to stand by his refusal to participate, but the definition of participation [changes]." (Landler 2002)

Furthermore, in the case of Turkey, it became increasingly clear that Germany's argument of "purely defensive" support could be easily challenged. In the first days after the US began its strikes against Iraq, reports appeared that Turkish troops had entered Iraqi territory along the border. (Burkeman and Howard 2003) According to media reports, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul announced the incursion on March 21. However, Germany was saved from being tested on its verbal threats to withdraw the Patriots if Turkey became embroiled in the conflict. After NATO allies voiced strong criticism of Turkey's incursion, Ankara modified its stance and denied that its soldiers had entered Iraqi territory. (Castle 2003)

Throughout the crisis with Iraq in 2002-2003, Berlin engaged in a delicate balancing act between maintaining the anti-war stance while satisfying at least some US requests. Alliance considerations played a key role in the above-mentioned decision to allow US use of German airspace for its attack on Iraq. Berlin did not want to jeopardize alliance relations by giving the impression it was obstructing military preparations. (Schnappertz 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki) Although the Schröder government politically clearly condemned the war, it remained deliberately vague in legal terms about whether the US

attack was a “war of aggression” (Angriffskrieg). If not for this ambiguity, a German permission for US use of its airspace would have been highly problematic. (Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)<sup>100</sup>

### *Role Conceptual Violations?*

Given the veto policy regarding the US request for support in NATO, one could take the view that Germany violated its role conception of ‘reliable partner.’ For example, Philip H. Gordon and Jeremy Shapiro of the Brookings Institution accuse the Federal Republic of departing from alliance norms and “damaging the notion of NATO as a defense alliance on which its members could rely.” (Rudolf 2005: 144) However, as the discussion above showed, the broader context does not justify such an assessment. Germany’s decision to veto the request together with France and Belgium derived clearly from the fear that the US might interpret a NATO agreement on preparatory measures for war as an endorsement of its Iraq policy, resulting in an acceleration of military planning. In other words, the trilateral veto was an attempt to entice Washington to make further diplomatic efforts with regard to Iraq. It would be misleading to infer that Germany was evading its alliance obligations or even beginning to distance itself from NATO. (Overhaus 2005: 30) Rather, Berlin’s leaders indicated clearly from the start that they would assist Turkey.<sup>101</sup>

German officials were infuriated at the fact that the US – not Turkey – had made the request for help and interpreted this as a trap: They would either have to accept that war was imminent and Germany would have to play a role in it – a position that would undermine the Chancellor’s own position against the war – or they would face accusations of lacking solidarity in the alliance. (Rudolf 2005: 144) Policymakers sought a way out of the dilemma by vetoing the original US request and only consenting to a NATO compromise that narrowed the focus of war preparations to the assistance of Turkey.

One may criticize German policy however as being inconsistent with regard to the United Nations during the Iraq crisis of 2002-2003 – and thus not being fully in line with the role conception of ‘exporter of security,’ which places importance on this international

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<sup>100</sup> According to Karsten Voigt, most US policymakers took the German permission for granted and were unaware that it had been a deliberate decision by Berlin to prevent a further deterioration in relations. (Voigt 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

<sup>101</sup> The interpretation that Berlin was evading alliance obligations could be found in a number of media reports at the time, even though decision-makers continuously vowed their support for Turkey. This attests to the success of US politicians in publicizing their portrayal of German policy as lacking solidarity.

institution. Ostensibly, Germany vetoed the NATO decision on war preparations in order to allow more time for diplomatic efforts in the UN. Following German foreign policy traditions, officials emphasized the primacy of the UN as a forum for debate and as an authority to solve international conflicts. On the other hand, Schröder declared in January 2003 that no matter what the UN Security Council decided, his government would not send troops to Iraq. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2003b) As the statement was made during an election rally at Goslar in Niedersachsen, it seems likely that Schröder was trying to secure votes for his party in the state elections by taking advantage of anti-war sentiments among the population. However, in refusing to make German policy contingent upon a UN decision, Schröder contradicted his own arguments that this international institution should be the main authority in the conflict.

In sum, role conceptions offer a convincing explanation for German policy in the four cases, when partner countries requested Patriot MD equipment. The comparison clearly exposes the role conflict between the conceptions of 'exporter of security' and 'reliable partner' on the one hand and that of 'anti-militarist country' on the other hand. Berlin sought to comply with all three roles at least to some extent, although this aspiration led to some policy ambiguity, as seen in the above analysis. The role conceptual violation, identified in Schröder's stance on the UN in the war on Iraq in 2003, can be explained in the context of the domestic election campaign at the time.

## **Part 5: Japanese Policy on Territorial Missile Defense**

### **Introduction**

Like their German counterparts, Japanese politicians considered the need for a territorial missile defense shield in the post-Cold War era. Three phases in the Japanese debate can be identified: (1) the time period from 1990 to 1998, when interest in MD grew steadily due to regional security concerns and burden-sharing debates in the alliance with the US, (2) the period from 1998 to 2002, when Tokyo's politicians decided to go forward with MD research, conceiving of the shield as the only means for their country to respond to the growing missile threat while upholding the traditional self-defensive security policy, and (3) the period from 2002 to 2010, when decision-makers took swift steps to deploy MD, finding that such a move would not only strengthen relations with Washington, but – paradoxically – also serve as a hedge against Japanese over-dependence on the US for security.

The analysis finds Japan's MD policy can be characterized as highly pragmatic. The emergence of overt threats to Japanese security has driven the country's commitment to missile defense. However, it would be mistaken to discount the influence of norms and values on the formulation of policy. The analysis demonstrates that role conceptions can deepen our understanding of how policymakers in Tokyo have chosen to respond to missile threats.

### **Law-related Issues in Japan's Missile Defense Policy**

Three laws or resolutions have stood in potential contradiction to Japan's participation in missile defense projects: (1) the Resolution on the Fundamentals of Exploitation and Use of Outer Space (in Japanese 'Wa ga kuni ni okeru uchū no kaihatsu oyobi riyō no kihon ni kan suru ketsugi'; hereafter referred to as 'Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Space'), (2) Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution (the so-called peace clause), and (3) the Three Principles of Weapons Export. As these three issues repeatedly come up in debates, the following section will discuss each briefly, highlighting the relevance to missile defense.

*(1) Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Space*

The 1969 Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Space states that Japan's exploitation and use of outer space must be "restricted to peaceful purposes" (*heiwa no mokuteki ni kagiri*), to benefit scientific advancement and improvement in human welfare, while contributing to the development of industrial technologies and encouraging beneficial international cooperation.<sup>102</sup> (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 320) The term 'peaceful purposes' was initially understood as a ban on Japanese use of space for any kind of military reason, whether defensive or offensive. However, the interpretation later changed, as subsequent sections show.

MD specialists Morimoto Satoshi and Takahashi Sugio contend, "If one interprets the resolution on its most basic level, then missile defense is not permitted" for Japan. (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 308) Specifically, two issues are seen as problematic with regard to the resolution. One is the interception of enemy missiles in outer space, which constitutes a military – though defensive – act.<sup>103</sup> The other issue is the use of satellites, which are necessary for locating and tracking missiles in space.<sup>104</sup>

According to the original understanding of the resolution, Japan's Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) are prohibited from using satellites in their information-gathering. However, this interpretation was amended in 1985, when the head of the Defense Agency Kato Koichi in a Lower House Diet session stated that the JSDF could rely on the type of satellites that were commonly used in the commercial field. According to this interpretation, which was termed 'Principle of Common Use' (*ippanka gensoku*) the JSDF's satellites could only be the same resolution as those used in the commercial field. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 130) When discussion on a territorial MD shield intensified in the mid-1990s, the common resolution of commercial satellites was about 1-3 meters – insufficient for accurately tracking and intercepting an enemy missile.

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<sup>102</sup> For a background on the 1969 resolution, see Oros 2008: 123ff. Although the resolution does not have the binding power of a law, Japanese administrations since 1969 have vowed to adhere to the resolution. (Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami 2001: 71)

<sup>103</sup> The problem of interception in space did not arise in the case of Japan's earlier procurement of point-defense systems such as the PAC-2, since these systems intercept missiles within the atmosphere. However, the comprehensive territorial MD system under consideration from around the mid-1990s was to intercept missiles already in the upper-tier.

<sup>104</sup> For lower-tier interception systems, the use of radars for tracking enemy missiles is sufficient.

*(2) Article 9 of the Constitution*

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution stipulates that “the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes” and that “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential will never be maintained.” (Kaneda et al. 2007: 72) The government’s interpretation of Article 9 has long been that Japan may retain a minimum level of armed strength and may exercise military force for self-defense against armed attacks. This understanding is encapsulated in the notion of ‘exclusive defense’ (*senshu bōei*; generally translated by the Japanese government as ‘exclusively defense-oriented policy’).<sup>105</sup> Accordingly, Japan may use force for individual self-defense, while collective self-defense (i.e. helping other countries to protect themselves by military force) exceeds the limits of the Constitution.

As will be seen in the discussion below, the majority of Japanese policymakers see MD as a particularly fitting instrument for Japanese defense, since intercepting missiles is by definition a defensive mission and thus reflects the spirit of Article 9.<sup>106</sup> However, scenarios in which Japan’s MD policy conflicts with the ban on collective self-defense are conceivable. Firstly, in accordance with the ban, Japan is not allowed to intercept an enemy missile as long as its destination is uncertain. However, in waiting for this information, Japan may inadvertently lower the chances of a successful intercept. Secondly, if Tokyo refused to shoot down ballistic missiles targeting the US mainland or US forces outside Japan’s territory, it may risk severe tensions in its alliance relationship.<sup>107</sup> Thirdly, the ban on collective self-defense implies that even if Japan cooperates with the US on the development and deployment of MD, it would have to ensure that the system’s operational infrastructure allows for separate, individual decision-making by the two countries when responding to missile threats. (Japan Policy & Politics 2003b) On the other hand, a

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<sup>105</sup> The JDA defines this passive defense strategy in the following manner: “The exclusively defense-oriented policy means that defensive force may not be employed unless and until an armed attack is mounted on Japan by another country in which case, it must be limited to the [absolutely necessary minimum], and furthermore that the extent of the defense forces retained [...] should be kept to the minimum level necessary for self-defense.” (Defense Agency Japan 2004: 81)

<sup>106</sup> According to common interpretation, Japan may employ force in response to missile attacks on its territory, including US bases therein. This corresponds to the conception of role-sharing within the US-Japan alliance, according to which Japan is responsible for protecting Japanese territory, while the US military focuses on more offensive missions to ward off attacks. This division of labor in the alliance is also known as the ‘sword and shield’ framework. (Allen et al. 2000: 65)

<sup>107</sup> While missiles launched from someplace in East Asia and heading towards the US mainland are unlikely to take a track flying over Japan, missiles targeting US installations in the Pacific – including the naval and air force base at Guam – would pass over Japan. (Kaneda et al. 2007: 73)

concerted response by both countries may be crucial in order to ensure success in intercepting missiles. Finally, the ban raises the question under what circumstances Japan may share intelligence information with its ally, assuming this information may be used in US decisions to intercept missiles.<sup>108</sup>

### *(3) Three Principles of Weapons Export*

The Three Principles of Weapons Export, approved by the Diet in 1967, state that Japan would not export arms to communist countries, to countries sanctioned for weapons exports under UN resolutions, or to countries involved or likely to be involved in international conflicts.<sup>109</sup> In 1976, the government further tightened the regulations, by announcing that hardware technology for arms manufacturing would also be included under the ban and that the restrictions would be applied to all countries.<sup>110</sup> Due to pressure from the Japanese defense industry and advocates of close US-Japan security cooperation, the constraints on arms exports were again loosened in 1983, however. An exemption was introduced for Japan's transfer of military technology and know-how to the US, although the supply of hardware elements continued to be banned. (Murayama 2002: 286)

In the post-Cold War era, the Three Principles were seen as problematic in the context of joint production of MD equipment with the US, since Japan might be required to transfer related hardware. Furthermore, a potential US desire to sell the jointly developed MD technology and hardware to third party countries has also been seen as a potential challenge to Japan's Principles of Weapons Export.

### **1990-1998: Towards a Consensus on MD**

During the time period from 1990 to 1998, Japanese interest in a territorial missile shield grew steadily, as decision-makers realized the potential for instability in the region. However, the analysis finds that another key reason for the increasing support was US

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<sup>108</sup> The Japanese government argues it may provide information to the US in two cases: one, if the information will be used with the sole purpose of ensuring Japan's security, and two, if the information is provided as part of a routine exchange of information (ippantekina jōhō kōkan no ikkan toshite). (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 307-08, Aßmann 2007: 374)

<sup>109</sup> For a background on the 1967 principles, see Oros 2008: 94ff.

<sup>110</sup> According to Prime Minister Miki Takeo, the importance of the principles lay in the fact that "Japan, as a peaceful country (heiwa kokka), should avoid contributing to international disputes." (Kaneda et al. 2006: 128)

pressure for Japan to contribute more actively to the alliance relationship and to lower bilateral trade imbalances. While skeptics questioned the feasibility and costs of MD, by 1997-1998, a latent consensus emerged among security experts in favor of joining US research efforts.

### *Growing Interest*

The majority of Japanese politicians did not perceive a major missile threat to Japanese territory in the early 1990s. The end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union raised hopes in Japan for an improved East Asian security environment. In 1992, some members of the Japanese Defense Agency began calling for a comprehensive territorial missile defense shield arguing that North Korean and Chinese missile development programs constituted a growing threat to Japan. (Aerospace Daily 1992) However, such demands fell on deaf ears among the general policymakers, who were optimistic about bilateral relations to these countries. The historic visit of Emperor Akihito to China in October 1992 seemed to herald a more constructive relationship between Tokyo and Beijing. Initial expectations about a quick normalization of bilateral relations with North Korea following the September 1990 visit of a Japanese delegation of politicians to Pyongyang quickly gave way to a more cautious assessment. (Wittig 2002: 31ff)

From around 1993-1994, Japanese interest in a potential territorial missile defense shield began to grow. Supporters focused on three aspects in arguing for the necessity of MD: (1) the need to defend against regional security threats, especially North Korea, (2) the desire to strengthen ties with the US and to share more of the burden within the alliance, and (3) the potential benefits for Japanese companies participating in the development of this new technology.

#### *(1) Security Concerns*

The intensifying nuclear crisis surrounding North Korea in 1993-1994 spurred a realization within Japan that the post-Cold War world was not as benign as many had assumed. North Korea's test-firing of a Nodong-1 scud-type missile into the Sea of Japan on May 29, 1993 demonstrated the regime's potential to build medium-range ballistic missiles. The Nodong-1 with an estimated range of 1,000 to 1,300 kilometers was fired only to a partial range of

about 500 kilometers in the test, but it was assumed to have the capability to reach large parts of Japan if fired to full range. (Ducke 2002: 138) For the Japanese policymaking elite, the test-firing raised the specter of a North Korean missile attack on Japan, even though the likelihood of such a scenario was still considered relatively low.<sup>111</sup> (Wittig 2005: 19–20) Nevertheless, amid the severe tensions surrounding the North's suspected nuclear activities, Japanese interest in a potential missile defense shield rose. Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro urged a debate on defense measures including MD in October 1993, stating

“I am concerned about the suspected North Korean nuclear weapons program. Japan needs to consider how to respond to the program by holding close consultations with the United States [...]. The government should work out measures to counter a potential threat from the long-range North Korean missile.” (Aerospace Daily 1993)

## (2) *Burden-sharing in the Alliance*

Another important reason for Tokyo's interest in missile defense was the pressure by the Clinton administration for Japan to participate in one of the US MD programs through government-backed research and development. In September 1993, US Secretary of Defense Les Aspin called for Japan to participate in missile defense during a meeting with Defense Agency Director General Nakanishi Keisuke. He emphasized that cooperation on MD was a way for the two countries to correct their trade imbalance and decrease bilateral tensions regarding Japan's contribution or 'burden-sharing' within the alliance. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 280)

A number of Japanese officials stressed that MD provided Tokyo with a convenient opportunity to improve bilateral relations with the US. This argument gained particular importance in the mid-1990s. As Kawakami Takahashi and Jimbo Ken observe, the characteristic in the Japanese debate in this period was that missile defense “increasingly became framed in the context of the Japan-US alliance.” (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 270) Officials in Tokyo were concerned about bilateral frictions caused by economic issues, such as the car-trade dispute that climaxed in 1995. Furthermore, policymakers worried about the effectiveness of the alliance in responding to regional contingencies, as the Korean

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<sup>111</sup> According to an official from the National Institute for Defense Studies, the reaction by the Japanese government concerning the missile shot was limited, because party politics were in disarray at the time. Furthermore, North Korea at the time was not believed to have nuclear capabilities, so the public was not overly concerned. (Official at the National Institute of Defense Studies 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

nuclear crisis of 1993-1994 had exposed the difficulties in bilateral security cooperation. Joint work on missile defense was thus seen as a means to revitalize alliance ties.

In September 1993, the Clinton administration proposed the so-called technology-for-technology (TFT) framework, in which the US would trade its military technology for Japanese non-military technology within a joint MD research project. Many Japanese political leaders as well as private companies were skeptical about the TFT proposal. Critics saw the TFT initiative as a potential guise for the US to obtain Japanese civilian technology, possibly even with the intention to exploit this knowledge in commercial ways. (Murayama 2002: 289)<sup>112</sup> Nevertheless, Japanese officials felt obliged to respond to US pressure for participation in view of the mounting economic frictions. Japan thus decided to set up a bilateral working group, called TMD-Working Group in December 1993. The group, which included Defense Agency and Foreign Ministry officials, mostly examined alliance related aspects of cooperating on MD and deliberated the technological feasibility. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 268) At the same time, Japanese policymakers emphasized Japanese participation in the working group did not necessarily mean proceeding with joint development and deployment of a missile defense system.

### *(3) Industry Interests*

Not all decision-makers in Tokyo believed that MD cooperation with the US would result in a one-way transfer of technological know-how. Rather, by the latter half of the 1990s, officials increasingly stressed that Japanese companies could equally benefit from joint work on this cutting-edge technology. They furthermore argued that due to the sophistication of the required system, Japan did not have the option of developing MD technology by itself.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> The Japanese side was particularly suspicious based on the experience of cooperating with the US on the development of the so-called FSX fighter aircraft in the late 1980s. The final joint agreement for the FSX project, to which the Japanese leadership had felt compelled to agree, was highly lopsided: While the US instituted restrictions on its technological transfer to Japan, it maintained open access to Japanese technological know-how. This arrangement left a bitter aftertaste among Japanese policymakers about technological cooperation with the US. (Murayama 2002: 288)

<sup>113</sup> See for example the arguments by Tsukihara Shigeaki on April 24, 1998 in the Diet or the Upper House Diet session on October 2, 1997. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan Various Dates)

### *Weighing the Pros and Cons*

In May 1994, the results of the WESTPAC study, initiated in the late 1980s by US and Japanese companies, stimulated debates about missile defense. The study concluded that the North Korean Nodong-1 missile presented a threat to Japan and urged Tokyo to participate in the development of a missile defense shield. Specifically, the industry consortium recommended that Japan join the efforts of the US Army in its Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) program, designed to shoot down short and medium range ballistic missiles through ground-based interceptors. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 89–90)

The study's results found supporters as well as opponents among Tokyo's policymakers. High-level officials in the Japan Defense Agency (JDA), who had already been outspoken proponents of MD following the US requests for a joint project in 1993, backed its recommendations strongly. Some military officials hoped to expand the agency's budget through such a project. (Sanger 1993) Even after the first nuclear crisis with North Korea was peacefully brought to an end under the initiative of former US President Jimmy Carter and the subsequent signing of the Geneva 'Agree Framework' in October 1994, the JDA maintained its steadfast support for missile defense. As Kuroe Tetsu, assistant director of the defense policy division at the JDA stated, "[...] generally speaking the agency thinks this kind of capability will be necessary given the international situation after the Cold War." (Goozner November 3, 1994) The JDA's assessment in favor of participating in missile defense was also backed by members of the LDP.<sup>114</sup>

The Social Democratic Party (SDP), the strongest counterweight to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) at the time, strongly opposed participation in US MD projects. In August 1993, the SDP was the largest among seven coalition parties that took over power from the LDP, and in June 1994 it entered into a coalition with the LDP. SDP chairman Murayama Tomiichi had already spoken out against MD in September 1993, stating his party would "not support a proposal to maintain peace and security by strengthening Japan's military capabilities." (Japan Economic Newswire 1993) In October 1994, the SDP at its annual convention officially adopted a platform that rejected US invitations to participate in joint research on missile defense. Especially after the peaceful resolution of

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<sup>114</sup> In addition, support for considering missile defense came from the private advisory group on defense issues to the prime minister, established in early 1994 under the chairmanship of Asahi Breweries CEO Higuchi Hiroto. In the final report of August 1994, the group noted: "Japan [...] needs to have capability of coping with ballistic missiles" and recommended that Tokyo consider to build a missile defense shield together with the US. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 268, Toyoshita 2005: 37)

the North Korean nuclear crisis, the party saw itself vindicated in opposing MD plans. (Goozner November 3, 1994) Members from other parties, in particular the Komei and Communist Parties, concurred in the SDP's rejection of MD. Members of parliament raised doubts about the system's costs, the technological feasibility, as well as the potentially destabilizing effect of such a system on the regional balance of power.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, they questioned whether Japan's development of a missile shield would be permissible in view of the Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Space.

On the whole, doubts and reservations among Japanese policymakers outweighed the perceived benefits of joining the US missile defense program. Especially with a domestically weak JDA and with the SDP opposed to MD, the Japanese government did not go beyond setting up study groups to examine the possibility of joint technological research. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki)

### *The Emerging Consensus*

From around 1995-1996, perceptions about the necessity of a missile defense shield began to change, primarily because of the Taiwan Straits crisis. Starting in the summer of 1995 and continuing through the spring of 1996, China conducted several underground nuclear tests and made a show of force by launching a series of ballistic missiles into Taiwanese territorial waters, not far from important commercial ports.<sup>116</sup> Japanese leaders, concerned about regional instability and tensions, demanded that Beijing abandon its confrontational posture – a request that was ignored by Chinese leaders. (Hughes 1999: 74) In July 1996, China finally joined the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and pledged to stop all nuclear testing. The immediate fear in Japan faded; however, the crisis had highlighted the possible threat posed to Japan's security by its giant neighbor China and raised suspicions about Beijing's military build-up. Furthermore, the Japanese realized just how important a smooth functioning of alliance cooperation was in order to deal with regional instability.

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<sup>115</sup> See for example the Upper House Diet sessions on November 5, 1997 and on November 2, 1994. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan Various Dates)

<sup>116</sup> Beijing intended to send a message to the Taiwanese electorate in the run-up to the 1996 presidential election that voting for Lee Teng-hui, a candidate who favored greater Taiwanese independence, meant war or at least serious frictions with the mainland.

Under Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro's LDP-led coalition government taking office in January 1996, considerations on a possible participation in missile defense were intensified. The US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security, announced in April 1996, noted both countries' common interest in dealing with the growing missile threat. The document stated:

“The two governments recognize that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery has important implications for their common security. They will work together to prevent proliferation and will continue to cooperate in the ongoing study on ballistic missile defense.”<sup>117</sup> (Aßmann 2007: 77)

By 1997, a latent consensus within the LDP began to emerge that Japan should join the US in technological research on MD. An April 1997 report issued by the Policy Affairs Research Council of the LDP recommended that Japan more actively pursue missile defense studies with the US. (Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami 2001: 30)

Policymakers in Tokyo carefully monitored Chinese criticism about possible cooperation on MD between Japan and the US. Chinese leaders voiced fear about the expansion of the alliance's regional role after the announcement of the revised 1997 US-Japan Guidelines for Security Cooperation. The Guidelines called on Tokyo to cooperate with the US in responding to ‘situations in areas surrounding Japan,’ by providing logistical and other rear-area support in times of crises in the region. Chinese leaders criticized the vague terminology and argued that the Guidelines could serve as a pretext for the alliance's involvement in a future Sino-Taiwanese dispute. In particular, they worried the US and Japan might opt to provide MD capabilities to Taiwan. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Amid Chinese opposition and remaining doubts in Tokyo about the costs and feasibility of missile defense, Japan postponed a decision on MD participation in early 1997. (Japan Economic Newswire 1997)

Debates within the government accelerated in 1998, as the JDA pushed for commencing technological research with the US. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki) In February 1998, the government set up a covert study group consisting of officials from the JDA, the Foreign Ministry and the Prime Minister's office to make recommendations on how Japan could join US efforts without sparking an international uproar or domestic political backlash. (Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami 2001: 51) In the summer, news reports floated about concrete plans by the JDA

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<sup>117</sup> Morimoto Satoshi points out that the US was keen to include this passage on missile defense. (Morimoto 2002: 21)  
[168]

to launch MD research in fiscal year 1999. Furthermore, it was later revealed that the JDA had earmarked some 500 million Yen for the project in its August 1998 draft budget for the following year. (The Independent 1998) The allocation was not labeled ‘missile defense’ but included under the rubric of ‘other items.’ In doing so, Japanese leaders sought to avoid raising Chinese concern, especially in view of the upcoming summit meeting between Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo and President Jiang Zemin in November 1998. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) It was agreed that only the final version of the budget in December 1998 would include a line labeled ‘Joint Research on BMD.’ (Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami 2001: 51)

Despite strong support for MD research from the JDA and large parts of the LDP, it was not certain that the JDA’s budget request would be cleared by the Diet, however. Although most parliamentarians regarded MD as an important issue, they continued to harbor skepticism about the feasibility and cost-related aspects of the project.<sup>118</sup>

### **1998-2002: Responding to Threats Defensively**

The time period from 1998 to 2002 is characterized by firm commitment among political elites to MD research. Amid a North Korean missile launch in August 1998, Tokyo’s politicians realized that MD was the only means by which their country could actively counter missile threats while remaining committed to the exclusively defense-oriented policy. Korean rapprochement in 2000 was viewed with skepticism in Japan, and thus few politicians called for a reconsideration of the MD project.

#### *North Korea and the Decision for MD Research*

The JDA was saved from strenuous efforts to convince Diet members to vote for the missile defense budget by a North Korean missile test-firing on August 31, 1998. The Taepodong-1 ballistic missile – which Pyongyang claimed was the failed launch of a satellite – crossed over Japanese airspace and landed in the Pacific Ocean. It flew 1,550 kilometers to waters 750 kilometers northeast of Japan. (Wittig 2002: 76) The launch alerted policymakers that Tokyo and other densely populated urban areas were well within range of North Korean missiles. Chief Cabinet Secretary Nonaka Hiromu expressed his

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<sup>118</sup> See for example the Diet session on April 24, 1998. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan April 24, 1998)

outrage about the launch saying, “Such a violent action taken in international waters without any prior warning is unforgivable.” (Wittig 2002: 76) LDP Secretary General Mori Yoshiro later described the tense situation following the launch by noting that even “a war could have broken out.” (Green 2001: 124) Among Japanese policymakers, the missile also raised doubts about the effectiveness of the US nuclear umbrella and extended deterrence. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Diet debates reflected overwhelming frustration about Japan’s defenselessness in the face of the North Korean missile threat. On September 3, 1998, LDP member Asano Katsuhito observed “the missile could have fallen on Japanese archipelago,” if something had gone wrong as it crossed over the country. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan September 3, 1998) Asano urged Japan to proceed with technological research on missile defense as soon as possible. On the same day, representative of the Liberal Party Nakamura Eiichi similarly called for a quick decision on MD. Japan, he argued, should not be a

“country that cannot deal with an emergency situation at all and that has a legal framework that [obliges it] to sit and wait for its death (zashite shi o matsu shika nai hōsei), a country that has to ask for intelligence information from the US and South Korea, and a country that cannot list ballistic missile defense research expenditures in its draft budget in consideration of the [forthcoming] visit of the Chinese Head of State to Japan [...]” (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan September 3, 1998)

Following the North Korean missile shot, a majority of Diet members favored the commencement of joint research. Only muted criticism was voiced, mostly by Communist Party members, about the costs, the feasibility, and the legal and strategic issues related to the project.<sup>119</sup> However, prior doubts about cost and feasibility had not suddenly vanished among those politicians who now favored MD research.<sup>120</sup> Rather, the debates suggest that policymakers believed Japan was without significant alternatives in order to deal with the missile threat.

In the two-plus-two US-Japan security cooperation meetings held on September 20-21, 1998, leaders from the US and Japan reached a de facto agreement that they would begin with joint technological research on MD. A bilateral declaration stated that both sides “emphasize the importance of ballistic missile defense [...] and will work towards joint

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<sup>119</sup> See for example the November 18, 1999 Diet session. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan November 18, 1999)

<sup>120</sup> In fact, only a few months earlier, on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1998, Defense Agency Chief Kyuma Fumio himself had conceded in an Upper House Diet session that missile defense technology was still at a very early stage. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan June 4, 1998)

technological research.” (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 270) The formal decision by Japan to proceed to the research stage of MD was announced three months later, on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1998. In August of the following year, the Japanese government signed a memorandum of understanding with the US covering a five-year program of mutual work. The two countries agreed to undertake joint research on the US Navy’s Theater Wide Defense (NTWD) project with the aim of constructing a ship-based missile defense system with surface-to-air interception missiles that would be able to destroy enemy missiles in the upper-tier. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 90)<sup>121</sup>

*Policy Considerations: Defense Orientation, the Alliance, and Industry Interests*

Threat perceptions about North Korea alone do not provide a complete explanation for the Japanese government’s swift decision-making after the missile test-firing of August 31, 1998. At least three related considerations influenced lawmakers in giving their support for MD. Firstly, policymakers felt that missile defense was a particularly suitable and in fact the only means for Japan to actively deal with the North Korean threat, while allowing it to preserve traditional defense policy norms in line with the Constitution. As Chief Cabinet Secretary Nonaka Hiromu pointed out in December 1998, MD “is a purely defensive means to protect the public’s life and property, and there are no alternative means” for Japan to respond to the threat. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 271) Similarly, Matsui Kazuhiko, a researcher at the Diet’s Upper House, explained in a December 2000 article that MD is “not an offensive, but a purely defensive system” that does not threaten other countries. (Matsui 2000: 54–55) Thus, the system would correspond to Japan’s exclusively defense-oriented policy (*senshu bōei*).

Secondly, considerations about the need and the opportunity to strengthen relations to the US through joint research in MD played a role in the minds of Japanese politicians. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki) Some observers even contended that the alliance relationship was the main – if not sole – reason for Japanese participation in research. Okazaki Hisahiko, a longtime diplomat, asserted Japan did not need a missile defense system, but since “America wants the

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<sup>121</sup> The exact costs of the research efforts were not disclosed, but officials did not contradict reports that put the figure at between 400 and 524 million US Dollars, which were to be split equally between the two countries. (Sims 1999) Also note that the Navy Theater Wide Defense program was later absorbed into the US Sea-based Midcourse Defense system (SMD), and is now commonly referred to as Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense, referring to the use of Aegis destroyers as platforms for the MD system.

cooperation [...], we should always show we are reliable allies. If it costs money, we pay money. For Japan, the supreme target should be the maintenance of the US-Japan alliance.” (Struck 2001)<sup>122</sup> Policymakers furthermore pointed out that Japan did not have the option of buying the MD system off-the-shelf if the US succeeded in development. They maintained such a policy would draw Washington’s criticism about Japan being a technological “free-rider” (tada-nori). (Matsui 2000: 54)<sup>123</sup> By cooperating and contributing to a policy field with high priority for the US, Japan could demonstrate its steadfast support for the alliance.

Thirdly, Japanese policymakers viewed missile defense cooperation with the US as an opportunity for their country’s defense industry to participate in state-of-the-art research and to win lucrative contracts. In the first half of the 1990s, Japan had shown some interest in the US Army’s Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) program. However, Tokyo’s leadership finally decided on joining NTWD, in part because this program was still in an early stage of research and development, leaving room for Japanese companies to participate from the start. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 90)<sup>124</sup>

### *An Indigenous Intelligence Capability*

On November 6, 1998, the Japanese government took another important decision in the context of MD, with the Cabinet adopting a plan to produce and deploy indigenous observation and reconnaissance satellites, setting aside 1.6 billion Euros (2 billion US Dollars) for the development of two optical and two radar satellites. (CNN 2005) The four satellites were subsequently launched in 2003 and 2006. In order to process and examine the data, Japan also established an intelligence center with 320 staff members, including 100 image analysts. (Hughes 2004b: 175) The decision in favor of an indigenous intelligence capability was driven by a widespread frustration among officials about Japan’s dependence on US services. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c,

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<sup>122</sup> Political scientist Soeya Yoshihide also remarked that Japan’s participation in MD was an “act of security cooperation with the US, and as such [...] an end in itself.” See Hughes 2001: 40.

<sup>123</sup> In a similar vein, one senior Ministry of Foreign Affairs official stated that the ultimate success or failure of the MD system was secondary because even if the system failed in the development phase, “the fact that Japan contributed will remain.” (Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami 2001: 49)

<sup>124</sup> Other reasons for Japan’s decision to participate in NTWD included the fact that this program was ship-based and thus well-suited for Japan’s geographic position as an island nation and that the ships used as a platform for NTWD were so-called Aegis destroyers, which Japan’s maritime self-defense forces already owned. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 268)

Interview by A. Sakaki) An official from the Defense Ministry criticized the strategic dependence, pointing out that without the US, Japan would have had practically no information about the August 1998 North Korean test-launch. (Shibuya 1999: 194) Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo encouraged Japan to deploy its own satellites in order to ensure the country had independent information sources.<sup>125</sup>

The general public in Japan supported the government's decision to develop and deploy satellites, as an October 1998 opinion poll showed. The poll, asking respondents whether they thought Japan should have its own reconnaissance satellite to collect intelligence information, found that 54% of Japanese were in favor of such a policy, while only 27% believed this was unnecessary.<sup>126</sup> (Roper Center for Public Opinion Research 1998) The decision to deploy the indigenous satellites attests to Japanese efforts to maintain a certain scope of independence in security policy, despite a concurrent consensus in favor of maintaining and strengthening bilateral alliance relations with the US.

### *Skirting the Legal Issues*

Given the participation in MD research and the launching of an indigenous satellite program, how did Japanese officials deal with the afore-mentioned legal issues? Regarding the Peaceful Use of Space Resolution, Tokyo's policy was characterized by contradiction. On the one hand, decision-makers opted to comply with the resolution – at least according to the 1985 interpretation and the 'Principle of Common Use' (ippanka gensoku) – by limiting the development of indigenous satellites to those with a resolution comparable to commercial satellites. The resolution of the four satellites subsequently developed by Japan and launched in 2003 and 2006 was thus about 2-3 meters, which is insufficient for MD interceptions. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 103) Furthermore, Japanese officials emphasized the fact that these satellites were 'multi-purpose' (tamokuteki) satellites and would thus not be used solely for military-strategic analysis.

On the other hand, however, Japanese officials amended their interpretation of the Peaceful Use of Space Resolution in order to allow missile interceptions in space. In their statements, cabinet members suggested that the term 'peaceful use' meant 'non-invasive'

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<sup>125</sup> See the Diet Session on September 3rd, 1998. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan September 3, 1998)

<sup>126</sup> The remaining 19% of respondents either did not answer or replied they did not know.

rather than ‘non-military.’<sup>127</sup> According to this understanding, Japan could use space as long as the intention was not to invade the territory of other countries. Politicians argued that the interception of enemy missiles in space was acceptable, since it was in line with Japan’s thinking as a “peaceful country” (heiwa kokka) and since it was the only means for Japan to defend itself against missile attacks. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 129)

On the Three Principles of Weapons Export and the Constitution, officials took the position that Japan’s research efforts did not raise any legislative problems. They argued that the government would make a strict separation into three project phases – research, development, and deployment stage – and that before moving on to the next phase, it would reevaluate the MD project and any associated legislative issues. (Kawakami and Jimbo 2002: 271, Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki) During the research phase, technological know-how could be transferred to the US under the existing exemptions from the Principles of Weapons Export, politicians maintained. Furthermore, they argued that concerns about the constitutional ban on collective self-defense in case of deployment should not preclude Japan from at least joining research efforts. (Jimbo 2002: 58)

### *Japan Eyes Korean Détente with Skepticism*

After Japan signed the memorandum of understanding for MD research with the US in August 1999, major public discussions on missile defense faded. While the rapid rapprochement between North and South Korea in 2000 was greeted with high expectations around the world, most Japanese observers felt unease and apprehension about Pyongyang and its intentions. Few politicians in Tokyo thus reconsidered the necessity of MD research. While Japan-North Korea relations made little headway, Pyongyang rapidly moved to improve its ties with South Korea, China, Russian and the US in 2000. Japanese politicians were concerned about Washington’s diverging interests regarding Pyongyang’s missile and WMD programs. (Wittig 2005: 39)

A few members of the Social Democratic Party argued that the positive changes surrounding North Korea necessitated a reevaluation of Japan’s participation in MD research. On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2000, Yokomichi Takahiro of the SDP noted in the Diet that Japan

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<sup>127</sup> This change was not given much attention by the media, perhaps because the emphasis on ‘non-invasive’ or ‘purely defensive’ was the common interpretation of Article 9 of Constitution for several decades already.

should seriously consider halting the research efforts. He also cast doubts about the feasibility of MD, arguing that a missile shield could easily be rendered ineffective by counter-measures including multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs). (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan August 2, 2000) However, such criticism was countered by MD proponents, who argued that Japan continued to face the threat of North Korean missiles. Furthermore, Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro pointed out on September 27, 2000 that Japan was still in the research phase, and no decision had been taken regarding development or deployment. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan September 27, 2000)

The announcement in May 2001 that the Bush administration would drop the distinction between NMD and TMD raised some concern in Japan, although it did not prompt a fundamental rethinking on missile defense. The distinction had been particularly important, since it provided credence to the Japanese claim that the missile defense shield under joint study would not be used to protect the US homeland and was thus in line with the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. The US merging of NMD and TMD caused some fear among Japanese politicians about future legal problems. Defense Agency Chief Nakatani Gen reflected this concern, stating in June 2001 that Japan would not participate in the US missile defense program if that meant violating the exclusively self-defensive interpretation of the Constitution. (Jimbo 2002: 58)

### **2002-2010: Acquiring MD Capabilities**

After 2002, Japan moved swiftly towards the deployment of MD capabilities for territorial defense. The domestic atmosphere was characterized by overwhelming resentment vis-à-vis North Korea, not only because of the regime's nuclear activities, but also because of the dominance of the so-called 'kidnapping issue' in the media. The characteristic of this time period was that decision-makers began to frame MD as an opportunity to hedge against over-reliance on the alliance partner, while also deepening ties with Washington.

#### *The Japanese 'Red Scare' Cements MD Support*

In the fall of 2002, anti-North Korea feelings peaked among the Japanese public, marginalizing missile defense critics and inducing a swift decision-making in favor of

acquiring MD capabilities from the US. During a bilateral summit meeting with Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro on September 17, 2002, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il took a bold step by admitting and apologizing for the abduction of thirteen Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s. In Japan, the confession was seen as a confirmation of the regime's malevolent and cruel nature. Resentment against the North increased as tensions surrounding the regime's nuclear program rose in October 2002. Pyongyang's admission on October 16 of operating a secret uranium enrichment program stirred fear in Japan about North Korean nuclear-armed missiles. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Considering Japan's irrational and erratic neighbor, a missile defense shield seemed a sensible choice to most Japanese, and few politicians dared to challenge this view. Many MD critics, who had previously advocated 'soft' policies towards Pyongyang lost credibility amid the second nuclear crisis and the kidnapping issue. Japanese far-right magazines including the *Shukan Bunshun*, *Shokun* and *Seiron* began a smear campaign to denounce such 'pro-North Korean' commentators as unpatriotic traitors. The November 2002 issue of the *Bungei Shunju* published an article by Ishii Hideo on the "pro-North Korean intellectuals and their record of unreflective and reckless remarks." (Wittig 2005: 53) Such reports weakened and discredited those on the left side of the political spectrum, who had taken a cautious stance on MD. Tessa Morris-Suzuki compares this atmosphere to the anti-Communist hysteria of 1950s McCarthyism in the United States. She argues:

"While the kidnapping issue has not of course produced the sort of 'pluralist repression' evident in the American Red Scare, with its mass deportations of 'radicals,' it has encouraged a disturbing upsurge of xenophobia directed at those 'associated' in some way with North Korea." (Morris-Suzuki 2003: 234)

With little opposition and a sense of urgency, Japan began to look more carefully into the possibility of speeding up the missile defense program. On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Defense Agency Chief Ishiba Shigeru stated before the Security Committee of the Japanese House of Representatives "I believe we should exert efforts to get the program [past] the research phase as soon as possible." (Japan Times 2002b) Meanwhile, the US announced in December 2002 that the MD technology had proven highly reliable, citing a successful SM-3 interception missile test. Washington furthermore revealed its intention to deploy a preliminary missile defense shield. Sensing an opportune time, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld urged Ishiba to follow the US and purchase SM-3 missiles and further Aegis destroyers to counter the North Korean security threat. After the meeting with [176]

Rumsfeld, Ishiba indicated that Japan wished to “study the [joint missile defense] program with an eye toward a future move to development and deployment.” (Fouse 2003: 2) Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo and Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro quickly denied that Ishiba’s comments signaled a step forward on Japan’s position on the MD system, cautioning that various aspects of the project were still under study. (Hughes 2006: 20)

Nevertheless, by late February 2003, a US Pentagon official observed Japan seemed to move “rather dramatically” towards a decision to acquire a missile defense capability. (Sherman 2003) Speculations about Japan’s advancing towards MD deployment were further substantiated at a US-Japan summit meeting on May 23, 2003. On this occasion, Prime Minister Koizumi stated that “missile defense is a very important issue in the defense of Japan, and it contributes to strengthening the trust in the US-Japan alliance. Our country will accelerate the examination [of MD].” (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 256) Koizumi’s statement was widely interpreted as a de facto promise that his country would deploy MD.

### *The Decision to Deploy Missile Defense*

Officially, the Japanese government announced its decision on December 19, 2003 to introduce a layered missile defense system that would include Aegis ship-based and PAC-3 ground-based interceptors. The initial plan called for Japan to acquire three Aegis ships outfitted with four Patriot batteries for intercepting missiles.<sup>128</sup> The costs for this capability, according to former Undersecretary for Defense Moriya Takesama, were estimated at about one trillion Yen. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 275) The Japanese government also revealed the intention to import the necessary equipment from the US in order to expedite the first deployment. Officials pointed out, however, that they would work towards an agreement with the US to begin licensed production in Japan at a later date. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 96–97)

Explanations for the decision on MD deployment reflected the main arguments of the earlier debate: (1) the need to defend Japan and strengthen the alliance with the US, (2) the attractiveness of MD in view of the exclusively defense-oriented policy, and (3) interest in the technological know-how. However, in this period, an additional fourth argument in favor of MD emerged in the debates: While policymakers in Tokyo hoped MD deployment

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<sup>128</sup> Japan later increased the planned number of MD systems to sixteen PAC-3 fire units and four Aegis ships equipped with SM-3 interceptors. (Toki 2008)

would serve to strengthen the US alliance, paradoxically, they were also driven by a latent concern about Japanese over-reliance on the US for security.

Firstly, Japanese policymakers emphasized the missile shield would help protect Japan from North Korean missiles and strengthen the relationship to the US. By ensuring the security of US bases, MD would help to reinforce the credibility of the alliance and bolster the deterrence effect. In this context, decision-makers emphasized that due to recent progress, the technological feasibility of MD was now judged as “high.” (Ishikawa 2005: 644) Missile defense would discourage neighboring countries – particularly North Korea – to use missiles in a coercive manner. As Prime Minister Koizumi explained, the shield “is part of our efforts to prevent someone from getting the wrong idea that Japan would give in to threats.” (Japan Economic Newswire 2003b) Furthermore, MD would offer protection in the event of an accidental or unauthorized missile launch. (Ogawa 2002: 48–49)

Secondly, officials underscored that MD was attractive for Japan as it matched the country’s exclusively defensive security policy. In a press conference on December 19, 2003, Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo stated Japan’s missile defense system would be “purely defensive in order to protect our citizens’ lives and property” and that there was “no alternative” to deal with the threat. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 96–97) Fukuda furthermore highlighted the defensive character of MD by pointing out that the Japanese interception missiles “would not even carry gunpowder or explosive objects,” as kinetic energy would be sufficient to destroy enemy missiles (hit-to-kill technology).<sup>129</sup> (Japan Economic Newswire 2003b)

Thirdly, officials in Tokyo felt under pressure to keep pace with the US in the project after Washington decided to deploy MD elements in December 2002. They argued the US would further deepen its technological knowledge, leaving Japan behind. Defense Agency official Moriya Takesama for example maintained deployment was necessary to “close the information gap” with the alliance partner regarding MD know-how. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 273)

Finally, Japan’s decision to build up its missile shield was driven by a concern about Japanese over-dependence on the US for security. Ueki Chikako Kawakatsu, Assistant

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<sup>129</sup> Subsequent discussions also frequently highlighted MD’s suitability in view of Japan’s exclusively defensive policy. For example, Foreign Minister Komura Masahiko in 2007 dismissed criticism that Japan’s MD system might be directed at Russia, stating “Our missile defense is not a spear, but a shield. It is an exclusively defense-oriented policy of Japan.” (Mizoguchi 2007) For a similar viewpoint by former Undersecretary for Defense Moriya Takesama see Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 273.

Professor at Waseda University, observed that Japanese policymakers became increasingly worried about Washington's focus on the Middle East after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Political leaders feared the US – preoccupied with other conflicts – might be less willing or unable to help defend Japan in case of an attack. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) <sup>130</sup> To many policymakers, the dispatch of some US military units from Japan to the Middle East at the onset of the war on Iraq seemed to confirm the dangers of over-reliance. An MD shield would help increase Japan's own capability to defend itself in the event of a missile attack, thereby serving as a hedge against over-dependence. In this context, decision-makers observed the strategic goals pursued by the US and Japan concerning North Korea differed somewhat. During the period of Korean détente in 2000-2001, it had become evident that Washington's primary concern was the proliferation of WMD by the North, while Tokyo's fears focused on the existing capabilities of the regime. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Such different priorities further increased the need to avoid over-reliance on the US.

With the mounting tensions on the Korean Peninsula, few policymakers criticized the MD deployment decision. Some Social Democratic Party members voiced skepticism about the project's enormous costs. SDP Secretary General Mataichi Seiji, for example, warned that the government's decision would “be linked to a massive rise in the defense budget.” (Asahi Shinbun 2003) In addition to cost-related concerns, some observers challenged the government's evaluation of the technological feasibility as being ‘high.’ In the monthly journal *Sekai*, political scientist Toyoshita Narahiko observed that a 2003 research report by a renowned US physicist association cast serious doubts about the maturity of interception technology. (Toyoshita 2005: 40) He also noted there was no reason to believe that the North Korean regime would act irrationally in the face of US extended deterrence. (Toyoshita 2005: 41)

#### *Considering the Legal Issues: Towards a Revision of the Three Principles on Arms Export*

The Japanese government asserted that there were no major legislative hurdles to Japan's acquisition of a missile defense shield from the US. Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo rejected the view of MD conflicting with the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. He stated that the system had “the sole objective of protecting our country and will

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<sup>130</sup> For similar arguments, see Kaneda et al. 2006: 75 and Tanaka 2006: 11.

be operated based on [Japan's] independent judgment and will not be used to defend third countries." He concluded "therefore, there is no problem" with the issue of collective self-defense. (Fukuda 2003) To dispel fears of Japan potentially breaching the ban, Fukuda also maintained that the decision on intercepting a missile would be made autonomously based on target information collected by Japan's own sensors. Alluding to the Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space, the Cabinet Secretary reiterated the government's stance that intercepting missiles in space would be for self-defense in response to an armed attack. (Fukuda 2003) Fukuda refrained from commenting on Japan's Three Principles on Weapons Exports. This was not surprising however, because the principles were not affected by the decision to purchase MD technology from the US.

Nevertheless, the Japanese desire to go forward with licensed production of MD equipment stimulated debates on the need to revise the Three Principles on Weapons Exports.<sup>131</sup> As former Defense Agency member Moriya Takesama pointed out, licensing was seen as an attractive option because it would help Japan gain insights and knowledge into the highly sophisticated MD technology. Moriya also argued that given the enormous costs involved in the project, Tokyo had to ensure that Japanese companies could gain a share of the profits. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 275) Licensing production was seen as potentially in contradiction to the Three Principles: For example, political leaders in Tokyo feared Washington might demand from Japan the supply MD hardware in case of production problems in the US.

The Japanese defense industry also pressured politicians to loosen constraints, complaining they would "be left behind in technological know-how" due to their inability to export. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 264) The LDP – traditionally with close ties to the defense industry – had already begun to push for a reconsideration of the Three Principles in the course of 2003. As a result, the Defense Agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry met behind closed doors beginning in the summer of 2003 to investigate a change in the principles. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 264) A quick consensus could not be established, as the LDP and its coalition partner, the Komei Party, diverged in their views on how to change the principles. In December 2003, Defense Agency Director General Ishiba Shigeru was the first to officially propose a review on

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<sup>131</sup> In 2004, Tokyo's political leaders were also considering to move forward with the development and production stage for the advanced SM-3 missile to be used on the Aegis destroyers – a missile, which the US and Japan had jointly conducted research on since 1998. These considerations also intensified discussions on the Three Principles on Weapons Exports.

Japan's arms export ban. However, his remarks sparked immediate criticism from members of the Komei Party, who emphasized the need to preserve Japan's status as a "pacifist country." (Wuebbels 2004: 11) Koizumi reacted by downplaying Ishiba's remarks, observing that the Defense Agency Chief had not suggested a complete elimination of the Principles, but an amendment that would facilitate Japan's participation in MD. (Wuebbels 2004: 11)

After intensive internal debates, the LDP and Komei Party agreed to partially revise the Three Principles, a decision announced on December 10, 2004. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hosoda Hiroyuki stated "given the fact that ballistic missile defense will contribute to the effective management of the Japan-US Security Arrangement and to the security of Japan [...], the government will exempt the items related to the ballistic missile defense system from the regulations of the Three Principles on Arms Export, on the condition that strict export control is maintained." (Hosoda 2004) Furthermore, Hosoda announced an additional, more controversial change to the Three Principles, according to which Japan could export military-related items and technologies to the US and other countries on a case-by-case basis. (Wuebbels 2004: 10) Japan would handle these cases bearing in mind its "basic philosophy as a peace-loving nation that seeks to avoid the escalation of international conflicts." (Hosoda 2004)<sup>132</sup> Only three months after the announcement of the changes to the Three Principles, the US and Japan reached an agreement for licensed production of MD equipment in Japan beginning in 2008. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 96–97)

### *Preparing for MD Use*

Amid persistent tensions surrounding North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, the Japanese government undertook efforts in 2005 to prepare for the future use of its missile defense system.<sup>133</sup> North Korean missiles could reach Japanese territory within about ten minutes and thus rapid decision-making on the use of MD equipment was deemed indispensable to ensure a high likelihood of interception. In July 2005, the Diet revised the

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<sup>132</sup> In May 2007, Defense Minister Kyuma Fumio sparked criticism when he called for a further loosening in the Three Principles on Arms Export. Kyuma argued that Japan should cooperate with other countries in developing defense equipment (other than MD) in order to reduce costs. However, Chief Cabinet Secretary Shiozaki Yasuhisa denied that Tokyo was considering a relaxation in the Principles, saying that "the Japanese government will firmly maintain the policy of thinking about our basic principles as a peaceful country, including the Three Principles on Arms Exports [...]." (Japan Policy & Politics 2007)

<sup>133</sup> Pyongyang's February 10, 2005 announcement of its success in developing a nuclear bomb and the May 1, 2005 test-firing of a short-range missile into the Sea of Japan were pertinent reminders of the regime's capabilities.

Self-Defense Forces Law, giving the Defense Agency chief the power to order the interception of incoming ballistic missiles based on the prime minister's consent, or based on emergency response guidelines approved in advance by the prime minister.<sup>134</sup> (Masaki 2007) Furthermore, in October 2005 the US and Japan agreed to set up the Bilateral Joint Operation Coordination Center in order to ensure interoperability and communication on missile defense related issues.<sup>135</sup> (National Institute for Defense Studies 2007: 237)

Two years after its fundamental decision to purchase an initial MD capability from the US, the Japanese government took another major step in its missile defense policy. On December 24, 2005, Tokyo formally announced it would move to the development phase in the advanced SM-3 missile project with the US. Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe Shinzo explained the government was confident about the technological feasibility of the new interception missile. (Abe 2005) The development costs of the advanced version of the SM-3 were estimated to reach as much as 2.7 billion US Dollars, with Japan shouldering up to 1.2 billion US Dollars. (Asahi Shinbun 2006a) Regarding the Three Principles of Arms Exports, Abe reiterated the government's stance that any technology related to missile defense would be exempted in line with the Diet's December 2004 decision. (Toki 2008) Remarkably, Abe did not touch upon the issue of collective self-defense. The advanced SM-3 missile was expected to raise problems in this regard, because it would be able to intercept intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) flying towards the US mainland. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Recurrent provocations by North Korea ensured a firm consensus on the MD project. On July 5, 2006, North Korea raised regional tensions when it test-fired seven missiles into the Sea of Japan, including a long-range Taepodon-2 missile. Pyongyang further upped the ante by conducting its first underground nuclear test on October 9, 2006. Three days after the nuclear test, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo observed that "the threat to Japan has multiplied" and stated his firm determination to continue building up Japan's missile defense shield. (Nōsei 2007: 7) Ishiba Shigeru, at the time the head of the Diet's National Security Research Group (Anzen hoshō giin kyōgikai), also declared his full support for Japan's MD program. He pointed out that MD helped to deepen the alliance relationship to the US, while simultaneously allowing Japan to become more independent. Ishiba argued that Japan at the moment still had "to rely on deterrence power" provided by the US to deal

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<sup>134</sup> After the Defense Agency was elevated in status to Defense Ministry in January 2007, the Defense Minister had the same power.

<sup>135</sup> The establishment of a Bilateral Joint Operation Coordination Center was formally agreed upon in May 2006.

with missile threats. However, with the capability to “neutralize ballistic missiles” through MD, Ishiba maintained, “Japan will have its own deterrence power without possessing offensive weapons (i.e. limited to deterrence by denial).” He concluded that therefore, Japan’s “foreign policy choices are expanding.” (Ishiba 2006)

The July 2006 North Korean missile test-firings prompted Japanese and US decision-makers to accelerate the deployment of MD capabilities in and around Japan. Washington announced in mid-July that it would start setting up PAC-3 missile interceptors at Kadena air base on the island of Okinawa, the largest US base in the Asia-Pacific. Furthermore, Washington revealed plans to deploy Shiloh, a cruiser equipped with the Aegis missile tracking and engaging system, at one of its bases in Japan. (CNN 2006) Japanese security experts also urged the government to speed up its planned deployment of the missile defense elements. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 96) MD expenditure was boosted for fiscal year 2007, raising the budget by more than 30% from the initial plan to 182.6 billion Yen. (Masaki 2007) Japan deployed its first PAC-3 system at Iruma Air Self-Defense Force Base in Saitama prefecture, near Tokyo, in March 2007, and in three other prefectures, also adjacent to Tokyo, by the end of 2007 already, instead of the originally intended March 2008. The Defense Ministry planned to introduce PAC-3 units at twelve other air bases between fiscal years 2008 and 2010. (Toki 2008) In addition, Tokyo began installing the Standard Missile-3 interceptors on its Aegis destroyers. The first of four Aegis destroyers to be equipped with MD capability by end of fiscal year 2010 was commissioned in December 2007, three months earlier than originally planned. The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces used the destroyer ‘Kongo’ to conduct their first missile intercept test on December 18, 2007 near Hawaii. In the test, the JSDF successfully shot down a mock missile resembling North Korea’s Nodong.<sup>136</sup> (Toki 2008) In January 2008, the SDF conducted several drills with mobile PAC-3 missile interceptors in Tokyo in order to practice for an emergency scenario.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> The interception test in 2007 was characteristic of how Chinese and Japanese attitudes had changed about missile defense since 1998. Then, Tokyo had decided to defer mentioning in its preliminary budget its plans for MD research until after a summit meeting between the two countries. In 2007, the test was conducted immediately before the first visit of Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo to Beijing in December. China’s response regarding the intercept was relatively calm, with officials expressing hope that Japanese actions were beneficial to regional peace. (BBC 2007) According to Chikako Kawakatsu Ueki, Chinese leaders had come to realize that MD was far too limited in capability to offset the vast Chinese missile stockpiles, and that North Korean provocations warranted a response from Tokyo. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

<sup>137</sup> The drills had originally been planned for 2007, but were postponed because the government feared stirring public opposition to an expanded role of the JSDF. In the fall of 2007, the Fukuda administration was desperately trying to

*The Basic Law on Outer Space: Upgrading Surveillance Capabilities*

On May 20, 2008, soon after the deployment of the initial missile defense capability, the Diet passed the Basic Law on Outer Space (*Uchū Kihon Hō*) – replacing the 1969 Diet Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space. The law, jointly submitted by the ruling LDP, the coalition partner Komei Party and the opposition party DPJ (Democratic Party of Japan), was passed by an overwhelming majority of 221 supporting against 14 opposing votes in the upper house. (Yamaguchi 2008) The Law states that the development of outer space should “contribute to establishing a society that can live securely and at ease, [it should] remove diverse threats to the lives of people [...] and ensure peace and safety of international society, as well as *the national security of our country*.” (Japanese Government 2008, emphasis added) The last phrase on using space for ‘national security’ was a particularly controversial issue. The law did not give unlimited permission to use space for national security, however. It restricted Japan’s space development by declaring the country would have to comply with international agreements on the use of space, including the UN’s 1967 Treaty on Outer Space, and most importantly, with the “peaceful principles of the Constitution.”<sup>138</sup> (Yomiuri Shinbun 2008b)

The law formally revoked the initial interpretation of the 1969 Resolution, according to which Japan was permitted the use of space for strictly non-military objectives. It established the legal basis for embarking on space development for self-defensive and non-aggressive purposes. However, as seen in the above discussion, the interpretational redefinition of the term ‘peaceful’ from ‘non-military’ to ‘self-defensive’ had been under way since 1998, when officials announced Japan could intercept missiles in outer space as a defensive action. For the most part, the new law thus signified a codification and institutionalization of this *de facto* reinterpretation.

Nevertheless, the law implied an important step towards the enhancement of Japan’s missile detection capabilities. In the November 1998 decision to produce and deploy indigenous reconnaissance satellites, Japanese policymakers did not rely on the above-mentioned ‘self-defensive’ interpretation, but rather opted to draw on another understanding: In accordance to the 1985 ‘principle of common use’ (*ippanka gensoku*), the Self-Defense Forces had to limit the resolution of their surveillance satellites to a level

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gain approval for an extension of the controversial Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. (Toki 2008) The drills were held after the January 11, 2008 passing of a new Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law.

<sup>138</sup> Interestingly, the oversight of Japan’s space program was placed on the Cabinet Office – thereby keeping with the Japanese principles of civilian control. (Japanese Government 2008)

comparable to that of commercially used satellites. Since the December 2003 decision to deploy MD, a growing number of Japanese politicians had called for the development of satellites with a higher resolution, however. Three arguments were cited in favor of such a capability. Firstly, policymakers emphasized that precise missile tracking information was necessary to operate the MD shield. They pointed out that the transfer of intelligence data from the US caused unnecessary delays in Japan's policy response in case of a missile launch.

Secondly, officials advocated an upgrade in reconnaissance satellites to ensure they could autonomously decide whether to intercept missiles. By relying on an independent capability for judging intelligence, Japan would run less risk of violating the ban on collective self-defense, they maintained. In this context, they also stressed the need for Japan to hedge against over-dependence on the US. In an October 2006 article, DPJ party member Maehara Seiji argued it was unrealistic for Japan to deploy a surveillance system as large as the US with over 100 satellites, but the country should at least obtain a basic capability. He reasoned "to depend on another country – even if it is an ally – for large amounts of information, can be an obstacle (ashikase) in making an independent foreign and security policy." (Maehara 2006: 32–33) Maehara observed Japan had wrongly believed US intelligence reports about Iraq's threatening WMD stockpiles in 2003. (Maehara 2006: 33) Criticizing the one-sidedness of the alliance relationship, other politicians furthermore maintained that Japan's boost of its surveillance capabilities would contribute to a more "mature relationship" (seijuku shita kankei) with the US.<sup>139</sup>

Thirdly, industry interests factored into the calls for an expansion of Japan's satellite program. The business federation Nippon Keidanren already proposed a review of the government's policy on space development in 2004. (Asahi Shinbun 2006b) In the following year, an informal study group led by LDP politician Kawamura Takeo contended that Japan's space program was far behind the ones of competitive countries. The group called for a new regulatory framework more conducive to industry needs. (Myoken 2008: 4) Diet debates similarly reflected the perceived need to support Japan's space industry.<sup>140</sup>

Following the establishment of the Basic Law on Outer Space, Japan set up the Strategic Headquarters for Space Development, thereby unifying its policies related to the utilization of space. (Maeda 2009) In June 2009, the Strategic Headquarters issued the

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<sup>139</sup> See the May 9, 2008 Diet debate. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan May 9, 2008)

<sup>140</sup> Also see the May 9, 2008 Diet debate. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan May 9, 2008)

‘Basic Plan for Space Policy,’ emphasizing the need to bolster the performance of the nation’s intelligence satellites. The publication came shortly after North Korea stirred fears in Japan with a long-range missile test on April 5 and an underground nuclear test on May 25. In view of the threat facing Japan, the report called for quick improvements both in the quality and quantity of image information. (Japanese Strategic Headquarters for Space Development 2009: 61) A few months later, in November 2009, Japan took a first step towards enhancing its surveillance capability by launching a new satellite with increased resolution to replace one of the four previously launched satellites. (Japan Times 2009a)<sup>141</sup>

*(Almost) Using Missile Defense*

Prior to the above-mentioned test-firing of a long-range Taepodong missile on April 5, 2009, the North Korean regime announced its intention in March to launch what it described as a communications satellite. The Japanese government reacted quickly, dispatching its destroyers ‘Kongo’ and ‘Chokai,’ both equipped with anti-ballistic MD systems, to the Sea of Japan. Defense Minister Hamada Yasukazu ordered the ships to shoot down any parts of the rocket that could cause damage to Japanese territory. (Japan Times 2009b) Nevertheless, Hamada sought to avoid raising tensions and fear, explaining that Japan was preparing for a possible accident, not for a North Korean attack. He maintained his orders sought “to prepare for an event in which a North Korean projectile falls onto our country in an accident.” (Harden 2009) Pyongyang warned that any attempt to shoot down its rocket would be seen as an act of war and provoke retaliation.

The North’s launch on April 5 was closely monitored by the Japanese Defense Ministry. However, Japan decided against interception, because the missile’s debris posed no threat to Japanese territory, according to security experts. The Defense Ministry announced the rocket’s first booster fell into the Sea of Japan, approximately 280 kilometers west of Akita Prefecture, while the remainder of the rocket crossed over the Tohoku region, falling into the Pacific about 2,100 kilometers east of Japan. (Japan Times 2009b) Thus, the Japanese MD system was saved from its first real interception test.

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<sup>141</sup> According to media reports, the Japanese government is also planning to develop an optical information-gathering satellite that will have one of the world’s highest resolutions by 2015. (Yomiuri Shinbun 2009) However, due to budgetary constraints, the project’s feasibility and scope remain uncertain.

## Explaining Japanese Policy

Japanese missile defense policy in the post-Cold War era seems highly pragmatic, based on obvious considerations about the changing strategic environment. All major decisions to move forward in the MD project followed an intensification of regional tensions, especially with North Korea. Furthermore, politicians adjusted legislative interpretations in order to facilitate Japan's participation in the US missile defense shield. Because of this pragmatism, Andrew Oros claims norms- or culture-based explanations "cannot account for Japan's initiation of joint research with the United States on missile defense." (Oros 2008: 157) Oros reasons that violations of anti-militarist norms manifested in the Three Principles on Weapons Exports or the Resolution on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space "should not even be considered" among a population that shares these views widely. Does that mean role conceptions cannot explain Japan's commitment to MD?

Although Japanese policy on the whole seems pragmatic and rational, some decisions cannot be understood by solely looking at security threats. The most striking example is Japanese adherence to the ban on collective self-defense. In order to comply with the ban, Japan pledges to refrain from intercepting an enemy missile as long as its destination is uncertain. Given the short flight time of North Korean missiles to Japan, the policy of waiting for target information seems risky. Japan has also refrained from joining US research efforts on boost phase interception, as the flight path of an enemy missile cannot be determined at that stage. Furthermore, after the 1998 North Korean Taepodong shot, Tokyo took a full ten years to introduce a new space law allowing it to deploy its own reconnaissance satellites with a high resolution for military purposes.<sup>142</sup>

As the discussion below shows, one would be misguided to reject the influence of norms on Japanese policy just because legislative changes were made. To the contrary, one would overlook important reasons why Japanese politicians have found missile defense such an attractive policy option. Role conceptions must be considered to understand the way decision-makers in Tokyo have chosen to respond to security threats. The following analysis examines Japanese policy by considering the three aspects that were also discussed in Germany's case.

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<sup>142</sup> Some security experts have even gone so far as to contend that Japan's MD participation is overall mistaken, since offensive weapons systems that enable a surgical strike of enemy bases are by far cheaper than Japan's missile defense shield. (Asahi Shinbun 2003)

### *(1) Threat Assessment*

In the minds of Tokyo's decision-makers, the regional security environment has significantly deteriorated since the end of the Cold War. Doubts have emerged about the effectiveness of the US nuclear umbrella in deterring potential aggressors.<sup>143</sup> North Korea has been the primary source of concern in Japan, especially with the prospect of nuclear-loaded missiles. China's military built-up and its provocative stance during the Taiwan Straits Crisis of 1995-1996 also stirred fears.<sup>144</sup> Russia is another country that possesses missiles that could reach Japanese territory, although Moscow's capabilities are generally not viewed as a major threat. (Morimoto 2002: 13) The Defense Guidelines published in December 2004 clearly describe the growing missile threat to Japan's security. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 260) Based on these perceptions, Tokyo's decision to deploy an MD system appears rational.

In this context, it is important to note that – unlike many German officials – the majority of Japanese politicians do not see disarmament, non-proliferation and other diplomatic initiatives as alternative means to deal with the missile threat. Despite active supporter for such initiatives as the Six Party Talks or the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), decision-makers in Tokyo have expressed skepticism about the potential of these measures to reduce the existing threat to Japan. In January 2008, for example, the Executive Director of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) Takesada Hideshi voiced bewilderment at the fact that the US was so keen on carrying out 'complete inspections' of North Korea's nuclear facilities. Takeasada rejected such a policy endeavor, stating that "it is not possible" to carry out full inspections in such a reclusive regime. (Takesada 2008)

### *(2) Technological Feasibility and Cost-Effectiveness*

While the technological feasibility of MD was an important point of contention in the early- to mid-1990s, few politicians raised this issue after the 1998 Taepodong shot. On the one hand, the decrease in skepticism was related to a growing confidence in the system's capability, as interception tests proved successful and the US moved towards

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<sup>143</sup> Japan's White Paper 2008 notes that the various threats, which have emerged since the end of the Cold War, may not always be deterred. See Chapter 2, Part II (Aratana Bōeiryoku no Kangaekata). (Ministry of Defense Japan 2008)

<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, according to Associate Professor Ueki Chikako Kawakatsu, most Japanese people do not consider it realistic that China launches missiles at Japan. A North Korean launch is seen as more likely. (Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

deployment of MD. Regarding the key decisions on MD – the beginning of research in 1998, the deployment of MD in 2003, and the development of the advanced SM-3 in 2005 – Japanese policymakers stressed that they had reconsidered the system’s feasibility before deciding on further commitments. On the other hand, the feeling of defenselessness amid the North Korean threat also prompted policymakers to put more hopes into MD technology as Japan’s only means to respond.

Although in the minority, some security specialists still stress the enormous technological hurdles, pointing out that the MD system could easily be offset by enemy countermeasures, such as decoys or multiple warheads. For example, a book edited by the Asahi Shinbun cautions that MD has not always worked reliably even under simple test conditions, and therefore a decoy would likely put the system in disarray. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 251) Similarly, defense specialist Ogawa Shinichi highlighted the challenges, asserting that such a defensive system was invariably “destined to run after offensive technology and [would] have difficulty in catching up with the developments in offensive technology.” (Ogawa 2002: 53) Nevertheless, he insisted that research efforts were worthwhile, as MD was the only means by which Japan could protect itself.

With regard to the cost-effectiveness of the planned MD system, the trend in the Japanese debate was similar to the one observed above on technological feasibility: While a number of politicians voiced criticism on the costs of the system before 1998, the topic was rarely raised afterwards, despite large expenditures. The price tag on Japan’s MD system includes procurement costs of over 1 trillion Yen,<sup>145</sup> development costs for the advanced SM-3 missile of about 115 billion Yen,<sup>146</sup> development and deployment costs of 195 billion Yen for the four ‘multi-purpose’ surveillance satellites launched since 1998,<sup>147</sup> and additional operation costs for running the MD system and the analytical center that monitors intelligence data from reconnaissance satellites.<sup>148</sup>

Without doubt, it is difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness of this complex technological system, while facing a threat from an unpredictable neighbor. Politicians must answer the difficult question: How likely is a ballistic missile attack on Japan and – given such a scenario – what level of security should realistically be sought and at what

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<sup>145</sup> See Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 261.

<sup>146</sup> Or: 1.2 billion US Dollars. See Asahi Shinbun 2006a. Currency conversion at [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com); the given number is only a rough estimate, since currency fluctuations may change costs considerably.

<sup>147</sup> Or: 1.6 billion Euros. See CNN 2005.

<sup>148</sup> The Japanese government has not disclosed specific figures for the operation costs.

costs? One contentious issue is how to evaluate a certain interception probability.<sup>149</sup> Defense experts Morimoto Satoshi and Takahashi Sugio illustrated this point with an example. If Japan's MD system had an interception success rate of 70% and an enemy shot five missiles at Japan, then the probability that *all* missiles were intercepted would be just 17%. (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 320) Conversely, one may argue the probability that *at least one* missile is intercepted in this scenario is more than 99%.<sup>150</sup> Whether an observer considers these numbers high or low depends on his point of view.<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, cost assessments may diverge considerably, as reflected in the comments by members of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS): While one publication describes the costs of MD as "exorbitant," (National Institute for Defense Studies 2007: 236) an official contradicted this stance in an interview, stating MD was "affordable." (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki) As a result, Defense Minister Ishiba Shigeru entirely rejected debating cost-aspects, insisting "We can't talk about how much money should be spent when human lives are at stake." (BBC 2007)

Nevertheless, cost-related aspects of MD may again become a focal point in the near future, due to severe constraints on governmental spending. DPJ member Maehara Seiji noted in an October 2006 article that the cost of MD was substantial, especially given that only 25-30% of Japan's total yearly defense budget of about 4.8 trillion Yen was invested in new equipment. (Maehara 2006: 32) Japan was not just facing a ballistic missile threat, he observed. Similar concerns have been voiced by other specialists. Kaneda Hideaki et al. caution that the Defense Guideline's goal of building a "multifunctional defense power with flexible effectiveness" (*takinō de danryokutekina jikkōsei no aru bōeiryoku*) may be jeopardized by MD participation. They recommend increasing the procurement budget to ensure Japan can make necessary purchases in areas other than MD. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 16–17) A security specialist at NIDS also warned that budgetary pressures will likely intensify, as Japan is forced out of its current 'procurement holiday.' He explained that

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<sup>149</sup> MD experts Ozawa Toshiaki and Morimoto Satoshi also point out that it is difficult for politicians to address budgetary questions, because the costs for the system may change completely depending on the desired features and procurement numbers. (Ozawa and Morimoto 2002: 328)

<sup>150</sup> The calculations are as follows: Likelihood of all five missiles being intercepted successfully is  $0,7^5=16,8\%$ . Likelihood of at least one missile being intercepted successfully is  $1-0,3^5=99,8\%$  (100 percent minus the likelihood that none of the missiles are intercepted).

<sup>151</sup> The only conclusion drawn with certainty from these numbers is that an MD system can realistically be only a complementary instrument in dealing with the North Korean threat, in addition to reliance on the US alliance. As a defense specialist explained, Japan estimates North Korea to have 200 missiles capable of reaching Japan. If Japan sought a capability ensuring the interception of all 200 missiles with 99% probability, it would need a total of about 800 interceptor missiles, including SM-3 and PAC-3 missiles – which is simply not affordable. (Official at the National Institute of Defense Studies 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Japan made major purchases in basic defense equipment like tanks and fighter planes in the late 1980s and early 1990s, ushering into a period in which the country was able to use its defense budget on other items, such as MD. However, as the two-decades old equipment is becoming outdated, competition for budgetary allocations will grow. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki)

### *(3) Policy Goals and Role Conceptions*

In formulating their response to the growing regional missile threats, Japanese policymakers have been guided by four role conceptions reflected in the analysis above: (1) reliable partner, (2) anti-militarist country, (3) respected and trusted country, and (4) regional stabilizer.

Firstly, politicians have felt that Japanese participation in the MD project is desirable in light of the role conception of ‘reliable partner.’ In the 1990s, when Tokyo faced serious trade frictions with its alliance partner, a number of decision-makers argued that the goal of soothing bilateral relations was in fact the primary reason for joining MD research. Today, MD policy continues to be influenced by alliance considerations and Japan’s role as a US partner. According to an official at the National Institute for Defense Studies, the MD project is both a means of sharing the security burden in the alliance, while also ‘entrapping’ the US in Asia by ensuring strong cooperative links between their armed forces. (Yoshizaki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) In addition, pragmatic considerations also influenced the decision to join the US project: Policymakers believed missile defense technology to be far too complicated for their country to go ahead on its own, and thus saw cooperation with the US as the only feasible approach. (Nōsei 2007: 179–80)

Secondly, MD appeals to decision-makers, because it fits the role conception ‘anti-militarist country’ with its focus on an exclusively defense-oriented policy (*senshu bōei*). Tokyo’s political leaders have repeatedly highlighted that MD is the only means for Japan to respond to the North Korean missile threat with a non-offensive military system, in line with the constitutional emphasis on a minimal capability needed for self-defense. Since 1998, a few individual politicians have stirred controversy by suggesting that Japan should consider acquiring offensive strike capabilities in order to launch pre-emptive or counter

strikes against North Korean missile bases.<sup>152</sup> (Hitoshi 2006: 20ff) However, the majority of decision-makers have favored pursuing MD, thereby sticking to the traditional stance of exclusive self-defense, while relying on the US ally to maintain offensive deterrence capabilities.

Thus, it would be mistaken to portray Japanese participation in the MD project as an indication of the country's remilitarization, as John Feffer does.<sup>153</sup> (Feffer 2009) Rather, MD signifies a strong reconfirmation of the principle of exclusive defense. As Hitoshi Yuichiro observes,

“The tide in the domestic debate was not in the direction of having the Self-Defense Forces assume more of the traditional US military's function as a ‘spear,’ but rather a shift towards deepening the exclusive defense [posture] and reinforcing the ‘shield’ [function] through missile defense.” (Hitoshi 2006: 23)

Hitoshi furthermore maintains that the provocative calls for acquiring offensive capabilities served to consolidate support for the introduction of a missile defense system. Faced with the North Korean missile threat, policymakers in Tokyo concluded that the interception of missiles was the only policy option conforming to the role conception of ‘anti-militarist country.’<sup>154</sup> As a result, Japan's balance of offensive and defensive weapons continues to be “unique among the world's advanced nations,” as Tokyo voluntarily restricts its acquisition of weapons “in an almost hypersensitive fashion.” (Takahashi 2006: 93)

The amendments in the peaceful use of space and weapons export policies also do not imply dangerous militarization tendencies. Both changes were made in order to facilitate cooperation with the US, but in doing so, policymakers stressed the continuing importance of the peaceful principles of the Constitution. In fact, the new Basic Law on Outer Space drew on the common interpretation of the Constitution's Article 9 by emphasizing the ‘non-invasive’ use of space. Furthermore, a key reason for introducing the

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<sup>152</sup> Some politicians have not clearly stated whether they are referring to pre-emptive or counter attacks. (Kaneda et al. 2006: 15)

<sup>153</sup> Feffer believes Tokyo's claim that missile defense is for defensive purposes only is “dubious.” (Feffer 2009) Richard Samuels seems to agree at least to some extent, maintaining that MD is a “significant change” in Japanese security policy (Samuels 2007b: 104), while observing that “there is still a formal insistence on ‘defensive defense.’” (Samuels 2007b: 181)

<sup>154</sup> This does not mean that calls in favor of examining the possibility of preemptive or counter strikes on enemy missile launch sites should be overlooked. They reflect obvious concerns about Japan's defenselessness in the face of the North Korean threat and a fear that the US may be caught up in the Middle East. US commitment to Japan and East Asia is an important variable in the debate, because Tokyo's exclusively defense-oriented policy is predicated on the role sharing in the alliance (Japan as the ‘shield’, the US as the ‘spear’). (Hitoshi 2006: 21, Ueki 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

law was to ensure Japan had its own intelligence information to operate the MD system based on its independent judgment, thereby conforming to the ban on collective self-defense.

Thirdly, Japanese MD policy highlights the importance of the role conception ‘respected and trusted country’ and the associated desire for a more equal and mature relationship with Washington. Politicians have been concerned about the alliance’s one-sidedness and Japan’s high degree of dependence on the US. The role conception ‘respected and trusted country’ gained particular relevance amid the US focus on the Middle East in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Tokyo’s politicians saw MD as a means to strengthen relations with Washington, while simultaneously expanding Japan’s own capabilities to deal with threats, thereby hedging against over-reliance. They hoped to put bilateral relations on a more equal footing both by making technological and financial contributions in the MD project and by boosting their own capabilities for defense. The role conception of ‘respected and trusted country’ thus also explains Japan’s decision to revise its peaceful use of space policy: Decision-makers hoped to develop and deploy surveillance satellites in order to lessen the one-sided dependence on US intelligence information.

Finally, Japanese MD policy is guided by the role conception ‘regional stabilizer.’ In contrast to their German counterparts, Japanese policymakers generally reject the potential of MD bringing about serious instability or an arms race in the region. This different evaluation rests on the diverging understandings of how to achieve regional stability: German politicians seek stability mainly through multilateral cooperation and believe that even a defensive MD system would signal distrust towards countries like Russia or Iran. Japanese decision-makers, on the other hand, hope to achieve stability by relying on a minimal self-defensive capability. Few opinion leaders thus believe Japan could incite an arms race by acquiring a non-offensive MD shield.<sup>155</sup> Particularly in the aftermath of the 1998 missile launch, politicians depicted MD as a legitimate, non-provocative instrument in dealing with the missile threat. As Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo stated in December 2003, missile defense “does not pose a threat to neighboring countries or have any adverse effect on the region’s stability.” (Fukuda 2003)

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<sup>155</sup> Interestingly, one of the few Japanese articles warning of an arms race in East Asia was written by a foreign analyst. (Gagnon 2005)

In fact, many Japanese defense specialists insist on missile defense fostering regional stability and peace. They argue that MD promotes arms control, because the effectiveness of an enemy's missiles declines and the costs for developing new ones capable of penetrating the MD shield rise.<sup>156</sup> (Ishikawa 2005: 649) Furthermore, a number of security experts contend MD helps Japan maintain an overall balance of power in the region, thereby ensuring stability. Specialists and politicians point out that in accordance with the concept of 'basic defense capability' (*kibanteki bōeiryoku*), Japan should avoid becoming a destabilizing "power vacuum" due to a lack of adequate capabilities. (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 306) This corresponds to the view in the 2004 Defense White Paper, according to which Japan should maintain defense capabilities – including MD – to such an extent that it "would not become a power vacuum and turn into a destabilizing factor in our country's regional environment."<sup>157</sup> Thus, missile defense is seen as a means of dealing with the shifting power balance caused by the built-up in capabilities by North Korea and China.

In sum, role conceptions offer important insights into why decision-makers perceive MD as a suitable and appealing option for their country. The anti-militarist role conception in particular explains Tokyo's preference for a defensive rather than offensive approach to the North Korean threat. In addition to the relevant role conceptions, two factors help to explain Tokyo's policy choices. Firstly, the analysis highlighted the persistent influence of industry interests. As demonstrated, Japanese defense companies and the business federation Keidanren have strongly pushed for participation in MD and for the development of indigenous satellites. Secondly, the domestic mood following the 2002 revelations about North Korea's kidnapping of Japanese citizens had important effects on Tokyo's MD policy. The ensuing atmosphere was characterized by intense resentment against not only North Korea, but also against those Japanese opinion leaders who had supposedly 'underestimated' the North. Calls by politicians for a missile shield thus resonated with the public, which was concerned about the unpredictable neighbor.

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<sup>156</sup> Politician Ishiba Shigeru for example maintains that MD would not lead to other countries developing missiles that would defeat the system. "If you launch a missile and it gets shot down," he said, "you give up missile production." (Onishi 2004)

<sup>157</sup> See White Paper 2004, Chapter 2. (Defense Agency Japan 2004)

## **Part 6: Japanese Policy on Missile Defense for Soldiers Abroad**

### **Introduction**

So far, Japanese policymakers have not given in-depth consideration to the protection of Japanese soldiers from missile threats. Therefore, this part briefly examines both why policymakers rarely discuss the threats to Japanese soldiers abroad and whether their evaluations of the security situation are in step with reality. While this part does not provide an in-depth study of the JSDF's international missions, it argues that the apparent contradictions within Tokyo's policy can be well understood by considering the relevant role conceptions.

### **Japan's Official Stance on JSDF Deployment**

According to Tokyo's official policy-line, JSDF contingents are not supposed to operate in areas where enemy attacks are likely. The strict rules on missions abroad are a consequence of the government's interpretation of the Constitution. The first paragraph of Article 9 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." (Nasu 2005: 50) Until the early 1990s, the Japanese government submitted to the interpretation that it could not send its armed forces to multilateral missions at all, because this would exceed the limits of self-defense and imply the use of force in settling international disputes.

After the 1990-1991 Gulf conflict however, Tokyo increasingly felt under pressure by the international community to change this interpretation and make a 'human contribution' to multilateral UN missions rather than continuing to confine itself to 'checkbook diplomacy.' In 1992, Japan responded to the criticism by enacting the *International Peace Cooperation Law*, allowing the dispatch of the JSDF to UN peace-keeping missions. However, the law required the existence of a ceasefire agreement among the adversaries, so that the region could be declared a 'non-combat' zone (*sentō kōi ga*

*okonawarete orazu*). (Ishizuka 2004: 140) In such areas, Japanese forces would not be required to use military force for offensive purposes, according to officials.<sup>158</sup>

### **No Threats? The Reality of Non-Combat Zones**

A number of observers have criticized the Japanese government's interpretation of Article 9 as untenable. They point out that the definition of 'non-combat' zone is too vague, because the use of military force cannot be rejected as a possibility. According to Nasu Hitoshi, if there was "a complete and permanent cease-fire with no possible violations, peacekeepers would be unnecessary."<sup>159</sup> (Nasu 2005: 50:61) The Japanese government discounted such criticism, maintaining 'non-combat' areas were appropriate to make international contributions.

However, more than any previous mission, the reconstruction efforts by JSDF troops in Iraq from early 2004 to mid-2006 highlighted the ambiguity of the term 'non-combat' area. Even though Tokyo sought to select Iraq's safest zone for the mission, opposition parties questioned whether Samawah – the chosen city – could be classified as a 'non-combat' area. They argued Iraq overall was too volatile to have 'safe zones' where the JSDF could be deployed under the requirements of Article 9. While admitting that "Nobody can guarantee that it's a 'no danger' zone," Prime Minister Koizumi insisted on the government's stance of it being a non-combat zone. (Watanabe 2004) In November 2004, when the security situation deteriorated and the Baghdad government declared a state of emergency across the country except for the Kurdish north, the Japanese government still insisted on the Japanese troops' operating in a 'non-combat' zone in the southern Iraqi region. (Asian Political News 2004) As Iraqi insurgencies rose, JSDF troops had no other option than to shut themselves up in a fortified camp under the protection of Australian forces. (Hughes 2004c: 436, Szechenyi 2006: 145) Japan's posture provoked international

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<sup>158</sup> There are other limitations on the JSDF missions: For example, due to the aforementioned ban on collective self-defense, JSDF members are not allowed to defend the UN troops from other countries. Furthermore, they are not allowed to undertake measures that may be viewed as integral to the use of force by another state, not even if Japanese acts fell short of the actual use of force. However, this part only considers those restrictions that are pertinent for the security of JSDF troops.

<sup>159</sup> Specialists have furthermore criticized the government's stance that even if Japan were to use military force in accordance with resolutions of the UN, such use would be understood as an act by Japan (which is prohibited by the Constitution). As Hitoshi Nasu argues, "this view confuses the physical presence and the legal status of the Japanese SDF contingents. It is *ipso facto* Japanese contingents that participate in U.N. military operations, but they are *ipso jure* not qualified to exercise the sovereign right of Japan." (Nasu 2005: 59) However, this view is disputed and other legal specialists argue that Japanese soldiers must always be considered to act under Japanese legislation.

criticism. Observers stressed that JSDF troops would be of little help if they had to be 'babysat' by Australian forces.

While the government persisted in its interpretation, it became increasingly clear that a distinction between 'combat' and 'non-combat' zones was impractical and that Japan had arguably crossed the line of the Article 9 restrictions. The ambiguity of the term 'non-combat' zone subsequently prompted a group of Japanese activists to launch a civil lawsuit against the government in order to determine whether the Air Self-Defense Force's mission to airlift multinational troops between Kuwait and Baghdad was unconstitutional.<sup>160</sup> The Nagoya High Court's ruling in April 2008 was equivocal and contradictory. While it regarded Baghdad as a 'combat area' and the JSDF mission as unconstitutional, it rejected the plaintiffs' demands for suspension of the JSDF deployment and the payment of consolation money. In commenting on the court's ruling, Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura Nobutaka dismissed the need to clarify the government's definition of 'non-combat' zones in which JSDF may operate. (Japan Times 2008a)

### **Explaining Japanese Policy**

Even though Japan apparently has sent troops to precarious regions, especially in Iraq, government officials rarely address potential hazards to soldiers abroad, including the threat from missiles. The evasion of such security considerations can be explained by examining the conflicting expectations of Japan's role conceptions of 'non-militarist country' on the one hand and the conceptions of 'exporter of security' and 'reliable partner' on the other hand. In line with the latter two conceptions, Tokyo has sought to respond to demands by the international community and especially the US alliance partner for playing a bigger role in resolving international conflicts. As a result, Tokyo passed the 1992 Peace Cooperation Law and subsequently made two amendments to the law, facilitating Japan's cooperation with international UN troops. (Ishizuka 2004)

At the same time, the Japanese government sought to act in accordance with its role conception of 'non-militarist country,' insisting deployments were only made to 'non-combat' areas and thus consistent with constitutional constraints. By drawing on the ambiguity in the definition of 'non-combat' zone, Japan was able to dispatch the JSDF to

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<sup>160</sup> The deployment of Japan's Air Self-Defense Forces continued after the withdrawal of the Ground Self-Defense Forces from Iraq in mid-2006.

Iraq. For policymakers, this was perhaps the best compromise solution short of having to reject one of the three role conceptions. However, as seen above, the compromise remained on the declaratory level, as Tokyo essentially admitted Samawah was a ‘danger zone.’ This de facto violation of the traditional interpretation of Article 9 demonstrates Japan’s willingness to broaden its understanding of the scope of activities permissible under its role as ‘non-militarist country.’<sup>161</sup> It also indicates the importance Tokyo attaches to the two role conceptions of ‘exporter of security’ and ‘reliable partner.’

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<sup>161</sup> As Japan formally maintains constitutional restrictions on its participation in UN missions, it is fair to say that the role conception of ‘non-militarist country’ continues to be important in decision-makers’ minds.

## **Part 7: Japanese Policy on Assisting other Countries with MD**

### **Introduction**

Due to the ban on collective self-defense, Japan is technically not allowed to assist other countries with its MD equipment. While policymakers have emphasized their intention to obey the constitutional ban, they face difficulties in defining the precise boundaries of individual self-defense. Debates have focused on various scenarios to clarify when Japan may intercept missiles or share intelligence information with the US. As will be seen below, decision-makers in Tokyo have been under growing pressure from Washington to broaden their interpretation of the ban on collective self-defense. While Japanese politicians have been careful to avoid an overt breach of the ban, they have arguably moved towards a de facto exercise of the right of collective self-defense in actual policy. The analysis in this part argues that the contradictory stance can be well explained by the role conflict faced by political elites.

This part is divided into five main sections. The first section briefly reexamines the legal stipulations on Japan's assistance to other countries. The next section considers the policy dilemmas faced by Tokyo, in particular with regard to the alliance relationship to the US. An in-depth analysis of the Japanese debate on assisting other countries with MD equipment follows. As a pertinent example, the fourth section assesses Tokyo's debate and decision-making regarding a US request to deploy Aegis destroyers with significant capabilities for intelligence collection in the Indian Ocean in 2002. The final section summarizes the characteristics of Japanese policy and evaluates the explanatory power of role conceptions.

### **Legal Restrictions: Insistence on 'Independence'**

As discussed above, Article 9 of the Constitution prohibits Japan from invoking the right of collective self-defense – defined as the use of force to protect another state in a situation where Japan itself is not under attack – because this would exceed the minimum level of military force necessary to defend Japanese territory.<sup>162</sup> Accordingly, Tokyo has

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<sup>162</sup> In May 1981, the Japanese Cabinet Legislative Affairs Office explicitly stated this interpretation, arguing that “It is understood that the exercise of the right of self-defense permitted under Article 9 of the Constitution must be limited

maintained that it may not employ missile defense capabilities for the protection of other countries, if Japan is not endangered. Since the decision to introduce a missile defense shield in December 2003, politicians have repeatedly insisted that the system's purpose is to protect only Japan and that there is thus no conflict with the constitutional ban.

Announcing the 2003 decision, Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo explained the system would be operated based on Japan's "independent judgment" and would "not be used to defend third countries." (Fukuda 2003) Policymakers attached particular importance to the use of the term 'independent.' Reportedly, negotiations with the US on the bilateral memorandum of understanding for setting up an MD system were complicated by Tokyo's insistence on describing the Japanese program as 'independent' rather than as a 'part' of the US concept – a request that was viewed with suspicion by Washington. (Lim 2004)

As highlighted in previous parts, Japan's decisions to develop its own information-gathering satellites in 1998 and to introduce the Basic Law on Outer Space in 2008 were clearly influenced by the perceived need to observe the ban on collective self-defense. Defense Agency Chief Nakatani Gen argued that although Japan was permitted to receive intelligence information from foreign countries, it needed autonomous data to detect and track missiles. Only by having its own data sources, Tokyo could ensure it was able to operate the system "independently" (*shutaitekina unyō*) and at its own discretion, thereby abiding by the constitutional ban. (Asahi Shinbun 2001)

### **Dilemmas and Difficulties in MD Policy**

While the Japanese government claims MD does not raise any problems with the ban on collective self-defense, debates among policymakers demonstrate that the situation in fact is more complicated. The definition of the precise scope of individual self-defense is linked to several policy dilemmas. Firstly, Japan may lose precious time if it has to wait for target estimates before deciding on the interception of an enemy missile. Secondly and yet more importantly, Tokyo's politicians fear they may jeopardize the alliance relationship with the US if they refused to intercept a missile targeted at American facilities or territory. On the other hand, officials also seek to avoid promising outright support to the US, for that would constitute a violation of Article 9. Military affairs specialist Shibayama Futoshi aptly

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to the minimum level necessary to defend our country. The exercise of the right of collective self-defense exceeds that limit and thus is not permissible under the Constitution." (Asahi Shinbun 2007b)

summarizes the Japanese dilemma: “Suppose a missile was launched from North Korea aimed at the United States. If we didn’t shoot it down, that would break up the alliance with the United States. But to shoot it down would be unconstitutional.” (Struck 2001) Similarly, decision-makers in Tokyo fear a deterioration of relations with the US if they do not respond to demands by Washington for sharing intelligence information.

Finally, Japanese policymakers may face difficult policy choices vis-à-vis regional neighbors, although such scenarios are rarely discussed. For example, Tokyo may be asked to provide MD equipment to protect Taiwan if tensions with mainland China rose like they did in 1995-1996 during the Taiwan Straits Crisis. As the 1997 US-Japan Guidelines for Security Cooperation call on Tokyo to cooperate with the US in responding to ‘situations in areas surrounding Japan,’ Washington may put severe pressure on its alliance partner to act jointly in aiding Taiwan. Demands for Japanese help are also conceivable in case of a crisis on the Korean Peninsula. However, it is unlikely that Japan would be asked specifically for missile defense systems to protect South Korea, because Aegis ships are generally incapable of intercepting North Korean missiles targeted at the South.<sup>163</sup> (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki)

With regard to South Korea, the US may also be interested in beginning trilateral cooperation on developing MD systems. However, Japanese policymakers have displayed a cautious attitude regarding such cooperation. In a January 2008 talk, Takesada Hideshi, Executive Director of the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), argued for example that Tokyo would refrain from cooperating with South Korea on MD, even if the new administration under President Lee Myung-bak was interested in working with Japan. He stated trilateral collaboration between the US, South Korea, and Japan was out of the question, because the Constitution prohibits Tokyo from joining such an endeavor. (Takesada 2008)

The next part analyzes Japanese debates on defining the limits of individual self-defense. It focuses on the alliance dilemma with the US, which has dominated public discussions.

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<sup>163</sup> Aegis ships can only intercept missiles if they fly over the ocean. Undoubtedly, other demands for help would confront Japan with a quandary. While forced to observe the constitutional ban on collective self-defense, Tokyo would probably face severe US pressure to help South Korea. For Washington, cooperation between Japan and South Korea is vital, because the bilateral relationship forms the third leg in the US triangular alliance system with the two countries. See Cha 1999.

## Defining the Boundaries of Individual Self-Defense

Discussions on the scope of individual self-defense touch upon two main issues: (1) whether the JSDF may under certain circumstances intercept missiles that are possibly not targeted at Japan, and (2) whether Japan may share its intelligence information with the US. The sections below provide an analysis of the discussions on each of them.

### *(1) Interception of Missiles (Possibly) Not Targeted at Japan*

Regarding the first issue, the debate deals with the conceivable scenario that Japan has to decide on intercepting a missile without reliable information on the estimated target area. The majority of government officials reject the possibility of utilizing the MD system for such a missile. They maintain that Japan would not be able to invoke the right of individual self-defense, given the uncertainty about whether the country was in fact being attacked. (Asahi Shinbun 2005b: 276) Based on this reasoning, the government has also rejected participating in the development of boost phase missile defense systems, since the trajectory of a missile cannot be estimated at this early stage. Defense Agency Chief Ono Yoshinori expressed this view in 2004, stating that it is “unclear whether the missile will fall on Japan or fly to the US” during the boost phase, and thus interception is not possible. (Asahi Shinbun 2006a)

However, some policymakers have challenged this view, contending that Japan has no choice but to intercept a missile, if the impact area cannot be estimated. Several specialists have urged the government to consider more seriously the option of boost-phase interception systems. In their view, such MD systems may be particularly attractive, because an enemy missile with its burning rocket motor can be easily tracked at this early flight stage. Furthermore, they point out that there are few countermeasures for the enemy to foil the intercept during this phase. (Jimbo 2002: 58) Some key politicians such as Ishiba Shigeru and Maehara Seiji have backed this assessment, calling for participation in US development programs for boost-phase MD.<sup>164</sup>

A related, even more contentious debate deals with the question of whether Japan may under certain circumstances intercept missiles targeted at US territory or at its facilities and forces abroad. Discussions reflect the above-mentioned concern among politicians

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<sup>164</sup> Ishiba made his comment when he was Defense Agency Chief in May 2004. See Hughes 2006: 22. For the view by Democratic Party members Maehara, see Maehara 2006: 32.

about the negative effect on the alliance relationship if Japanese MD capabilities were not employed. Decision-makers distinguish several cases and scenarios. Firstly, government officials generally agree that a missile targeted at US forces within Japan can be intercepted based on the right of individual self-defense, since it would be entering Japanese territory. In addition, the Cabinet Legislative Affairs Office declared in January 2003 that missiles targeted at US forces deployed in areas outside, but adjacent to Japanese territory, could also be intercepted, based on the argument that Japan or the JSDF patrolling in nearby waters were a plausible target given the proximity. (Oros 2008: 168)

The hypothetical case of a missile flying towards US mainland or a US facility like Guam in the Pacific has been more contentious, however. Since the Japanese government has insisted that the MD system would not be used to defend other countries, a number of politicians have strictly opposed intercepting such a missile. Ota Akihiro, President of the Komei Party, for example stated at a press conference in November 2006 that “It is not possible to intercept [a missile] fired towards the US, because this would mean exercising the right of collective self-defense,” which is banned under the Constitution. (Asahi Shinbun 2006a)

However, other officials – especially those from the defense establishment – have challenged this view. They raise various scenarios in arguing that Japan may be permitted to intercept missiles flying towards the US. For example, in May 2007 Defense Minister Kyuma Fumio maintained Japan could intercept a missile targeting the US, if the country that launched it had attacked Japan before. According to Kyuma, in such a situation, Japan would be exercising the right of individual self-defense, because it was reacting to an assault on its territory and had to respond with defensive measures. (Toki and Diehl 2007)

Furthermore, a number of defense experts have argued that the use of MD was permissible if a missile flies across Japanese territory towards the US. In June 2003, the Japanese Defense Agency explained that missiles aimed at a third country could be intercepted while traveling above Japan, because there was a possibility of the missile’s failing and striking on Japanese territory. Therefore, such an interception would be construed as the exercise of individual self-defense. (Japan Economic Newswire 2003a) The Agency also stated that the interception of missiles not crossing over Japanese territory would violate constitutional restrictions. Some politicians supported the JDA’s stance. One of them, Maehara Seiji of the Democratic Party stated in a 2004 interview that “it is natural that Japan, as an ally [of the US], discusses its scope of actions, for example, in case of a

missile launched from North Korea towards Hawaii or Guam and flying over Japanese territory.” (Nishimoto et al. 2004: 57) However, the Japanese government has not clearly taken position on this issue and there have been contradictory media reports on how Tokyo would act. (Asahi Shinbun 2003, Kaneda et al. 2007: 74)

Washington increased pressure on Tokyo for clarifying its stance on intercepting missiles flying towards the US in October 2006, after North Korea conducted its first nuclear test following a long-range missile test in July of the same year. Washington’s Ambassador to Japan, Thomas Schieffer, made clear that the answer to this question would be “absolutely critical to the function of our future alliance.” (Toki and Diehl 2007) Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, who had taken office just a month earlier, showed himself receptive to this warning. Abe, a well-known hawk among Japan’s political leadership, had publicly advocated amending Japan’s Constitution and Article 9 prior to taking office. (Abe 2006: 122–23) Shortly after Schieffer’s speech on November 14, 2006, Abe stated in an interview with the US newspaper *Washington Post* that Japan “must examine whether it may shoot down missiles that are possibly flying towards the US.” (Asahi Shinbun 2007b) He furthermore indicated that he was open to a reinterpretation or change of the Constitution. Abe’s proposal met with considerable opposition among many politicians, who were cautious about any radical change.

In April 2007, Abe nevertheless set up the Council on the Reconstruction of a Legal Basis for Security (*Anzen hoshō no hōteki kiban no saikōchiku ni kan suru kondankai*, hereafter shortened to ‘Council’). This expert panel was charged with drafting recommendations on specific cases related to Japan’s security policy and the Constitution, particularly the right of collective self-defense. Before the first meeting of the Council, Abe won a further victory on the issue of constitutional reform. On May 14, 2007 the Upper House of Japan’s Diet passed a bill setting up a national referendum system – thereby establishing the legal basis for a possible revision of the Constitution.<sup>165</sup> A few days later, Abe convened the first meeting of the Council. He specifically asked it to ascertain whether it was appropriate for Japan to use its missile defense system for the interception of missiles targeting the United States.<sup>166</sup> (Toki and Diehl 2007)

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<sup>165</sup> The national referendum law did not take effect until three years after becoming law, however. Japan’s present Constitution has never been amended since coming into effect in 1947.

<sup>166</sup> The Council was charged with examining four scenarios, one of which related specifically to MD.

However, the momentum towards constitutional reform slowed considerably after Abe resigned from his post as Prime Minister in September 2007. His successor, Fukuda Yasuo, was more guarded on the possibility of constitutional reform and paid little heed to the activities of the Council. When the Council's experts made their final report in June 2008 and urged the Prime Minister to lift the ban on exercising the right of collective self-defense, Fukuda turned a deaf ear on the panel's recommendation and shelved the report. (Japan Policy & Politics 2008) The next Prime Minister, Aso Taro, who came into office in September 2008, did not take up a clear position towards the Council's recommendations. While he stated the issue of collective self-defense was "important" (Japan Policy & Politics 2008), he ruled out the option of exercising the right of collective self-defense.<sup>167</sup> (People's Daily 2008) The question of intercepting missiles targeted at areas outside of Japan remains a quandary to the country's policymakers. Tokyo will need to establish clear guidelines on how it will act, taking into consideration the current ban on collective self-defense. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008c, Interview by A. Sakaki)

## *(2) Sharing Intelligence Information with the US*

Article 9 of the Constitution is also considered in debates on the possibility of sharing Japanese intelligence information with the US. The government has taken the stance that it may provide information to the US in two cases: one, if the information will be used with the sole purpose of ensuring Japan's security, and two, if the information is provided as part of a routine exchange of information (*ippantekina jōhō kōkan no ikkan toshite*). (Morimoto and Takahashi 2002: 307–08) On the other hand, Japan is not allowed to pass intelligence information if another country requests it to gather data with the intention of utilizing them in a military encounter. According to government officials, this would signify a case of collective self-defense. In explaining the difference between the prohibited case of collective self-defense and the permissible 'routine' exchange of information, the head of the Defense Agency Akiyama Masahiro asserted in 1996 that the former "is a concept that comprises the actual use of force." (Kaneda et al. 2006: 118)

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<sup>167</sup> Aso's statement asserting a continued adherence to Japan's constitutional ban was made after a controversial remark by the Air Self-Defense Force Chief-of-Staff, Tomogami Toshio, who insisted that Japan should be allowed to exercise the right of collective self-defense.

At first sight, this distinction appears fairly clear-cut. However, Japan's actual policy is characterized by contradictions and ambiguity, as the following analysis of Tokyo's position on the dispatch of an Aegis ship to the Indian Ocean in 2001-2002 shows. Although Japan's Aegis destroyers were not equipped with MD capability based on the SM-3 missile at that point, they did feature advanced radar equipment, which later was used for the MD systems installed on these ships. The intelligence systems on the Aegis, including data-linkages with the US, were at the heart of the Japanese dispute about a possible deployment. This debate provides a pertinent example of Tokyo's stance on intelligence sharing with a partner country and reveals actual practices in dealing with the ban on collective self-defense.

### **Japan's Policy regarding the Dispatch of Aegis ships to the Indian Ocean**

#### *The Indian Ocean Dispatch*

In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Washington called on allies and partner countries to support its 'war on terror' and the fight against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In response, Japan passed the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law on October 29, 2001, after exceptionally speedy deliberations in the Diet. This law enabled Japan to send the Maritime Self-Defense Forces to help provide logistical and oil-refueling services to multinational forces operating in the Indian Ocean against Afghanistan. Prior to the law's adoption, a "vague but general consensus" emerged among Diet members according to which Japan's support of multilateral troops would not be "unified with combat" and therefore not violate the ban on collective self-defense. (Ishizuka 2004: 144)

On this basis, the Japanese government debated in November 2001 whether it should send Aegis destroyers to the Indian Ocean. These ships were equipped with a more sophisticated air-defense radar covering a range of approximately 500 kilometers – about five times that of older destroyers – and would allow the detailed transfer of intelligence information to the US Navy via data linkages. (Foreign Press Center Japan 2002) However, after Japanese policymakers of the LDP and the Komei Party voiced concern that such a dispatch might violate the Constitution, the idea was shelved. Lawmakers explained that the US might use the Aegis intelligence data for the planning of military attacks. In that case,

Japanese support would be ‘unified with combat’ and therefore violate the ban on collective self-defense.<sup>168</sup>

### *US Pressure or ‘Manufactured Gaiatsu’?*

In late April 2002, Washington requested Tokyo to dispatch an Aegis destroyer to the Indian Ocean to support the US campaign against terrorism in Afghanistan. (Japan Policy & Politics 2002b) This appeal was motivated by several factors. First, Washington was interested in a more substantial regional presence by Japan, as NATO forces continued to wage a strenuous military campaign on Afghanistan’s Taliban regime. Furthermore, the Japanese presence with an Aegis destroyer was also favored amid the growing tensions between Washington and Baghdad after President Bush’s January 2002 State of the Union address, in which he labeled Iraq an ‘axis of evil’ together with Iran and North Korea.

The US request was to some extent also a case of ‘manufactured gaiatsu,’ a term coined by Paul Midford. Midford suggests that the US ‘gaiatsu,’ or foreign pressure on Japan, does not derive from US national interest, as commonly assumed, but in this case originates from within Japan. (Midford 2003: 336) According to media reports, the leadership of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces was a driving force behind Washington’s demand. Japanese Navy officials hoped to set a precedent by deploying the Aegis destroyers far away from Japan, thereby expanding the scope of their activities. This, they assumed, would also facilitate pushing through future requests for procurement orders and vindicate budget increases for the Maritime SDF. Without consulting the central government, Japanese Navy officers reportedly met their US counterparts in early April 2002, urging them to persuade Washington’s leadership to “strongly request” the deployment of the Japanese Aegis vessels. (Berkofsky 2002b)

Whether they were in fact successful in ‘manufacturing’ US pressure is difficult to judge – the Japanese government later denied any connection between the US appeal for Aegis ships and the bilateral talks between Navy officers from both countries in early April. (Berkofsky 2002b) Regardless, Tokyo rejected the demand for an Aegis deployment. Government officials declared that dispatching the technologically sophisticated Aegis

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<sup>168</sup> See for example the November 9, 2001 debate in the Diet. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan November 9, 2001)

destroyers to the Indian Ocean was no option within the scope of Japan's contribution to the campaign against terrorism.<sup>169</sup>

### *Heightening US Pressure Prior to the Attack on Iraq*

In the fall of 2002, the US administration and Pentagon officials increased pressure on Japan for the dispatch of Aegis ships. The question of deployment was discussed at length in the Japanese Diet. Many Diet members voiced opposition, fearing the Aegis dispatch might result in a violation of the Constitution. Critics argued that the dispatch was problematic in two respects, both related to the issue of collective self-defense. First, Japan might contribute to the planning of US attacks in Afghanistan through data linkages between Japan's Aegis ships and the US Navy. Furthermore, as a US attack on Iraq was becoming increasingly certain, a number of Japanese politicians also warned that the intelligence data might be used to identify targets in Iraq. Many lawmakers considered a Japanese contribution to a possible war on Iraq even more contentious than on Afghanistan since it was not justifiable under the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law. (NHK Online 2002) Secondly, critics suspected the US wanted to replace its own destroyers in the Indian Ocean by Japanese Aegis ships. However, as a replacement, Japan's Aegis would contribute indirectly to a possible war on Iraq. (NHK Online 2002)

Opposition to the dispatch was particularly strong in the Social Democratic Party, the Komei Party, and in some sections of the LDP itself. Social Democratic Party member Mataichi Seiji pointed out that the dispatch would constitute a "transgression of the peace Constitution" and therefore his party was rejecting such a step. (Mataichi 2002) In the LDP, former Secretary General Nonaka Hiromu was critical of the dispatch. Alluding to the common view that Japan's Aegis ships might be used to support US forces in a likely attack on Iraq, Nonaka said that sending such a ship "could trigger a move to drive our nation in a dangerous direction, including deployment of forces against Iraq." (Japan Policy & Politics 2002a)

On the other hand, proponents of the Aegis dispatch, including many LDP lawmakers, voiced three arguments in favor of the deployment. First, they pointed out that

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<sup>169</sup> Apparently, one reason for the refusal was concern within Japan that an Aegis dispatch might have a negative effect on Diet debates of government bills on emergency legislation. The bills on emergency measures, which detail actions to be taken in dealing with foreign military attacks on Japan, were submitted to the Diet in mid-April 2002. Some officials feared that two concurrent debates on a potential expansion on the scope of activities of the JSDF might cause a backlash among more pacifist-minded Diet members. (Japan Policy & Politics 2002b)

one of the three smaller Japanese destroyers deployed in the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean was, in accordance with the rotation schedule, returning home soon. The Aegis ship would thus take the place of the smaller vessel and ensure a smooth rotation. Secondly, advocates claimed that the Aegis, equipped with more advanced radar tracking and information processing capabilities, would better ensure the safety and air defense needs of Japan's troops abroad.<sup>170</sup> Thirdly, they referred to the highly efficient air conditioning system on the Aegis that would provide the Japanese crew with more comfortable working conditions in the hot climate of the Indian Ocean, while the smaller ships were not as well-equipped for use in tropical regions. (Japan Times 2002a) With these arguments, proponents emphasized that Japan's independent reasoning would be the basis for the dispatch, not US pressure. Diet member and former Defense Agency official Fujishima Masayuki supported deployment, stating that Japan should "make an independent judgment" (*shutaiteki ni handan suru*), taking into consideration the superior protection JSDF members were offered by the Aegis.<sup>171</sup>

#### *Japan's Aegis Dispatch despite Lingering Concerns*

On December 4, 2002, after considerable controversy in the ruling coalition, Prime Minister Koizumi finally decided to dispatch an Aegis destroyer as an escort for the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. The ship would be allowed to share intelligence information with the US Navy. The government's sudden shift from a reluctant to an affirmative stance on the dispatch caused bewilderment among observers. One of them remarked that it was a "U-turn" in Japan's security policy agenda. (Berkofsky 2002a) But the Koizumi government claimed that the decision in favor of the deployment was taken with regard to Japan's capability requirements in the Indian Ocean.<sup>172</sup>

By this time, there was ample evidence about the US intention to launch an attack on Iraq. Critics argued the US request for an Aegis dispatch was obviously linked to the

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<sup>170</sup> Critics argued, however, that the smaller but still highly capable Shirane- and Murakame-class destroyers were more than capable of handling any conceivable local area ocean air defense needs. See Tanter 2006.

<sup>171</sup> See the November 13, 2002 debate in the Diet. (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan November 13, 2002)

<sup>172</sup> The Komei Party, in the coalition government with the LDP, opposed the dispatch, but asserted in early December that it would not risk breaking up the coalition over the issue. Prior to this announcement, the Defense Agency lobbied the Komei Party heavily for taking an accommodating stance on the dispatch. A high ranking Defense Agency official tried to convince the more pacifist minded Komei leadership by highlighting the superior air-conditioning system on the Aegis as a key advantage for JSDF members. Apparently, the Komei Party found it easier to accept the Aegis dispatch based on arguments stressing the well-being of Japanese soldiers. (Berkofsky 2002a)

planned war on Iraq. However, Japanese government officials maintained the decision had nothing to do “with the operation regarding the situation in Iraq.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan 2002) Press Secretary Takashima Hatsuhisa argued

“The Aegis escort ship is expected to exchange information with American and other naval vessels, which are friendly forces fighting against terrorism. If any other operation is undertaken by American or other naval vessels, the Japanese Aegis escort ship would not participate in it at all.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan 2002)

But this announcement did not allay opponents’ fears, that Japan’s transfer of data collected by the prodigious area-wide Aegis surveillance capacities would violate the ban on collective self-defense. Prime Minister Koizumi tried to evade critical questions, stating “The only difference between Aegis destroyers and other destroyers is that the former have a higher capability.” (Berkofsky 2002a) Of course it was precisely this high military profile of the Aegis that was anathema to critics.

The Diet debate demonstrated that the Japanese government was walking a tight rope. On October 29, 2002, Defense Minister Ishiba Shigeru maintained that to him, Japan’s provision of Aegis intelligence data to the US and other multilateral forces was “not [an act] [...] unified with combat,” although he conceded that it “depended on the situation” (*kyokumen ni yotte chigaimasu*). He explained “it is obviously problematic if [Japan] provides information on the timing and direction of an enemy airplane which is then attacked, however, [...] sharing knowledge about objects far away and communicating their nationality is [something other ships do as well].” (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan October 29, 2002) The public was skeptical, however. An *Asahi Shinbun* survey found that 48% of the respondents opposed a dispatch, while only 40% favored it. (CNN 2002)

In mid-December 2002, following Koizumi’s decision, Japan sent an Aegis destroyer to the Indian Ocean, authorizing it to share military intelligence with US forces. Critical voices quickly faded, even though the question of collective self-defense gained significance with the beginning of the US-led strike on Iraq in April 2003. In February 2003, at a time when the US was actively preparing for war with Iraq, another comment by Defense Minister Ishiba reflected the difficulty of distinguishing individual and collective self-defense. Ishiba admitted “it is hard to clearly distinguish” between intelligence data that Japan can share with the US and data that it should keep to itself. (Japan Policy & Politics 2003a) The comment demonstrated the risk of violating the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. Nevertheless, even the dispatch of a second Aegis destroyer in April

2003 did not arouse a major public discussion. (Nabers 2003: 255) A third dispatch followed in January 2004. Aegis destroyers stopped accompanying Japanese oil tankers after November 2005, because Japan sought to mount newly developed SM-3 interception rockets on them. (Tanter 2006)

### **Explaining Japanese Policy in Light of its Policy Goals**

Japan's stance on supporting partner countries and allies through missile defense systems and related capabilities exhibits three characteristics. First, policymakers have been extremely cautious to avoid an overt breach of the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. In order to escape potential criticism of being locked into US global strategy and thereby violating the ban, they emphasized the MD system would be operated on Tokyo's 'independent judgment' only. In view of constitutional limitations, the Japanese government so far has refused a promise to intercept any missile targeted at the US homeland and facilities. Politicians furthermore carefully distinguish between cases in which missile interception is acceptable and those in which it is prohibited. As shown, the Japanese political leadership has shied away from anything that would constitute an overt breach of the ban on collective self-defense.

A second characteristic of Japanese policy has been the attempt by parts of the political elite to stretch the interpretive limits of the meaning of 'individual self-defense.' This was reflected in debates about whether Japan could intercept missiles flying over its airspace towards the US. However, as seen above, lawmakers have not reached a consensus on the precise limits of the term 'individual self-defense' and thus a variety of views currently coexist.

Third, as the case of Japan's Aegis dispatch to the Indian Ocean demonstrates, Tokyo has in actual policy moved towards what may be called a *de facto* exercise of the right of collective self-defense. Although the Japanese government maintained the Aegis deployment was motivated solely by the JSDF's own needs, the sudden policy 'U-turn' and the timing of the decision cast doubts on this claim.<sup>173</sup> In addition, officials have recently shown more acceptance to reconsider Japan's constitutional ban on collective self-defense. Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's government took important initial steps in this direction.

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<sup>173</sup> Tokyo felt under particular pressure to show support to the US in a conflict with Iraq, given the need for a strong alliance relationship amid growing tensions surrounding the second North Korean nuclear crisis in the fall of 2002.

Hence, a number of observers see Japan undergoing radical change regarding the right of collective self-defense. They argue that Tokyo's support in the Middle East following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, including the dispatch of the Aegis destroyers, constitutes a de facto establishment of a system of collective self-defense through incremental steps. (Nabers 2003: 255) According to Sato Yoichiro, the Aegis controversy illustrates a "consistent drive" by the Maritime Self-Defense Forces to "set precedents through overseas deployments," signifying a move towards a de facto exercise of collective self-defense. (Sato 2003)

The three characteristics of Japanese policy seem contradictory. While policymakers avoid any overt violation of the ban on collective self-defense, they stretch the interpretive limits and arguably even exercise the right of collective self-defense in de facto terms. This apparent inconsistency can be explained in view of the role conflict faced by decision-makers. Politicians seek to adhere to the role conception of 'non-militarist country' by observing the limitations set by their Constitution and the concept of 'exclusive self-defense.' At the same time, however, they feel compelled to transcend the strict regulations governing Japanese foreign military contributions, so as to act in accordance with Japan's roles as an 'exporter of security' and, more importantly, as a 'reliable ally' to Washington. By demonstrating support as a US ally, Japan hopes to counter potential 'free rider' criticism and to increase the credibility and strength of the bilateral alliance relationship. As the above discussion showed, Tokyo has acknowledged this role conflict and policy dilemma. The inconsistent response seems to be an attempt to remain faithful – to the extent possible – to the different norms and values in Japan's role set.

However, the examination of Japan's policy raises another question: Is Japan's role conception of 'non-militarist country' losing importance, given Tokyo's de facto breach of the ban on collective self-defense? There is no clear-cut answer to this question. The high-profile study group on this issue established by Prime Minister Abe demonstrates the widespread discontent with Japan's strict limitations under the principle of 'exclusive self-defense.' However, policy changes do not mean that the norm of anti-militarism itself is *weakening* and that Japan is "drift[ing] from its old moorings" and entering "a new era," as Kenneth Pyle argues. (Pyle 2007a: 299 and 374) Rather, officials have adhered to a limited conception of Japan's international military role, despite of the momentous changes in the international environment since the end of the Cold War and overwhelming US pressure for Tokyo to abandon its pacifist values. If the role conception of 'non-militarist country' no

longer appealed to the Japanese, Tokyo would have seriously considered joining boost phase missile defense research – especially given the short flight time of potential enemy missiles from North Korea.

Furthermore, Japanese policymakers did not refer to the importance of the US alliance relationship as an argument for the Aegis deployment to the Indian Ocean. The officials' prudently seeking to evade a *de jure* exercise of the right of collective self-defense suggests a gradual change in Japan's *interpretation* of its self-conception as a 'non-militarist country,' while the *relevance* of this role seems to be unaffected or declining just slightly. But how Japan's self-conception will precisely change is still uncertain. Tokyo may hold the view that it is allowed to exercise the right of collective security in line with UN mandates, similar to Germany's acting in accordance with multilateral institutions in using military force. (Hughes 2002: 1) Just as well it could opt for a more comprehensive conception, in which it is allowed to exercise the right of collective self-defense with the US in addition to the right of collective security under UN leadership. The discussion of the Aegis dispatch hints a tendency to the second option. In either case, it is unlikely that Japan will abolish its pacifist-minded norms completely. Most probably, Tokyo will confine its use of military force, while seeking to redefine the role conception of 'non-militarist country' in order to allow a simultaneous adherence to the roles of 'exporter of security' and 'reliable ally.' In summary, one can say that missile defense has exposed Japan's role conflict and has thus served as a driving force in its debate on the role conception of 'non-militarist country.'

Overall, Tokyo's ambiguous policy on helping to protect allies and partner countries with MD capabilities can be explained quite well by the role conflict described above. However, two more factors need to be considered in explaining Japan's policy. First, the Maritime Self-Defense Forces apparently lobbied US counterparts about the Aegis request and were at least partially successful in 'manufacturing *gaiatsu* (foreign pressure).' Presumably they hoped to facilitate future budget requests by expanding their global role. Secondly, the tensions surrounding North Korea's clandestine nuclear program had risen significantly at the time of Koizumi's Aegis decision. Undoubtedly, this deterioration of the regional security environment provided a powerful incentive for Japan to demonstrate loyalty to the US in order to strengthen the bilateral alliance relationship.

## Part 8: Conclusion

### The Explanatory Power of Role Conceptions

The preceding analysis demonstrates that role conceptions provide suitable explanations for Germany's and Japan's policies on missile defense for territorial security, for the defense of soldiers deployed abroad, and for assisting allies and partners. Conflicting ideational concepts account for apparent *inconsistencies between two policy fields* of the *same country*. German decision-makers assessed the utility of MD systems for territorial defense and for the protection of its soldiers very differently, for instance. Officials considered territorial MD as an inappropriate policy option. Adhering to their entrenched normative views, they sought security through cooperative multilateral efforts rather than one-sided capability increases. On the other hand, evaluating it as a contribution to the UN, to NATO and to the transatlantic relationship, they were willing to develop MD for soldiers abroad.

Furthermore, role conceptions can explain why *countries* may choose *different approaches* in their foreign policies. Germany in its MEADS policy and Japan in its territorial defense posture chose to cooperate with other countries in developing the complex technologies. However, in Germany's case, ideational factors worked in favor of a multilateral approach with emphasis on the NATO context, while in Japan's case, normative aspects worked against a multilateral solution, with Tokyo preferring a bilateral setup with the US. As discussed above, Tokyo has in fact rejected cooperation with other countries such as South Korea.

Likewise, role conceptions help to understand why *under certain circumstances, countries* may choose *similar approaches* in their policy. Both Germany and Japan acted as 'selective' exporters of security when faced with the question of helping allies and partners with MD-related capabilities. The two countries chose to provide such support under certain limitations and restrictions. Similar responses of Germany and Japan are undoubtedly related to the analogous configuration in their role conceptions. Both countries faced comparable, though not identical, role conflicts related to the conceptions of 'non-militarist country,' 'exporter of security,' and 'reliable partner.'

Finally, role conceptions help to account for *apparently irrational behavior* by states. Japan insists that it will not intercept a missile as long as it is unclear whether it is  
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targeted at its territory. As seen above, such a policy is highly risky, given the fact that North Korean missiles can reach Japan within a short span of time. The role conception of 'anti-militarist country' with its emphasis on an exclusively defense-oriented policy offers a powerful explanation to this policy choice.

### **Other Factors**

While the analysis illustrates that both Germany's and Japan's approaches to MD are fundamentally driven by broadly shared norms and values, other factors also influence policy outcomes. Perceptions of threat and cost-effectiveness are weighty aspects in a country's MD policy, although these are also influenced by policy goals and role conceptions. In other words, aspects as threat level, technological feasibility and cost-effectiveness are not assessed independently of a country's policy goals, but rather *in view* of them.

Additionally, economic and technological interests of the defense establishment in both countries motivated the participation in and use of MD. Such economic considerations played particularly important roles in Germany's participation in MEADS and in Japan's decisions to build a territorial MD shield and to send Aegis destroyers to the Indian Ocean.

Domestic political settings had a decisive influence on policy outcomes as well. For example, considerations about the distribution of power in coalition governments caused the smaller party – the Green Party in Germany's case and the Komei Party in Japan's – to drop initial objections against policy plans of the dominant party. The Green Party thus went along with the SPD by voting for the MEADS procurement in April 2005, while the Komei Party refrained from blocking Koizumi's December 2002 Aegis decision. The domestic political atmosphere also had a substantial effect on Japan's policy and public debate in the run-up to the December 2003 decision to deploy a territorial MD shield. With the public focused on the 'kidnapping issue,' MD opponents feared that open criticism against the project would be seen as tantamount to 'underestimating' the North's belligerence.

## **Role Conflicts and Role Tension**

The analyzed policy cases offer profound insights into how countries may deal with *role conflict or role tension*. Both Germany and Japan displayed three interrelated techniques of handling situations of conflicting behavioral expectations based on two or more role conceptions. One of the methods was to lessen the strain of the diverging behavioral expectations by utilizing *semantic techniques* such as *conceptual ambiguity, emphasis and de-emphasis, as well as the broadening of interpretations*. When explaining the circumstances under which Self-Defense Forces might participate in multilateral missions, for example, Japanese policymakers were vague in their definition of a ‘non-combat’ area. By leaving some ambiguity in the term, they alleviated Japan’s role conflict between the conception of ‘non-militarist country’ and the ones of ‘exporter of security’ and ‘reliable partner.’

The technique of stressing only certain aspects was adopted both in Germany’s MEADS policy and in Japan’s territorial MD policy. In the 1990s, German policymakers supporting participation in MEADS consciously de-emphasized the fact that they sought to expand the international role of the *Bundeswehr*. They were aware that openly admitting such an objective might cause public rejection in view of the underlying tensions with the role conception of ‘non-militarist country.’ In a similar vein, Japanese policymakers stressed their territorial MD shield would be operated independently and at Tokyo’s own discretion. Simultaneously, they de-emphasized that the complex system structure of missile defense required Japan and the US to improve their inter-operability and coordination. In doing so, they attempted to alleviate concerns about a possible violation of Japan’s ban on collective self-defense and the related role conception of ‘non-militarist country.’

Japanese lawmakers furthermore used the technique of broadening conceptual interpretations when discussing whether Tokyo would be permitted to intercept missiles targeting the US mainland or US facilities. As the discussion showed, politicians stretched the interpretive limits of what it means to be a ‘non-militarist country,’ in order to lessen the strain resulting from the need to be a ‘reliable partner’ to the US. They argued, for example, that Japan might intercept missiles flying above its territory towards the US by invoking only the right of individual self-defense. In doing so, they did not openly violate existing norms and values, but rather broadened previous definitions and notions.

A second method of handling role conflict was to *proactively seek to change the circumstances and conditions that gave rise to the conflict*. In the run-up to the Iraq war in 2003, Germany attempted to break out of such a dilemma. In line with the conception as a ‘non-militarist country,’ it was opposed to a possible US-led preemptive strike on Iraq and called for a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Washington’s demand in NATO for members to undertake war preparations presented Germany with a quandary. To block NATO preparations for an attack would contradict the role conception of ‘reliable partner’ and ‘contributor to regional cooperation.’ To get out of this dilemma, Germany chose to veto the original decision on war preparations together with France and Belgium, while at the same time signaling willingness to provide defensive support to Turkey. By giving other NATO partners an indication of how far it was willing to go, Germany sought to free itself from the ‘all or nothing’ policy choice that it had been presented with. This strategy proved successful, as German policymakers convinced other countries to narrow the scope of the NATO decision to the support of Turkey. This was an acceptable policy choice for Berlin, because it would not have to act in contradiction to its role conceptions – at least not in an overt fashion.

A third method of dealing with role conflict was to *violate partially or fully one role conception’s prescriptions in order to fulfill those of another*. As was seen in the process of establishing the policy on territorial missile defense, Berlin defied its role conceptions of ‘reliable partner’ and ‘contributor to regional cooperation’ by siding with Russia in its criticism of territorial MD early on. This policy-line undermined the chances of finding a consensus within NATO. However, Germany’s stance corresponded to perceived responsibilities as an ‘anti-militarist country’ and a ‘regional stabilizer.’ Berlin’s leadership sought to avoid new regional tensions that they believed might ensue with a change in the strategic balance. As mentioned above, Germany felt obliged to achieve security through cooperative means and dialogue by involving and engaging Russia rather than isolating it.

The third method of handling role conflict was even more evident in Germany’s and Japan’s policies regarding the provision of missile defense-related equipment to partners before the 2003 Iraq war. In line with their conceptions of being ‘non-militarist countries,’ using armed force only as a last resort, they both distanced themselves from US war preparations. However, faced with the need to act as ‘reliable partners,’ both countries decided in the end to provide limited support – which they publicly claimed was not related to the Iraq war. Germany thus aided Turkey and Israel, while Japan sent an Aegis ship to

the Indian Ocean, ostensibly for support in the operations in Afghanistan. As the analysis showed, a connection between Germany's and Japan's assistance measures and the Iraq war was obvious, despite contrary claims. Thus, both Berlin and Tokyo arguably violated their conception of being 'non-militarist countries' by providing indirect help in the Iraq war. Policymakers of both countries endeavored to lessen the impact of this de facto violation by utilizing techniques such as semantic ambiguity and de-emphasis, as mentioned above.

This analysis does not provide sufficient ground for determining the circumstances under which a country may favor a particular method or technique of dealing with role conflict or role tension. However, it shows that countries often use several methods simultaneously and that other factors – such as the domestic atmosphere or economic interests – may lead them to favor one method over another. How long and to what extent a country can rely on the third method of violating one role conception in favor of another cannot be answered conclusively by this analysis either. Coping with role conflict in such a way indicates a possible cognitive dissonance, in which a country holds incongruous beliefs and attitudes within its role set. If a country relies on this third method for an extended period of time, the role conception being violated will likely undergo change to fit new societal beliefs and values. Such an adjustment may occur with the broadening of interpretations of common concepts and notions. A consensus within society might emerge deeming the role conception in question as no longer relevant or in need of change. However, such a consensus will only be reached over time.

# CHAPTER 4

## POLICIES ON TEXTBOOK TALKS: COMPARING GERMAN-POLISH AND JAPANESE-SOUTH KOREAN DIALOGUE

### **Introduction**

Traumatic experiences of war and aggression can lock two states into chronic cycles of mutual mistrust and resentment, with serious implications for bilateral as well as regional peace and security. (He 2009) Former adversaries frequently clash over their diverging views and interpretations of the past, especially with regard to history textbook depictions. Since narratives and representations of history are intimately linked to the construction, consolidation, and reproduction of national identity, a country's approach to dealing with history textbook disputes is an important and intriguing area for theoretical research. The harmonization of national memories between former adversaries is a key requisite for realizing stable relations based on reconciliation. Joint textbook talks are recognized as an effective means to narrow divergences in historical perception towards this end. (Wang 2009)

In the post-war period, Germany and Japan have faced substantial disagreements with neighboring countries about historical interpretations and textbook depictions. This chapter therefore examines and compares German and Japanese policies regarding history textbook disputes and bilateral textbook talks with former opponents. In particular, it analyzes German and Japanese policies regarding textbook quarrels with Poland and South Korea, respectively. From a historical perspective, German-Polish and Japanese-South Korean relations exhibit many parallels. In both cases, strong cultural bonds have existed for centuries between the respective peoples through cultural, scholarly, and commercial exchanges. In both relations, one party brutally oppressed its immediate neighbor in the early 20th century. After 1945, the former oppressors, Germany and Japan, successfully rehabilitated from their defeat in World War II to become self-confident democratic and economic superpowers, while their neighbors Poland and South Korea faced economic hardship and authoritarian rule. History textbooks in all four countries were afflicted with misconceptions and antagonisms after 1945. While Polish and South Korean textbooks emphasized the persistently belligerent and untrustworthy nature of their former oppressors, German and Japanese textbooks gave only scarce consideration to their neighbors,

frequently reflecting contempt for the economic backwardness of their former adversaries. Another important parallel in the two cases is that both Poland and South Korea became full-fledged democracies after the Cold War. The political reforms spurred renewed discussions and examinations in both countries about the past.

The chapter is divided into four main parts. The first section discusses the importance of textbook consultations in the context of post-conflict reconciliation processes and explores the objectives of such talks. It also highlights and evaluates the role of governmental and civil society actors in dealing with history textbook disputes. This part argues that political leaders' support is a decisive factor for the success in reconciling contentious national memories. The second and third sections explore the postures of the German and Japanese governments regarding bilateral textbook talks with Poland and South Korea, respectively. The analysis of the two cases is divided into several sub-sections, reflecting important developments in German and Japanese policies. The last part compares German and Japanese policies, assessing whether role conceptions provide useful explanations for each country's behavior and exploring other factors that need to be taken into account.

This case study traces and analyzes German and Japanese policies since 1945, thereby going beyond this dissertation's general focus on the post-Cold War era. There are several reasons for this extensive coverage. Firstly, it would be inadequate to consider only the developments since 1990, as controversies about historical depictions between Germany and Poland and Japan and South Korea already emerged long before the end of the Cold War. Prior policies shape the background to today's situation and are important for evaluating current progress. Secondly, as the analysis will show, the policies of Germany and Japan reflect strong continuity between pre- and post-Cold War attitudes and behavior. Although more research is needed on this point, this finding suggests that the motivational factors in German and Japanese policies have not changed fundamentally since the end of the Cold War.

Overall, the chapter finds significant differences in the behaviors and attitudes exhibited by German and Japanese decision-makers regarding textbook talks. Compared to their German counterparts, Japanese leaders reflect a lack of political will to engage in dialogue with Seoul about improving mutual depictions in textbooks. Whereas Germany and Poland have by and large achieved a bilateral reconstruction of their past by instituting in their textbooks a new narrative acceptable to both sides, Japan-Korea relations are still

plagued by recurrent rows over historical interpretations and school education. The different outcomes of the two reconciliation processes pose a puzzle to rationalist explanations of international relations. Realist theory would expect memory politics to be driven by strategic concerns and constraints. From this perspective, Seoul and Tokyo should overcome their disputed history swiftly, given an overwhelming incentive to unite against the communist threat. In contrast, strategic interests in German-Polish relations did not clearly point towards reconciliation during the Cold War, given the ideological confrontation between the two countries. The seemingly counterintuitive German and Japanese policies can be explained to some extent by each country's particular role conceptions. However, other factors also need to be taken into account to fully understand policymakers' behaviors, as the final part of this chapter shows.

## **The International Dimension of History Textbooks**

### *The Goals of Textbook Talks*

History education is considered an essential vehicle for the cultivation of future generation's historical consciousness and the transmission of political and social norms of a society. (Chon 2007: 261) Textbooks in particular are attributed international significance, because they are the most patent and tangible manifestation of how a country officially remembers and treats its past. They convey a society's understanding of history and its ideas about the future. Divergences in historical perceptions can easily be identified by comparing the school books of two countries. As numerous cases around the world attest, former adversaries in conflicts frequently clash over interpretations and depictions of the past in textbooks. Laura Hein and Mark Selden observe, "people fight over textbook content because education is so obviously about the future, reaches so deeply into society, and is directed by the state." (Hein and Selden 2000: 3)

Especially after traumatic experiences of war, textbooks tend to contain narrow-minded nationalist narratives, offering one-sided, ethnocentric accounts of history. Furthermore, they often draw on prejudices and misleading stereotypes regarding former adversaries. Such accounts cause mutual frustration and resentment and sow the seeds of renewed frictions based on mutual misperceptions. After World War I, the international community recognized the problem of nationalistic school education and sought to promote bilateral textbook talks and agreements through the League of Nations in the late 1920s and

early 1930s – although with little success. The task of combating national prejudices in textbooks was taken up by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with renewed urgency after World War II. At the first General Conference in 1946, UNESCO members decided that the organization should seek to “encourage member states to make bilateral and regional agreements concerning textbooks.” (Boden 1977: 11) The General Conference in 1974 reconfirmed this objective, describing the task in more detail:

“Member States should encourage wider exchange of textbooks, especially history and geography textbooks, and should, where appropriate, take measures, by concluding [...] bilateral and multilateral agreements for the reciprocal study and revision of textbooks and other educational materials in order to ensure that they are *accurate, balanced, up-to-date and unprejudiced* and will *enhance mutual knowledge and understanding* between different peoples.” (Pingel 1999: 16, emphasis added)

The meaning of accuracy and balance is difficult to define, however. Falk Pingel notes that there are different levels of accuracy, including factual accuracy, balanced content selection and an impartial contextualization of events. (Pingel 1999: 15) Textbook talks ultimately seek to address all these levels by promoting a transnational reconstruction of the past that nurtures tolerance and inclusiveness as a basis for peaceful coexistence between former opponents. The aim is to attain ‘objectivity’ in accounts of the past. According to philosopher Hermann Lübbe, objective historical writing – in its “function of presenting self and foreign identity” – must be “*acceptable* to all parties concerned.” (Lübbe 1977: 318, emphasis added) Former victims and perpetrators are not required to write the same historical narrative, but they must each give fair treatment to the viewpoints of the other side and engage with various perspectives.

The approach to international textbook talks has gradually changed since the initial attempts after World War I, reflecting an evolving conception of the discipline of history and a gradual learning process with regard to the endeavor of joint talks. Textbook studies conducted after World War I and throughout most of the Cold War period relied primarily on the ‘consensus model,’ in which the involved parties stress points of agreement rather than differences in their perspective. (Pingel 1999: 13) The goal was to demonstrate that the countries in question share similar perspectives on a range of issues, providing the basis for a future-oriented relationship. More recent textbook talks have relied increasingly on what one may call a ‘multiperspectivity model,’ in which participants seek to expose points of agreement, while also emphasizing the fact that historical phenomena can be interpreted

and reconstructed from a variety of perspectives. The aim is to make textbooks more pluralist, inclusive and integrative and to teach students to think critically and understand the complexity of historical situations. (Stradling 2003) Recommendations based on such talks tend to take a more discursive form compared to those conducted on the basis of the ‘consensus model.’ (Pingel 1999: 33)

### *Actors in Textbook Talks: Political Leaders and Civil Society*

Joint textbook studies can be conducted either as projects with official governmental backing or as purely civil society endeavors under the leadership of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Despite the important role of non-state actors in supporting textbook talks however, this chapter maintains that political leadership is essential. Doubtlessly, civil society projects without government involvement have certain advantages. The unofficial setting allows for freedom, creativity and risk taking, since participants are likely to feel less constrained by political concerns. (Horvat 2007) Such projects also tend to progress more smoothly, since NGOs will assemble like-minded researchers who are sympathetic to the cause of reconciliation and textbook revision. However, a key problem for civil society initiatives is their limited ability to influence the actual contents of textbooks or teaching curricula. As Falk Pingel contends, the implementation of joint study results “often turns out to be the Achilles heel of projects conducted by NGOs. Ministries are not obliged to follow their advice and can band their materials from schools.” (Pingel 2008: 191) Moreover, civil society initiatives are often viewed with deep suspicion, since scholars tend to belong to the left end of the political spectrum.<sup>174</sup> As a result, such projects face the risk of marginalization.

Joint talks endorsed and supported by the respective governments have important advantages over purely private ones. Government officials – in their role as representatives of their state – can lend legitimacy and credibility to joint history projects and thus help overcome domestic opposition. Furthermore, decision-makers enjoy a unique position in the context of school education, as they exert direct influence over history teaching in schools through teaching guidelines, curricular directives, and textbook authorization

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<sup>174</sup> A recent trilateral civil society project between Japanese, Korean and Chinese scholars demonstrates these obstacles. The researchers published a history book, called ‘A History that Opens the Future: Modern and Contemporary History of Three East Asian Countries’ in 2005. However, sales figures from bookstores indicate that most buyers are individuals, rather than teachers or schools with bulk orders. Furthermore, in the Japanese public, the project was criticized for being biased and representing the political left. (Wang 2009: 117–18)

criteria. Political leaders are thus crucial actors in the implementation of textbook changes recommended by historians and researchers. On the downside, government-backed projects may take considerable time, and participants may have more difficulty in tackling contentious bilateral issues. (Pingel 2008: 184, 191) Even if the commission's scholars reach agreement on only a limited number of points however, the government's involvement will ensure both broad public awareness of the joint work and offer the prospect of implementation in school education and textbooks. (Katayama 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Participants in government-backed initiatives also tend to represent a more diverse group of scholars from across the political spectrum, raising the credibility of the joint commission. (Katayama 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)<sup>175</sup> Given the pivotal role of the state in the context of school education, the examination of German and Japanese policies in this chapter sheds new light on the ways by which decision-makers can influence the process of reconciliation.<sup>176</sup>

### **German Politics on History Textbook Talks with Poland**

German and Polish history textbooks were beset by mutual suspicions and antagonism after World War II. In Poland, historical accounts were dominated by the memories of German atrocities committed under Nazi-occupation and the prosecution and killing of millions of Polish Jews in extermination camps such as Auschwitz. German textbooks, on the other hand, were characterized by disregard and even contempt for Polish history. (Zernack 2007) Moreover, they reflected a strong public resentment against Polish authorities for expelling approximately eight million Germans from their homelands in the aftermath of the war, often under brutal conditions. (Kamusella 2004: 29) Mutual perceptions of Germans and Poles were not only shaped by the legacy of World War II, but the onset of the Cold War soon generated new ideological antagonisms that found their way into the textbooks of both countries. The challenges in a potential bilateral history textbook commission were thus significant.

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<sup>175</sup> Civil society actors are not irrelevant, however. Lilly Gardner-Feldman for example demonstrates that non-state actors can act as initiators and facilitators in government-backed talks. (Feldman 2008, Feldman 2007) Furthermore, non-state actors can influence history education indirectly. Japanese NGOs for instance have lobbied local school boards against the selection of the controversial Tsukurukai book, thereby contributing to the low adoption rate. (Schneider 2008: 111)

<sup>176</sup> Textbook talks are obviously not a magic remedy to overcome historical resentments. They need to be accompanied by other gestures of atonement and reconciliation. On the range of policy fields, see Torpey 2003: 6.

The German government's evolving stance regarding bilateral history textbook improvements with Poland can be divided into three main phases. The first phase covers the time period from after World War II until around 1970. During this time, Bonn rejected joint textbook work with Poland, although in general, it showed itself willing to engage in bilateral talks and reconciliation initiatives with countries of the capitalist block. The second phase covers the time period from 1970 until the end of the Cold War. With the onset of global détente in the 1970s, the German government began its active support of bilateral textbook talks with Poland, establishing a bilateral commission that published a set of recommendations for textbook improvements in 1976. As will be seen in the discussion below, Bonn provided critical institutional and financial backing during the talks, and played a decisive role in implementing recommended changes and raising public awareness about the results. During the third phase, the time period since the end of the Cold War, the German government continued its support for bilateral textbook talks, even proposing joint work on a German-Polish textbook in 2006. This time period was overshadowed, however, by renewed bilateral frictions regarding the remembrance of expelled Germans after the war. Debates on the expulsion issue for the most part were not directly linked to the matter of textbook contents. Nevertheless, the history-related dispute was a powerful reminder that the treatment of the past continues to be a delicate issue in German-Polish relations, even after decades of joint textbook talks. The following sections will analyze in detail the role of Germany's political leadership in textbook disputes with Poland during the three phases described above.

### **1945-1970: Poland as an Ideological Enemy**

#### *Textbook Talks – But not with Poland*

Following World War II, bilateral talks on history textbooks between the Federal Republic and Poland seemed out of the question. Prior to the war, an attempt had been made at government-backed talks on school books in 1937-38, but the talks had been broken off due to growing political frictions in the lead-up to the German invasion of Poland. (Kondo 1993: 133–34)<sup>177</sup> The deepening ideological division in Europe after 1945 precluded new joint initiatives for the improvement of textbooks. As Gotthold Rhode, a historian who took part in the bilateral commission in the 1970s, observed:

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<sup>177</sup> Bilateral textbook talks were also held between Germany and France in 1935. The talks resulted in the publication of 39 propositions on the 'decontamination' (Entgiftung) of textbooks. (Lässig 2007)

“Whoever would have predicted in 1945 that Polish and German historians and geographers belonging to the war generation would meet in Warsaw to negotiate toughly, but cordially and collegially in German on the possibility of devising more objective school textbooks and teaching-methods would have been declared mad (*geistesgestört*).” (Riemenschneider 1998: 75)

The Federal Republic was willing to engage in reconciliation efforts and textbook talks with countries of the ‘Western’ block, most prominently the ‘arch-enemy’ France. Only six years after the war ended, Bonn and Paris agreed to establish a bilateral commission of historians under the umbrella of the UNESCO to discuss historical depictions in textbooks with the goal of eliminating mutual distortions and prejudices. The commission – which was deemed a great success – published a first set of recommendations in 1951, continuing regular bilateral discussions until 1967. The bilateral work was critically supported by Georg Eckert, a professor at the Kant University at Braunschweig, who was an outspoken proponent of textbook talks and who set up the ‘International Institute for the Improvement of School Books’ at his university in 1951.

Policymakers’ growing support for joint textbook work in general and later with Poland specifically was reflected in a series of governmental decisions and gestures. Georg Eckert’s appointment to the German UNESCO commission in 1951 and his promotion to the presidential position in 1964 were two important steps signaling political backing for textbook dialogue. The state of Niedersachsen similarly demonstrated its backing by providing financial assistance to Eckert’s institute starting in 1953. (Kondo 1993: 43) Germany’s willingness to engage in bilateral textbook talks with France soon after the war had at least two reasons. Firstly, the occupational authorities, especially France and Britain, strongly supported German exchanges with their own countries’ historians and educators. (Lässig 2007) For them, educational reform was a key step in advancing the process of democratization in Germany. (Kondo 2001: 12–13) Moreover, reconciliation between Germany and other Western European countries was a strategic necessity, given the growing Soviet threat in the emerging Cold War. Political leaders of the Federal Republic were aware of the need to deal with antagonisms and grievances and offered apologies and reparations to Western allies – in marked contrast to the treatment of former victims of German aggression on the other side of the Iron Curtain. (Kansteiner 2006: 109)

Secondly, German politicians such as Chancellor Konrad Adenauer were convinced that the devastating Second World War had been the result of strong nationalist tendencies among European nations, especially in Germany. The reduction of nationalist narratives in textbooks and school education was thus a key policy objective for many German political [226]

elites. Under Adenauer, the Federal Republic's self-conception emerged in opposition to the old, pre-1945 Germany. Despite his loathing for the Nazi regime however, Adenauer's primary goal was the reconstruction of Germany. While he sought a break with the former national-socialist ideology, he also perceived a need to re-integrate former Nazi supporters into society in order to pour maximum strength into the reconstruction efforts. (Schneider 2004: 70, Benz 1995: 47) In many ways, the Federal Republic under Adenauer thus still avoided a thorough and self-critical confrontation with the past.

### *The Memory of Expulsion*

With regard to Poland, German textbooks increasingly focused on the bitter memory of expulsion after the war. On December 22, 1956, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the states (Länder) in Germany (Kultusministerkonferenz) adopted a decree called 'Recommendations on the Study of the East' (Empfehlungen zur Ostkunde, also called 'Ostkunde-Erlass'), that required teachers to increase their coverage on the 'Eastern territories' in class. The directive stated that educators should seek to foster "a profound connection (inneres Verhältnis) with the expulsion-territories that are the home of a part of [Germany's] population." At the same time, the directive called on teachers to build the basis for a "factual and clearly-defined relationship" (sachliches und klares Verhältnis) to the peoples of East Central Europe. (Gauger and Buchstab 2004: 92) For many Polish scholars and observers, the decree demonstrated Germany's insistence on its territorial claims based on a lack of critical self-reflection about wartime crimes vis-à-vis Poland. (Goehrke et al. 1977: 67)

### *Reconsidering Historical Memory*

From around the late 1950s and early 1960s, new discussions emerged within the public about German historical consciousness and the need to come to terms with the terrible past. A series of incidents alerted the public to the importance of memory and remembrance. Firstly, in 1958-1959, the Republic was shaken by a wave of anti-Semitic graffiti committed by a few right-wing extremists and a substantial number of juvenile copycats. (Kansteiner 2006: 112) Germans realized that there had been no full break or fresh start after 1945, and debates ensued about the contents of history education. Secondly, impetus for a critical examination of the past emanated from East Germany. Seeking to

discredit Bonn's democracy, the GDR leadership accused West Germany of facing an "unresolved past," due to the inability to confront history squarely. (Frei 2004: 43) Thirdly, the trials against Adolf Eichmann and other Nazi leaders in the early 1960s fueled debates about the atrocities committed by pre-1945 Germany and about the need for contrition. (Hirsch 2003)

Amid growing public debates about the past, civil society actors began to criticize mutual textbook depictions of Germany and Poland in the 1950s. In 1955, a small private conference was held between German and Polish historians at Georg Eckert's institute in Braunschweig. The joint research had to be suspended after the Hungarian Uprising in 1956 however, as the Soviet Union began to monitor contacts between East and West more closely. (Kondo 1993: 142) Nevertheless, based on his discussions with Polish researchers during the conference, the German history teacher Enno Meyer in 1956 published a set of 47 propositions on the treatment of German-Polish history in textbooks. Meyer's text promoted discussions among experts in Germany, but his work did not attract attention from the broader public and had no effect on history teaching. (Ruchniewicz 2005: 237ff.) Another civil society initiative was launched by Pastor Günter Berndt of the Protestant Academy of West Berlin, who succeeded in organizing a series of private textbook conferences between German and Polish historians in 1969-70. Berndt published a book called "Poland, a Horror Story or Brainwashing for Generations: Historiography and Textbooks – A Contribution to the View of Poland among Germans" in 1971, in which he strongly criticized German history textbooks. (Strobel 2008a, Interview by A. Sakaki) Without the official backing by government leaders, however, Berndt's publication – like Meyer's – had little impact on teaching practices in German schools.

From around the mid-1960s, first serious considerations about a government-backed bilateral history textbook commission with Poland emerged in Germany. After Georg Eckert assumed the presidency of the German UNESCO commission in 1964, he began to deepen his contacts with Polish officials, raising the possibility of holding bilateral textbook talks. (Strobel 2008a, Interview by A. Sakaki) The German Foreign Ministry was informed about Eckert's efforts and had approved them, although warning Eckert to exercise prudence. (Strobel 2005: 257) The shift in the German government's stance indicated a weakening of the Hallstein Doctrine and a growing interest in establishing closer ties with Eastern European countries.

## **1970-1990: Détente and the First Textbook Project with Poland**

### *Building Support for Bilateral Textbook Work*

It was not until the late 1960s that the atomic stalemate between the two Cold War superpowers ushered into a period of global détente, permitting Germany to take the first steps towards reconciliation with Communist Poland. In an attempt to lessen European tensions and ameliorate Germany's front-line status, Chancellor Willy Brandt sought to expand the Federal Republic's social, economic and political ties with countries of the Eastern bloc. His *Ostpolitik* was a reversal of Germany's prior refusal to establish or maintain diplomatic relations with any state that recognized the German Democratic Republic, as propounded in the Hallstein Doctrine of 1955. Brandt's policies led to the negotiation of a whole complex of Eastern treaties in 1969-70. In relations to Poland, a key step was the signing of the Treaty of Warsaw in December 1970, through which the bilateral relationship was normalized. In the Treaty, both sides committed themselves to non-violence and Germany accepted the Oder-Neisse line as its Western frontier, pending a final peace settlement. The Treaty served a key foundation for the subsequent establishment of a joint history textbook commission. (Ruchniewicz 2005: 237) On the day of the signing of the Treaty of Warsaw, Brandt unexpectedly knelt in front of a monument commemorating the Nazi-era Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The incident, which became known as the 'Warsaw Genuflection' (Kniefall von Warschau) was seen as an important gesture of German humility and contrition.

Bonn became visibly more supportive of the idea of joint history textbook talks with Poland from around 1970. The German government-run political journal *Das Parlament* published an article in that year written by educator Enno Meyer highlighting problems in the historical consciousness of Germans and Poles. (Kondo 1993: 142) When the President of the German UNESCO commission Eckert and his Polish counterpart called for joint talks on schoolbooks at the General Assembly in Paris in November 1970, German decision-makers reacted with cautious encouragement. (Wernstedt 2000: 125) Eckert, evidently considering political support for his idea as vital, actively approached politicians to convince them of his proposal in subsequent months. (Girgensohn 1981: 4) German policymakers, including Chancellor Brandt, began to embrace the idea of joint talks on history textbooks with Poland and to play an active role in negotiating the establishment of the joint commission. The Foreign Ministry furthermore demonstrated its espousal of Eckert's activities by beginning to provide regular budgetary support to his International

Institute for the Improvement of School Books in Braunschweig in 1971. (Strobel 2005: 258)

### *Textbook Talks and the Delicate Role of Politicians*

With Bonn's backing, the UNESCO commissions of Germany and Poland set up a bilateral textbook commission consisting of historians and educators from both countries in 1972.<sup>178</sup> Georg Eckert, who continued to serve as the president of the German UNESCO commission, ensured that his Braunschweig institute was closely involved in the joint work from the very start. The first meeting of the commission took place in Poland in late February 1972, at a time when the Treaty of Warsaw had not yet been ratified in either country. Knowing that a favorable political environment was critical for their work, participants of the bilateral talks were apprehensive about the consequences of a potential ratification failure. They felt elated when the treaty was ratified in May 1972. Włodzimierz Borodziej, Secretary of the Polish commission from 1979 to 1981, later reflected on the decisive role of political support for textbook talks at the beginning of 1972, asserting "the political establishment [...] without doubt acted as a *midwife* for the commission." (Borodziej 2000: 157, emphasis added)

The first German-Polish government-backed textbook talks took place between 1972 and 1976 and produced a set of 26 recommendations. During the conference phase, German political leaders played a decisive, though not overly conspicuous, role in encouraging the successful conclusion of talks. Decision-makers sought to strike a delicate balance between backing the joint project, while at the same time providing enough room for the commission's historians to hold their discussions free from political interferences and nationalistic pressures. The analysis reveals a number of strategies employed by the political leadership in pursuit of this balance. Firstly, political leaders agreed to hold the talks under the auspices of the UNESCO, representing an intergovernmental form of action. This institutional choice underlined the government's backing of joint talks, casting significant legitimacy on the endeavor. Decision-makers consciously utilized the authority and reputation of this esteemed international organization to shield the work of the commission from criticism. (Borodziej 2003: 36) The UNESCO framework thus served the double function of demonstrating political endorsement while simultaneously protecting

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<sup>178</sup> The two sides also agreed that the working language in the commission would be German.  
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commission members against nationalistic pressures. Furthermore, the use of the UNESCO conveyed to the German public that the commission's work was not merely a bilateral affair but that it was of international significance. This also ensured that the commission's results would receive widespread public attention.<sup>179</sup>

Secondly, political leaders used their position as governmental representatives to raise public awareness about the efforts and activities of the commission and to demonstrate sincerity about the project to the Polish side. For example, in response to a request by Eckert, the Minister of Education of the state of Northrhine-Westphalia, Jürgen Girgensohn, published the first interim results of the joint commission in 1972 in the state's gazette (*Amtsblatt*). As Girgensohn recounts, “[Eckert] needed this signal of governmental recognition of his work vis-à-vis his Polish partners. Doubts had emerged there [among Polish representatives], whether the German delegation had sufficient official backing.” (Girgensohn 1981: 3) By October 1972, seven other German states had followed Northrhine-Westphalia's lead, publishing interim results of the talks and declaring their solidarity with the undertaking. (Strobel 2005: 254) Another symbolic gesture in which politicians implicitly expressed their support for the ongoing bilateral textbook talks with Poland was the awarding of the Federal Cross of Merit to Georg Eckert in 1972. At the request of the German Foreign Ministry, Eckert received the medal on his sixtieth birthday from the Minister of State of Lower Saxony. (Harstick 2000: 108) Coinciding with the first round of German-Polish textbook talks, the award was another powerful signal of political endorsement of Eckert's efforts.

Thirdly, key political representatives took a deliberately low profile when it came to the actual work of the commission, thereby seeking to limit political pressure and interference. In particular, the selection of commission members was fully entrusted to Georg Eckert in order to prevent biases due to political considerations. In cooperation with his close colleagues, Eckert selected the participants, ensuring that they were reputable historians with in-depth knowledge, representing both the left and right side of the political spectrum. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki, Strobel 2008a, Interview by A. Sakaki)<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> It should be noted that the institutional choice was also influenced by the conditions of the Cold War. The UNESCO represented the ideal channel for contact with Communist countries like Poland, because it was less official in character compared to direct talks. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

<sup>180</sup> Other selection criteria included (1) a willingness by scholars to participate in the bilateral project, (2) the independence of scholars from organizations with particular interests, for example expellee associations, and (3) the acceptability of the scholars to the Polish side. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) The participants of the talks were highly self-motivated, as they were expected to work in an honorary capacity (i.e. without pay). Many of them had family roots in Poland or the former German territories and were driven by a desire to work for lasting peace. (Strobel 2005: 260)

Particularly in the early stages of the textbook talks, political representatives took care to limit their involvement in the commission's work. Members of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) feared the textbook talks, which were seen as an important component of the party's *Ostpolitik*, would be criticized as biased by opposition parties. Seeking to demonstrate the commission's neutrality, SPD member and Federal President Gustav Heinemann declined an invitation to provide a greeting to the bilateral commission members at their second gathering in Braunschweig in April 1972. In a letter to Eckert, Deputy President Fritz Caspari explained: "As you know, the federal government has always [...] attached importance to making clear that the inspection of school books, endorsed as a necessity for a better understanding between Germans and Poles, is the *objective work* of scholars of both countries, on which it *exerts no influence*." (Strobel 2005: 263, emphasis added)

Fourthly, government leaders sought to protect the commission from domestic pressures that would make the bilateral work more difficult. One of the most sensitive issues in the bilateral talks was the depiction of the Polish expulsion of Germans after the war. Since the 1956 adoption of the 'Recommendations on the Study of the East' in the Federal Republic, textbooks had increasingly taken up this issue, emphasizing German victimhood. Polish historians criticized such depictions for the perceived lack of contextualization and neglect of Germany's own responsibility as a perpetrator during the war. Politicians in the Federal Republic undertook efforts to lift some of the domestic pressure resting on German historians. Signaling support for the commission, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the states (Länder) in Germany (Kultusministerkonferenz) adopted a new statement regarding the 'Study of the East' (Ostkunde) in June 1973. The 1956 recommendations were not revoked completely, but the states concurred that they "today no longer form in their entirety the basis of current actions of the educational administrations of the states." (Goehrke et al. 1977: 67) The new agreement stipulated that students learn about the legal status regarding the Eastern territories based on the 'East Treaties' (Ostverträge) ratified in May 1972. The teaching about the culture and history of these territories was no longer an explicitly mandatory subject. (Gauger and Buchstab 2004: 93) A year later, in 1974, the government again undertook efforts to shield German participants in the bilateral talks from pressure regarding the expulsion issue. Following a proposal by the parliamentarians of the CDU-CSU, the grand coalition government set up a study group in 1969 to compile a documentary report on the crimes afflicted on Germans in the context of the expulsion from the East. It had been agreed that the report was not to be published and for internal use only.

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However, when the report was completed in 1974, the CDU-CSU pressed for a publication of the results, hoping to stimulate debates about *Ostpolitik*. (Beer 2004: 28–29) The governing SPD-FDP coalition feared that a renewed public focus on the expulsion issue would seriously impede progress in bilateral textbook talks with Poland, and therefore rejected the report's publication, citing the 1969 agreement.<sup>181</sup>

Finally, German political leaders provided significant institutional and financial backing to the International Institute for the Improvement of School Books in Braunschweig, which played a key role in coordinating the talks with Poland. When the institute's head, Georg Eckert, died unexpectedly in January 1974, a number of German policymakers expressed concern that the institute might not be able to continue its work due to financial and organizational difficulties. Under the leadership of Alfred Kubel, Prime Minister (Ministerpräsident) of the state of Lower Saxony, the institute was given legal status as an independent institution and named the 'Georg-Eckert-Institute' (GEI) in June 1975. Furthermore, decision-makers ensured that the GEI would receive adequate funding, with seven German states pledging their support. (Gabriel 2000: 11) Although the conservative establishment represented by the CDU-CSU tended to be more skeptical about textbook talks with Poland, lawmakers from across the political spectrum gave their backing to the GEI in the mid-1970s. The law on the establishment of the institute in Braunschweig received support from all parliamentarians in Lower Saxony, including those from the ruling SPD and the opposition's CDU and FDP, making it the only law passed unanimously in the state during the legislative period between 1974 and 1976. (Oschatz 2000: 13) Outside of Lower Saxony, Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusminister) of Rhineland-Palatinate Bernhard Vogel played a leading role among CDU members in providing support to the GEI. Under his leadership, Rhineland-Palatinate decided to contribute to the GEI's operating budget – as the only CDU-led state to do so from the very beginning. Vogel later explained that he felt this decision was important in order to show that both SPD and CDU members supported international textbook talks. (Vogel 2000: 22)

The GEI's establishment provides an excellent example of how German policymakers were able to strike a favorable balance between demonstrating their support for history textbook talks, while maintaining distance from the actual work. Although the

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<sup>181</sup> In spite of this decision, the CDU-CSU opposition deliberately leaked the report to a publisher in 1975, who printed it as a pirated edition with the title "Atrocities afflicted on Germans. The victims of the East. Finally the truth that Bonn conceals" (Verbrechen an Deutschen. Die Opfer im Osten. Endlich die Wahrheit, die Bonn verschweigt). The unofficial report did not receive the broad publicity that the opposition had hoped for, however. (Beer 2004: 29)

GEI is to a significant degree financed through governmental sources, it remains autonomous in its research activities – and thus is neither an official government organization nor a purely private institution. (Lässig 2007) Rather, it may be described as a ‘*parapublic*’ institution, as it “escape[s] the common binary distinctions of state-society or public-private.” (Krotz 2007: 1) According to Ulrich Krotz,

“Parapublic practices are not forms of public interaction among states, because the participants do not relate to each other as representatives of their states or governments. Yet, these practices also are inadequately conceptualized as transnational links among private individual or collective actors, because they do not autonomously originate in private society and, critically, because they are largely state-financed or -organized.” (Krotz 2007: 1)

As a parapublic institution, the GEI embodies the interplay between civil society and politics. Its institutional setup allowed German policymakers to pursue their dual goal of backing textbook talks, while simultaneously ensuring that the commission’s historians could work free from political pressure.

### *The Public Debate on the Joint Recommendations*

The German-Polish commission completed its work by publishing the last set of recommendations on history teaching in 1976. The final publication covered the most controversial time period, the modern era including World War II. For the commission, it had been a long and rocky road to the formulation of the joint recommendations. At times, a breakdown of talks had seemed imminent. (Borodziej 2003: 18) During the talks, some historians suggested to create a document with parallel presentations of each side’s viewpoints and interpretations, rather than writing a joint text. (Zernack 2007: 5, Riemenschneider 1998: 76) In the end however, the participants agreed to write a joint text in order to demonstrate the extent to which both sides could agree on a common view of history. In total, the bilateral commission published 26 concise and essential recommendations on the teaching of German-Polish relations.

Two issues dominated in the broad public debate that followed the recommendations’ publication in Germany. First, a number of critics pointed out that the recommendations failed to mention some important bilateral matters, including the secret supplementary protocol to the Hitler-Stalin-Pact of August 23, 1939, which led to the division of Poland. In consideration of Poland’s relationship with the Soviet Union, the commission had deliberately left this issue out from discussions and focused on strictly [234]

bilateral issues. Supporters maintained this was the only viable approach given the Cold War conditions. (Borodziej 2001: 12) Secondly, the recommendations' treatment of the expulsion issue was widely criticized. Opponents asserted that the text grossly downplayed the misery and suffering experienced by the German population by applying euphemistic terminology. Rather than describing Polish policies as an 'expulsion' the recommendations used the expression 'transfer' – a term the commission had in fact borrowed from the Potsdam Agreement of 1945, in which the victorious allies had agreed on the 'orderly transfer of German populations' from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Defenders of the recommendation argued the commission's text spoke of a 'forced relocation' – thereby making clear that the German population was not voluntarily participating.<sup>182</sup>

Reactions to the recommendations among the political leadership were mixed. As during the debate on the establishment of the GEI, conservative politicians of the CDU-CSU tended to be more cautious and doubtful than representatives of the SPD.<sup>183</sup> However, the CDU-CSU did not consist of a monolithic block. CDU politicians such as Prime Minister of Lower Saxony Ernst Albrecht, Prime Minister of Rhineland-Palatinate Bernhard Vogel, and party members Rita Süßmuth and Richard von Weizsäcker backed the bilateral commission's work. Such proponents of the talks, Robert Maier observes, "were a minority within the CDU, but not an insignificant one." (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Furthermore, while many conservative politicians were critical of the recommendations themselves, they agreed in principle on the necessity for joint textbook improvements and reconciliation with Poland. As long as Poland was under Communist rule, they argued, bilateral talks would be futile, as Polish historians would not be able to speak freely. In their view, German historians in the commission had furthermore yielded to Polish demands too easily, thereby creating a bias in the recommendations.

### *Initiating Change in History Education*

Although the ruling SPD-FDP coalition supported the recommendations, it was far from assured that the commission's work would have any effect on actual teaching practices in Germany. The recommendations were not binding and the federal government

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<sup>182</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the controversy, the public discussions in parliaments and in the media, see Jacobmeyer 1979.

<sup>183</sup> The CSU in particular was opposed to the recommendations. With the support of the CSU and the Association of Expellees (Bund der Vertriebenen), three German historians published the so-called "Alternative Recommendations on the Treatment of German-Polish History in Schoolbooks" in 1978. These recommendations, however, were not written in cooperation with Polish historians.

had no direct enforcement mechanisms, as German states enjoy sovereignty over educational issues. Each individual state government was thus responsible for deciding whether to issue new teaching guidelines and authorizing history school books in accordance. The difficulty of modifying textbook content was exacerbated by the sheer variety of teaching materials available in the Federal Republic. There were almost one hundred different history textbooks, issued by more than a dozen different publishers. (Jacobmeyer 1979: 199) Given the substantial hurdles in implementing changes, the broad public debate about the recommendations was in itself a major success, because it raised the general awareness about problematic textbook depictions. Among the political leadership, vigorous debates were held during plenary sessions in the parliaments of all eleven German states. (Strobel 2008a, Interview by A. Sakaki)

German politicians in favor of the recommendations adopted two related strategies in order to encourage consideration of the commission's work in history teaching. First, top-level leaders including the Chancellor and the Foreign Minister took the lead in expressing their full support for the commission, appealing to individual state leaders in Germany to consider necessary changes in history teaching. Even before the commission had ended its work, Foreign Minister Dietrich Genscher on a visit to Warsaw in November 1975 advocated putting "the recommendations into practice as soon as possible." (Jacobmeyer 1979: 199) Eight months later, Genscher and his Polish counterpart Stefan Olszowski signed an agreement, in which both sides promised to make efforts to "have the recommendations of the joint textbook commission taken into account" in history teaching and books. (Government of Federal Republic of Germany and Government of People's Republic of Poland 1976: 673) Chancellor Schmidt worked actively behind the scenes to convince state leaders of the importance of the commission's work. In June 1977, he explained before the German-Polish Forum: "[Regarding the consideration of the recommendations in education,] I am often holding talks and exchanging letters with the prime ministers of the states, which have the highest executive authority in educational policies." Schmidt asserted that "persistent efforts and goodwill" would lead to success. (Schmidt 1977: 618)

Secondly, German politicians in favor of the bilateral textbook talks ensured that the recommendations would be widely read. More than 300,000 copies of the document were printed in Germany, guaranteeing a broad distribution among the public and especially among teachers, textbook authors and publishers. Several state governments sent copies of

the recommendations to schools, accompanied by a letter from the prime minister or the minister of education explaining the significance of the German-Polish work. (Jacobmeyer 1979: 317) Other states published the recommendations in the state's official gazette. Northrhine-Westphalia took the lead among all German states in adopting a decree on the 'Education for International Understanding' (Erziehung zur Völkerverständigung) on November 15, 1977, thereby abrogating the 1956 directive called 'Recommendations on the Study of the East.' (Girgensohn 1981: 8)<sup>184</sup> Following in-depth deliberations, a majority of German states announced they would make efforts to reflect the recommendations in their history textbooks and teaching, although they maintained they would not do so uncritically. Bavaria, where former expellees represent an important voter constituency, was one of the states rejecting the use of the recommendations in formulating educational guidelines. Although it regarded highly the goal of furthering international understanding, the CSU-led government explained, this objective "can be realized only on the basis of equality, mutual respect and the factual-objective depiction of historical-political circumstances." (Jacobmeyer 1979: 135)

The efforts by supporters of the recommendations bore fruit and led to improvements in textbook depictions. Changes could be implemented only gradually, because the process of producing and adopting new books took several years. (Knepper 1981) Nevertheless, a survey conducted in September 1978 among history teachers in the area of Oberhausen and Duisburg found that the purpose and content of the German-Polish recommendations were generally well-known. Furthermore, the survey revealed that many publishers had already begun to adopt their textbook contents to reflect the recommendations. (Jacobmeyer 1979: 388) In Poland, the implementation of changes was technically much easier than in Germany, because only a small number of history textbooks existed, all of which were printed by a state-owned publishing company. The immediate impact on teaching materials in Poland was more limited, however. Enno Meyer analyzed Polish textbooks in 1982, revealing mixed results. He concluded: "While some volumes have in the course of time definitely taken account of the recommendations, others do not show any modification at all, some re-editions even being incompatible with the recommendations." (Meyer 1982: 274)<sup>185</sup> Furthermore, because the government printed

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<sup>184</sup> This was, above all, an important symbolic step. In other states, the 1956 directive was not fully abrogated, but it had little effect on history education by the late 1970s.

<sup>185</sup> Polish representatives, on the other hand, argued that significant changes had been made. See Rzeszotarski and Markiewicz 1981.

only a few thousand copies of the recommendations, Polish teachers and the public were largely unaware of the commission's work. (Borodziej 2000: 163)

After the 1976 publication, the bilateral textbook commission continued its work, but it lost some of its importance in the 1980s. Many Polish historians were caught up with domestic issues, and were thus unable to participate consistently in the bilateral commission work. At one conference in June 1981, only five of the fifteen invited Polish experts showed up. (Borodziej 2000) However, the declining importance of the commission in Poland also reflected the success of joint textbook work in 1970s. Given the improvements in relations with Germany, textbook depictions were no longer considered a priority issue in the 1980s.

### *Change and Continuity under Chancellor Helmut Kohl*

In Germany, the inauguration of the conservative federal government under Chancellor Helmut Kohl in 1982 had potential implications on bilateral textbook work. In his first policy declaration on October 13, 1982, Kohl criticized his predecessors' memory politics harshly. He stated Germany was facing a "spiritual-moral crisis" (*geistig-moralische Krise*), which was "the result of a decade-long questioning (*Verunsicherung*) in the relationship to our history [...] and [...] questioning of our national self-image." He called for "reconsideration" (*Neubesinnung*) in order to avert an intensifying national identity crisis. (Limbach 2008) In Kohl's view, Germany deserved a more positive self-conception, given the country's postwar peace and successful democracy. (Fischer and Lorenz 2007: 226) Furthermore, Kohl believed that one-sided emphasis on the Nazi past and the Holocaust would extend indefinitely Bonn's diminished influence in world politics. In his view, a new national historical identity – based on a factually accurate yet positive version of the past – would enhance political stability and render Germany more predictable in international politics. (Kansteiner 2006: 126) Kohl's view met with support from a number of conservative politicians. Parliamentary leader of the CDU Alfred Dregger echoed the Chancellor's concerns, when he stated in September 1986: "Our nation will not be able to survive without some basic patriotism, which is taken for granted in other nations. We must contradict those who are abusing our *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (process of coming to terms with our past) – which was undoubtedly needed – to make our nation incapable of dealing with the future." (Benz 1995: 56)

With his perspective on the German past, Kohl sparked several domestic and international controversies. The Chancellor was accused of trying to institute a new relativism in German historical consciousness and seeking to ‘draw a final line’ under the past. Two incidents in 1984 and 1985 reinforced such perceptions. On a visit to Israel in January 1984, Kohl asserted that he and his generation enjoyed the “grace of late birth” (*die Gnade der späten Geburt*), rendering them innocent of Nazi crimes. He argued against the notion of ‘collective guilt,’ although he acknowledged a moral responsibility of all Germans towards Israel.<sup>186</sup> (Fischer and Lorenz 2007: 227) Furthermore, in May 1985, on the fortieth anniversary of the end of War War II, Kohl invited US President Ronald Reagan to join him in visiting a military cemetery in Bitburg, where soldiers of both the *Wehrmacht* and the *Waffen-SS* were buried. (Levy and Dierkes 2002: 259)<sup>187</sup> On both occasions, Kohl was harshly criticized for being tactless and inconsiderate of the feelings held by former victims of war and aggression. The efforts to establish a positive and self-confident view of the past only triggered a public counter-movement that strengthened Germany’s culture of contrition.<sup>188</sup> (Wüstenberg and Art 2008: 84)

Despite such history-related controversies, there was little change in Germany’s policies on joint textbook work with Poland. Kohl briefly considered suspending the bilateral work or making personnel changes. (Kondo 2001: 21, Strobel 2005: 264) However, after deliberations involving historian Gotthold Rhode, the Chancellor decided to maintain governmental support for the existing commission. Kohl sought to carry on and advance his predecessors’ *Ostpolitik*, and therefore saw joint textbook work as an important means to forge close ties with Poland. Continuity in relations to Warsaw was underpinned by Foreign Minister Dietrich Genscher, who had played a constructive role in German-Polish relations during the previous Schmidt government. Furthermore, Kohl’s backing for the textbook commission was tied to the growing public pressure for him to demonstrate remorse. The Chancellor thus issued a statement on April 26, 1985, in which he publicly expressed his support for the textbook commission with Poland. (Kondo 1998: 127)

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<sup>186</sup> During the historians’ debate of 1986-87, Kohl’s remark was frequently taken up and in some cases consciously misinterpreted.

<sup>187</sup> For a detailed account of the Bitburg affair, see Fischer and Lorenz 2007: 227ff.

<sup>188</sup> German commitment toward greater remembrance was reflected in a speech by Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker in May 1985, in which he displayed sincere contrition. On Weizsäcker’s speech, see: Benz 1995: 60, Fischer and Lorenz 2007: 233. In the historians’ debate of 1986-87, a consensus in opposition to conservative-nationalists, who had questioned the uniqueness of the Holocaust, was also apparent. On the historians’ debate (*Historikerstreit*), see Schneider 2004: 77.

At the same time, Kohl provided more systematic assistance to the activities of former expellees by increasing the government's financial support for their foundations. (Bergsdorf 2004: 64) He revived a tradition of postwar chancellors attending the annual meetings of expellees, a practice that had been abandoned under Brandt. While Kohl did not endorse the demands of the expellees politically, he defended their symbolic status as victims. Daniel Levy and Julian Dierkes observe: "The memory of ethnic Germans' fate played a central role in Kohl's attempt to revive and rehabilitate old notions such as the 'Vaterland' (fatherland) and the 'Volk' (people). He sought to dissociate the ethno-cultural idiom from its Nazi connotation." (Levy and Dierkes 2002: 258) By drawing on the cultural heritage of the expellees, Kohl thus sought to transform common ethno-cultural ideas. Furthermore, the expulsion issue served as a symbolic counterweight to the focus on the victims of German aggression. (Levy and Dierkes 2002: 259)

### **1990-2010: New Textbook Projects amid History-Related Frictions**

#### *New Impulses for Joint Textbook Work*

After the fall of communism, relations between Poland and reunited Germany quickly improved. After some initial hesitancy on the part of Bonn, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Poland's first non-communist Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki recognized the Oder-Neisse Line as their common border under international law in their bilateral border treaty of November 14, 1990. In another treaty signed on June 17, 1991, the two countries underscored their determination to maintain peaceful and friendly relations and to cooperate in working towards stability in Europe. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Germany furthermore became a key proponent of Poland's participation in NATO and the European Union.

Debates soon emerged in the textbook commission and the public about whether the 1976 recommendations needed to be updated to reflect the new political developments. The fundamental changes following the end of the Cold War appeared to offer a good opportunity to discuss both countries' history education. Emerging as a democracy in the early 1990s, Warsaw adopted a system of competing and pluralistic textbooks. Furthermore, Polish scholars were able to speak freely about historical interpretations and to hold unrestricted discussions with colleagues from other countries. The commission thus suggested a new series of bilateral meetings, a proposal that was received positively by the

Kohl government, with the Foreign Ministry agreeing to provide generous financial support to the textbook commission. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki, Kondo 1993: 315) Consultations and discussions in the mid- to late-1990s confirmed the need for continuous dialogue. Even though mutual depictions had improved significantly since the early 1970s, one-sided interpretations of historical events could still be found in some textbooks. Scholars furthermore criticized the ‘asymmetry of knowledge’ between the two countries: While German textbooks allotted little space to Poland, Polish books covered Germany’s role extensively. At the same time however, Polish students learned little about the expulsion of Germans after the war. (Borodziej 2000: 163)

Critics increasingly question the suitability and relevance of the 1976 recommendations in public debates. Participants in the textbook talks exhibited caution and restraint about the idea of revising the joint document, however. Many of the recommendations were not affected by the political changes and thus remained valid, while other aspects had already been refined in conferences during the 1980s, commission members argued. German and Polish historians were reluctant to distance themselves from the 1976 joint publication by issuing new recommendations. They feared such an act would be considered a victory by nationalists and members of the German expellee associations, who hoped to eliminate the old recommendations by replacing them. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Following extensive deliberations, the textbook commission finally agreed in 1997 to develop a short brochure on German-Polish relations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which would include didactic advice for teachers. It was agreed that the booklet would be called ‘Germany and Poland in the 20th Century: Suggestions on History Teaching’ – thereby deliberately omitting the term ‘recommendations’ in the title. In the process of writing the brochure, the commission decided to adjust the project’s scheme. Participants concurred on the development of a teachers’ handbook, including didactic ideas, as well as analyses by experts and primary source material to encourage classroom discussions. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

In 2001, twenty-five years after the publication of the German-Polish Recommendations on History Teaching, the textbook commission concluded its work on the teacher’s handbook on 20<sup>th</sup> century bilateral relations.<sup>189</sup> Włodzimierz Borodziej, a former secretary of the bilateral commission, observed with satisfaction that the new, more than 400 page-long manual was “twenty times as voluminous as the 1976

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<sup>189</sup> See Becher, Borodziej, and Maier 2001.

Recommendations, detailed and nuanced.” (Borodziej 2003: 38) The publication was greeted by the federal government and various states. To alert history teachers about the existence of the handbook, the Georg-Eckert-Institute undertook various efforts, such as issuing press releases and mentioning the book at teachers’ conferences and seminars. Policymakers supported these efforts, for example by arranging a high-profile presentation in the parliament of Lower Saxony and by advertising the book on the website of the Federal Center for Political Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung). (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) The Foreign Ministers of Germany and Poland furthermore acknowledged the important contributions of the German-Polish textbook commission in 2002 by presenting it with the ‘Award for Special Service in the Development of German-Polish Relations.’ On this occasion, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer emphasized the 2001 handbook and recommended it to history teachers. The book was a considerable success, with more than 26,000 copies of the German edition sold. (Maier 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

### *The Expulsion Issue Comes to the Fore*

While bilateral relations generally developed in a positive direction after the Cold War, new public debates in Germany on the topic of expulsion revealed the delicacy of historical questions between the two countries. Since the 1970s, the expulsion issue had received little public attention and coverage in textbooks. (Schlögel 2004: 132) However, public interest grew after the Cold War for at least three reasons. First, Kohl’s decision to recognize the Oder-Neisse line as the common border with Poland was a bitter awakening for many former expellees and their descendants, who had hoped that their former homeland would once again be recognized as German territory. Many decided to travel to their former homes, refreshing memories of anguish and misery after the war. (Hirsch 2004: 117, Hirsch 2003) These developments stimulated public debates about the treatment and the commemoration of the expulsion in Germany.

Secondly, the German government increased its financial support to groups and associations focused on the preservation and development of former expellees’ culture and history. Under the leadership of Chancellor Kohl and Minister of the Interior Wolfgang Schäuble, the budget in this area was increased almost twofold from 24.4 million German Marks in 1990 to 47.6 million Marks in 1994. (Koschyk 2004: 140) The Kohl government was keenly aware that the recognition of the Oder-Neisse border had been an unpopular [242]

move among expellees, and thus sought to appease representatives through this financial recognition. The government's support enabled many groups to organize events and conferences, thereby heightening public awareness.

Thirdly, the policies of ethnic cleansing and persecution in the former Yugoslavia and in the Kosovo conflict led to a reevaluation of the German experience among many decision-makers from the political left. For example, Antje Vollmer, parliamentarian from the Green Party and at the time Vice-President of the German *Bundestag*, asserted in 1995 that German society had treated the former expellees with too much neglect. (Jach 2000) Similarly, in 1999 SPD-member and Minister of the Interior Otto Schily contended that the left had in the past "overlooked" the suffering of millions of German expellees. (Jach 2000) The most palpable indication of the left's shifting stance on the expulsion issue was the 2002 publication of Günter Grass' novella 'Crabwalk' (Im Krebsgang). The Nobel Prize winner describes the sinking of the ship 'Wilhelm Gustloff' by a Soviet submarine in January 1945, resulting in the death of more than 9,000 Germans, who were being evacuated from the Red Army. (Frevert 2003) Günther Grass, a left-wing intellectual who had always warned against great power ambitions and had opposed reunification, explained he had realized that the neglect of the expulsion's commemoration was an "abysmal failure" in post-war Germany. (Hirsch 2003)

In May 1998, German-Polish relations deteriorated significantly over the issue of expulsion. Apparently eager to score approval points in the run-up to the federal election, the fractions of the CDU-CSU and the FDP proposed a motion in parliament. Adopted on May 29, 1998 with the votes of these two fractions, the resolution described the expulsion by Poland after the war as a "great injustice and a violation of international law." (Mildenberger 2000) It furthermore called on the German government to stand up for the "legitimate interests of the German expellees." (Kranz 2008: 89) The timing of this resolution was highly controversial in Poland. In previous months, the 'Association for the Whole of Germany' (Bund für Gesamtdeutschland) had appealed to expellees to launch lawsuits and demand from Poland and other countries the return of their former assets. Furthermore, the head of the 'Association of Expellees' (Bund der Vertriebenen), CDU-member Erika Steinbach, had proposed making German approval of the EU's eastern enlargement contingent on the reimbursement of expellees. (Morhard 2001: 131) In this context, the German resolution mentioning the "legitimate interests" of the expellees appeared like a political endorsement of such claims.

The Polish Sejm countered with a declaration on July 3<sup>rd</sup> denouncing the motion and demanding a guarantee for the inviolability of Poland's frontier and titles of ownership. (Welt 1998) Even though the *Bundestag* had never explicitly questioned these issues in its resolution, Polish politicians sought the government's clarification.<sup>190</sup> Rita Süßmuth, President of the *Bundestag*, was ultimately able to alleviate Polish concerns about German intentions through extensive consultations during her visit to Warsaw at the end of July. During the talks, she stated that "no one in Germany is calling into question the Polish Western border" and insisted that "owners of formerly German properties can sleep peacefully." (Morhard 2001: 131) The Polish side accepted Süßmuth's confirmation, ending the bilateral dispute.

### *Commemorating the Plight of Germans: The Center Against Expulsion*

However, bilateral tensions over the expulsion issue reignited in 1999. In March of that year, the German Association of Expellees (Bund der Vertriebenen, BdV), with a membership of approximately two million, proposed the creation of an exhibition center focused on the fate of Germans forced to leave their homeland at the end of the war. (Hahn 2008: 74) To pursue this objective, a foundation called 'Center against Expulsion' was established in September 2000 under the leadership of BdV president Erika Steinbach and SPD member Peter Glotz, himself from a family that had been expelled after the war. Polish politicians expressed concern about the project, especially as Steinbach was well-known for her controversial and antagonistic statements regarding Poland. They feared the center would offer a revisionist interpretation of history, in which the expulsion was not properly contextualized and perpetrators were portrayed as victims. (Gauger 2008: 24) Polish observers warned the center could constitute a major setback in the bilateral work of the textbook commission, which had worked hard for a balance in historical interpretations. Polish media went as far as to dub the planned exhibition a 'Center against Reconciliation.' (Lutomski 2004: 449)

Among German politicians, Steinbach's initiative was highly disputed. The Red-Green coalition government, especially Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, displayed strong reservations from the beginning. Fischer, whose family was expelled from Hungary, argued

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<sup>190</sup> Warsaw also passed a law in August 1998 making it more difficult for foreigners who had possessed properties in Poland but lost them before 1990 to regain ownership. Poland's government spokesman Jaroslaw Sellin admitted that the law was a reaction to the campaign of German expellees. (Morhard 2001: 131)

he was not opposed to remembering, but that he feared that the BdV might seek to “set off” (aufrechnen) the guilt of the National Socialists with crimes committed by Germany’s Eastern neighbors. (Jach 2000) In 2000 and again in 2002, the SPD and the Green Party blocked parliamentary requests by the CDU-CSU fraction for government financing of Steinbach’s ‘Center against Expulsion.’ (Wildt 2007: 282) SPD-members such as Federal President Johannes Rau and parliamentarian Markus Meckel called for a government-financed center commemorating various European cases of expulsion in 20<sup>th</sup> century, rather than focusing primarily on the German experience. On July 4, 2002, the German *Bundestag* voted in favor of establishing such “a European-oriented center against expulsion” together with other interested countries. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2008a) In April 2004, first deliberations were held between several European countries, leading to the signing of an agreement by the ministers of education from Germany, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary in February 2005 on the formation of a “European Network Memory and Solidarity” (Europäisches Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität). (Wildt 2007: 284)

Meanwhile, the BdV’s planned exhibition center continued to cause frictions between Germany and Poland. From the summer of 2003, the foundation ‘Center against Expulsion’ launched a campaign to convince states and communities in Germany to provide financial backing for its project. (Zentrum gegen Vertreibung 2009b) The BdV succeeded in securing budgetary support from the German states of Lower Saxony, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and Hesse as well as numerous communities. (Zentrum gegen Vertreibung 2009a) Under the chancellorship of Angela Merkel beginning in November 2005, the federal government’s stance became more sympathetic towards the BdV’s plan. The CDU-CSU had favored governmental support for the ‘Center against Expulsion’ all along, although party members disagreed on the degree to which the BdV should lead the project. In their coalition agreement, the CDU-CSU and the SPD stated the intention to create a “visible token” (sichtbares Zeichen) in Berlin for the commemoration of expulsion “in connection with the European Network Memory and Solidarity.” (Welt 2005a) The apparent political support for Steinbach’s initiative caused indignation among Polish politicians and the public. The government under Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski took a particularly confrontational posture regarding Steinbach’s foundation, sending already strained bilateral relations to a new post-Cold War low in 2006-2007.

In the summer of 2006, Steinbach's foundation opened a temporary exhibition called "Paths Unchosen" (Erzwungene Wege) in Berlin, covering the history of expulsion in 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe by drawing on a number of cases, including the German one.<sup>191</sup> Although the Kaczynski government harshly criticized the exhibition, a majority of observers and commentators agreed that the presentation was neither revisionist nor one-sided and that it provided appropriate contextualization. (Ther 2008: 37) Apparently, public pressure in Germany to cover the topic at a European level had favorably influenced the balance in presentation. The foundation also sought to garner further political support for its long-term objective: the establishment of a permanent 'Center against Expulsion' in Berlin.

After protracted debates between the SPD and the CDU-CSU, the federal government in October 2007 finally agreed on a concept for the establishment of a "visible token" commemorating experiences of expulsion. A permanent center would be established with the help of the 'German Historical Museum,' an autonomous organization funded by the government. SPD members argued that such a setup would ensure balance in historical depiction. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 2008b) The government furthermore agreed that the council of the foundation 'Escape, Expulsion, Reconciliation' (Flucht, Vertreibung, Versöhnung) would include delegates from the BdV in addition to representatives of the government.<sup>192</sup> In relations to Poland, the inauguration of the Donald Tusk government in December 2007 brought positive momentum. Tusk was determined to improve strained bilateral relations, signaling general acceptance of the planned exhibition center. He stated in December 2007: "An appropriate commemoration of the expellees will meet with approval from my government." At the same time, he warned that the center must be based on "historical truth," asserting his strong opposition to Erika Steinbach becoming the BdV delegate in the foundation council (Stiftungsrat). (Welt 2007)

In the following months, heated discussions erupted in Germany on the question of who would represent the BdV in the council. The BdV nominated Steinbach as a representative, but the SPD voiced strong opposition. Vice-President of the *Bundestag* Wolfgang Thierse, who led the negotiations for the SPD, contended the BdV should choose someone other than the controversial Steinbach for this position. On the other hand, CDU

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<sup>191</sup> The exhibition was held in the Kronprinzenpalais in Berlin, a building belonging to the German federal government. (Bickerich 2006)

<sup>192</sup> Following intense deliberations, the SPD and CDU also agreed on a location for the 'Center against Expulsion' in Berlin. Steinbach had sought a building close to the Reichstag and the Holocaust Memorial, but the coalition agreed on the Deutschlandhaus, in the center of Berlin but not in the location Steinbach had hoped for. (Graw and Kamann 2007)

members including the Prime Ministers of Hesse and Baden-Württemberg, Roland Koch and Günther Oettinger, expressed their support for Steinbach. (Frankfurter Rundschau 2007) Since all nominees had to be confirmed by the Federal Cabinet, however, the SPD could effectively block Steinbach's appointment. In early March 2009, the BdV announced its decision to withdraw its nomination, explaining it would leave open the delegate position "for the moment." Steinbach made clear however, that the BdV "explicitly reserved the right to submit a re-nomination for the currently free seat." (Wittrock 2009)<sup>193</sup> An appointment of Steinbach under a CDU-CSU led government seemed conceivable, as the joint election program of June 2009 declared the two parties "stick to the position that the associations of German expellees decide themselves about their representation in the council of the foundation 'Escape, Expulsion, Reconciliation.'" (CDU/ CSU 2009: 42, Spiegel 2009) Although the document did not refer to Steinbach explicitly, the BdV had repeatedly made clear that she was the only candidate. CSU-parliamentarian and BdV-member Bernd Posselt confirmed: "Our goal is still to appoint Erika Steinbach to the foundation council." Referring to the upcoming federal election, he stated "We will see after September 27." (Medick and Puhl 2009)

After the liberal-conservative coalition under Chancellor Angela Merkel replaced the grand coalition government, Steinbach announced her intention to take the seat at the foundation council. However, FDP members raised strong objections and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle threatened to veto Steinbach's appointment to the council, citing concerns about the negative impact on German-Polish relations. (Zeit 2010b) When it became clear that Westerwelle would not bend to pressure from the BdV and CDU-CSU, Steinbach in January 2010 proposed to the government that she relinquish her seat in exchange for a number of concessions. (Helbig-Mischewski 2010)

On February 11, 2010, the BdV and the governing parties agreed to a compromise solution. While Steinbach promised that she would no longer seek nomination to the council, the liberal-conservative coalition gave in to several of the BdV's demands. The planned exhibition area for commemorating the victims of expulsion was increased from 2,200 to 3,000 square meters. (Zeit 2010a) Furthermore, the BdV's influence in the foundation council was increased: The compromise stipulated that six out of 21 council

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<sup>193</sup> When Chancellor Merkel attended the annual BdV ceremony in August 22, 2009, Steinbach reiterated the position that the BdV alone would decide on the nomination. She maintained: "This issue is not about myself. It is about the rights of freedom in this state. The BdV will not surrender these [rights] to anyone, whether domestically or abroad." (Tagesschau 2009)

members were to be nominated by the BdV, rather than the previous three out of 13.<sup>194</sup> Finally, the governing coalition agreed to cede the cabinet's veto right on council nominations to the *Bundestag*. (Zeit 2010a) Members of the SPD and Green Party sharply criticized the agreement, describing it as a result of Steinbach's blackmailing. (Zeit 2010b) Poland responded cautiously, as the precise scope and content of the planned exhibition remained unclear. (Augstein 2010, Helbig-Mischewski 2010)<sup>195</sup>

### *The Connection between the Expulsion Issue and Textbook Work*

The dispute over the planned 'Center against Expulsion' was indirectly related to the textbook work between Germany and Poland in at least three ways. Firstly, Warsaw's resentment against Erika Steinbach revealed the widespread concern about German revisionism in Poland, despite decades of success in improving depictions and narratives through textbook talks. Underlying suspicions and prejudices were quickly roused on both sides, demonstrating a continuing need for bilateral work on questions of remembrance. Secondly, a growing number of German decision-makers have recently sought to raise public awareness about the expulsion issue, arguing in favor of making it a mandatory subject in school curricula. In August 2005, Angela Merkel stated her support for such a change, pointing out that Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg had set good examples by adding the expulsion issue as a compulsory topic in history classes. (Merkel 2005) Two other states, Northrhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony followed this lead, making correspondent curricular changes in 2007 and 2008, respectively. (Strobel and Maier 2008: 7, Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Inneres Sport und Integration 2008) In order to avert new frictions in relations with Poland, further discussions on the topic among experts of the textbook commission are indispensable, however. Thirdly, the deterioration in German-Polish relations over the exhibition center and other foreign policy issues triggered two new initiatives in bilateral textbook work. Under the leadership of the state of Saxony, a small, regional project was started in 2005, followed by a more extensive project backed by the federal government in 2008. The two initiatives will be discussed in the following sections.

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<sup>194</sup> According to the new compromise, the council will include six BdV representatives, two representatives each from the Catholic and the Protestant Churches as well as the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Furthermore, there will be three federal government representatives, four parliamentarians (two of the CDU-CSU, one from the FDP, and one from the SPD), and the directors of the German Historical Museum and of the House of History in Bonn. (Augstein 2010)

<sup>195</sup> According to Brigitta Helbig-Mischewski, Poland is concentrating efforts on the "construction of the Museum of the Second World War in Danzig, which, under international participation and in the appropriate context, is also designed to commemorate the expulsion of the Germans." (Helbig-Mischewski 2010)

*(1) The Development of a Joint Regional Textbook*

Bilateral relations between Warsaw and Berlin had reached a new post-Cold War low in 2005, when the two countries celebrated the ‘German-Polish Year.’ Disagreements about the ‘Center against Expulsion’ were not the only cause of frictions. Relations were strained by disputes about a variety of issues, including the distribution of votes in the European Council, the US war on Iraq, and the German-Russian gas pipeline project. In this context, the state of Saxony sought to provide a positive impetus in bilateral relations by supporting a group of German and Polish historians to create a joint supplementary textbook. Kinga Hartmann of the Educational Agency of Saxony and Kazimierz Wóycicki, Director of the Polish Institute in Leipzig were the two initiators of the project. (Hartmann 2008, Personal Correspondence, Galla 2008) In her work with local schools, Hartmann had observed that German and Polish students still held one-sided historical views and understandings of each other’s country. She called for a joint textbook project, with the objective of “developing a cross-border regional identity in the field of school education.” (Menschner 2007)

The idea met with strong support from Saxony’s Minister of Culture and Education, Steffen Flath, and Prime Minister Georg Milbradt, both CDU members. A small project team was established under Hartmann’s supervision. In consultation with the state government, the team decided on treating German-Polish history during the most contentious time period between 1933 and 1945. (Schmidt and Wöller 2008) Furthermore, it was agreed that the book would serve as a complementary textbook and comprise many historical sources and pictures to stimulate classroom discussion. The focus of the book would be the history of the German-Polish border region of Saxony and Lower Silesia (Niederschlesien). Minister of Culture and Education Flath explained that the government of Saxony hoped to “arouse understanding and empathy among the students of the neighboring regions [...] for the experiences of the respective other side.” (Schmidt and Flath 2008) The political leadership furthermore agreed to finance 25% of the project costs, while the other 75% would be covered by a special EU project fund. (Hartmann 2008, Personal Correspondence, Schmidt and Flath 2008)

After two years of intensive work, the joint textbook called ‘Understanding History – Shaping the Future: German-Polish Relations in the Years 1933-1949’ was published in

2007 in both languages.<sup>196</sup> (Hartmann 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) The government of Saxony welcomed the successful conclusion of the project and announced its intention to test the book in selected high schools in the region. Public reactions in Germany and Poland were mixed. Polish conservatives were particularly critical, insisting the book was biased and reflected German views. However, Radoslaw Sikorski, Foreign Minister in the Tusk government, in late 2007 praised the book and suggested it was a good basis for a more comprehensive joint textbook project. (Flückiger 2008)

## *(2) The Initiative for a General Textbook for Germany and Poland*

While Saxony's project was under way, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier floated the idea for a similar initiative on the federal level in a speech in October 2006, pointing out that Germany and France had already succeeded in writing a joint textbook. He went on, "Perhaps it is not impossible to also compile in the medium term a joint German-Polish history book that will help us understand each other better." (Steinmeier 2006) Steinmeier hoped to provide a positive impulse to strained German-Polish relations. Poland's government under Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski was on a confrontational course, however, and thus failed to react to Steinmeier's proposal. Warsaw's stance changed with the inauguration of Prime Minister Donald Tusk. In January 2008, Vice Minister of Education Krzysztof Stanowski announced: "We should start [with the writing of a joint textbook] immediately. [...] We are waiting for an official offer from Germany." (Jasper 2008) In the same months, Germany and Poland agreed to charge the joint commission with the task of developing a history textbook.

The government-backed textbook project, which is supported by the Georg-Eckert-Institute, was officially kicked off in May 2008. The two countries agreed to finance the project on equal terms. (Strobel 2008b: 27) According to Steinmeier, the goal is to create a textbook for high school students "in which German guilt and German crimes are neither concealed nor relativized. But in which the suffering of the Germans who were displaced is also described." (Steinmeier 2008) The commission plans to publish a first volume, covering the period from the Middle Ages up to the French Revolution, in 2011. In writing a joint book, the commission will face at least two key challenges, however. Firstly, it will need to pay heed to the different didactic cultures in Germany and Poland. While German

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<sup>196</sup> See Hartmann 2007.

education seeks to stimulate discussions among students about different historical interpretations, Polish education focuses more on conveying knowledge and facts. (Strobel 2008b: 27)

Secondly, the commission will have to tackle sensitive topics in bilateral history, establishing a consensus on their depiction and deciding on how to weigh them in the text. The treatment of the expulsion issue will be a major point of contention. Continuing debates about the planned 'Center against Expulsion' may complicate discussions between historians in the commission. In addition, the joint project team will have to deal with a host of new challenges, as the post-Cold War era has bred additional mutual fears and prejudices between Germans and Poles. For example, the public in the Federal Republic often perceives Poles as cheap laborers who are snatching jobs away from Germans. In the state elections in Saxony in late August 2009, the far-right party National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) played on such fears by advertising with the slogan "Stop the Polish Invasion." (ARD 2009) The joint commission will need to combat the spread of such stereotypes through consultations and educational measures.

### **Japanese Politics on History Textbook Talks with South Korea**

After World War II, history textbooks in Japan and South Korea reflected deep-seated mutual resentments. The gist of many Korean textbooks was that though Japan "in pre-modern times learned much from Korean culture, it invaded and ruled" its neighbor in modern times. In short, Japan was seen as having "requited kindness with ingratitude" (on o ada de kaeshita). (Mitani 2007a: 243) Textbooks focused especially on Tokyo's oppressive and brutal colonial policies. In Japan, textbooks revealed contempt and a lack of interest in Korean history. (Chon 2007: 253) Many books portrayed Japan's early 20<sup>th</sup> century expansionism as a defensive and legally rightful act, while paying little heed to the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers and colonial authorities.

The Japanese government's stance regarding bilateral history textbook improvements with South Korea can be divided into four phases. During the first phase, covering the time period from after World War II until 1982, textbook depictions were discussed primarily in the domestic context. The idea of establishing a government-backed joint study group with South Korea only surfaced once in 1965, but it was quickly

abandoned. During the second phase, from 1982 to 1990, criticism about Japanese textbook narratives began to emerge from South Korea and China. In response, the Japanese government declared its intention to take into account regional views when authorizing textbooks, but it did not consider the establishment of bilateral research committees with other countries. The third phase, from 1990-2001 was marked by a growing willingness by Japanese politicians to confront the country's wartime responsibility squarely. Although Tokyo continued to reject the option of government-backed textbook talks with Korea, it launched several initiatives to promote research on Japan's historical role in Asia. This increasingly forthcoming stance towards Asian neighbors was countervailed by a backlash among conservative politicians and opinion leaders, however. Conservatives began to undertake efforts to make history education more nationalistic and less self-critical. During the fourth phase, from 2001 until now, the Japanese government officially shifted towards a supportive stance on government-backed talks on history and textbooks with Korea, following serious bilateral frictions about textbook depictions. However, the work of a joint commission of historians has been significantly hampered by controversial policies and statements by nationalist leaders in Japan.

### **1945-1982: Domestic Controversy and Polarization of Memory Politics**

#### *US Occupation and the 'Reverse Course'*

The first two decades after World War II led to a polarization in Japan between views from the political left and right regarding history textbook contents, with decisive consequences for today's situation. After Japan's surrender in 1945, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Tokyo, General Douglas MacArthur, sought to overhaul the nationalistic education system. Under his leadership, textbooks increased their critical coverage of Japan's recent history of colonialism and military aggression. (Ienaga 1993-1994: 124) However, with rising Cold War tensions and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the US 'reversed course' and purged members of the Japanese left wing instead of the pre-war nationalists. After Japan regained sovereignty in 1952, policies for textbook authorization further changed. The Ministry of Education (MoE) began to use its textbook screening system to tone down or remove accounts of wartime belligerence. (Lee 2002) This policy reflected the growing political clout of conservative leaders, some of whom had served in government positions prior to 1945.

In textbook authorization, the screening focus shifted accordingly from removing nationalist narratives to eliminating communist or leftist ideas and views. Demands by the MoE to moderate accounts of Japanese atrocities met with strong protest from textbook authors, the majority of whom belonged to the political left-wing. (Kondo 2004) Ienaga Saburo, a well-respected historian, was particularly frustrated about the MoE's attempts to influence depictions in books. After one of Ienaga's textbook manuscripts was rejected in 1963, he decided to file a lawsuit in 1965, arguing that the government's authorization system violated the Constitution with its right for the freedom of expression.<sup>197</sup>

### *Floating the Idea of Textbook Talks*

In the same year, Japan and South Korea normalized diplomatic relations. Korean President Park Chung-Hee, who had come to power through a coup d'état four years earlier, was keen to improve relations with Japan, seeking Tokyo's financial support to rebuild his country's economy. After the signing of the Treaty of Basic Relations in June 1965, the UNESCO headquarters in Paris proposed bilateral history textbook talks between the Japan and South Korea as a means to complement the political process of reconciliation. Japan's UNESCO commission first responded positively to the proposal, and a preparatory committee was set up by both countries. (Chung 2006: 23)

However, bilateral talks never materialized, as Tokyo soon announced its decision to postpone the project indefinitely. (Sakai 2002: 5) The Japanese side cited difficulties in choosing participants for textbook talks due to the split in domestic opinions following the Ienaga lawsuit. (Chung 2006: 23) Many historians from the political left agreed with Ienaga regarding the unconstitutional nature of textbook authorizations by the MoE. Thus, even though textbook talks with South Korea would have probably served their goal of ensuring a more critical treatment of Japan's past in textbooks, they rejected participation in a government-backed project. For Tokyo's conservative-nationalist leadership, the Ienaga lawsuit also provided a welcome pretext for abandoning the bilateral project with South Korea.

Ienaga's lawsuit turned into a protracted legal battle, continuing until 1997. Ienaga scored some victories in lower courts in 1970 and 1974, leading to a relaxation in MoE

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<sup>197</sup> Although Ienaga's lawsuit was about the government's involvement in textbook authorization, historians Ide Hiroto, Fukushima Hiroyuki and Ishida Masaharu observe that the domestic debate after 1965 focused primarily on the content of textbooks, rather than the selection process. (Ide, Fukushima, and Ishida 2010: 179)

screening procedures that enabled textbook authors to write about Japan's past from more critical perspectives.<sup>198</sup> However, these changes created a backlash among right-wing political leaders in the LDP around 1979. (Ide, Fukushima, and Ishida 2010: 181) Conservative politicians called for stricter MoE controls, arguing that textbooks lacked patriotism. The LDP party convention in January 1981 passed a resolution against "leftist tendencies in school books." (Nagahara 1983: 74) In response, the MoE again revised its screening criteria in order to tone down or eliminate depictions of Japan's wartime conduct. (Nozaki 2002: 605)

The idea of holding bilateral textbook talks was not taken up by either Seoul or Tokyo in the years following the abortion of the 1965 project. President Park Chung-Hee depended on economic assistance from Japan and thus sought to avoid stirring antagonistic feelings between the two countries by broaching the topic. In Tokyo, many decision-makers and conservative bureaucrats in the MoE opposed textbook talks with other countries. As the newspaper *Asahi Shinbun* observed, there was a widespread belief among LDP politicians that "the content of textbooks should be decided independently by each country." (Asahi Shinbun 1987)<sup>199</sup>

Interestingly however, Tokyo's leadership did not shy away from demanding changes in foreign textbooks. In 1958, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a non-profit organization, called International Society for Educational Information (ISEI; Kokusai Kyōiku Jōhō Sentā), to which it provided annual budgetary support. (Kokusai Kyōiku Jōhō Sentā) ISEI's primary aim was to "rectify incorrect accounts by pointing out mistaken descriptions with regard to Japan and providing related documents and pictures." (Gaimusho: 357) The organization initially focused on one-sided depictions about Japan as a country of 'Samurai' and 'Geisha'. Reportedly, ISEI later also submitted requests targeting 'anti-Japanese' descriptions in foreign history textbooks. (Chosun Ilbo 2001, Kondo 2008a)<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> For a detailed overview of the Ienaga lawsuit see Petersen 2001 or Ide, Fukushima, and Ishida 2010: 179.

<sup>199</sup> Interestingly, there has been little government-backed collaborative history research between the US and Japan, for example regarding the portrayal of the US atomic bombings. According to Laura Hein and Mark Selden, "Japanese postwar subordination to US strategic designs, together with Japanese vulnerability to criticism of its activities during the Pacific War, has muted official Japanese criticism of the United States." (Hein and Selden 2000: 21) Some privately organized joint historical research was undertaken from the late 1960s. For details, see Matsuda 1986: 641ff. Mike Mochizuki contends that the US and Japan "have still not achieved reconciliation on historical issues," pointing out that reciprocal visits by US and Japanese acting heads of state to Pearl Harbor and Hiroshima have not yet happened. (Brown 2010)

<sup>200</sup> Not much is known publicly about ISEI's requests and activities. According to the *Asahi Shinbun*, one controversial demand in the early 1980s was for Moscow to change Soviet textbooks describing the four islands of the 'Northern Territories' as Soviet territory. ISEI insisted that the four islands were Japanese territory. (Asahi Shinbun 1984)

## 1982-1990: International Frictions over Textbooks

### *The 1982 Textbook Dispute*

The first major international dispute about the content of Japanese history textbooks emerged in 1982 following an announcement of that year's textbook screening results. (Satoh 1987: 247ff.) Media reports revealing the MoE had demanded authors to erase or moderate descriptions about Japanese wartime atrocities triggered a storm of protests and outrage among South Korean and Chinese leaders. According to newspaper articles, the 1919 Korean Independence Movement was to be described as a "riot," and Korean workers forcibly transported to Japan as "volunteers." (Yoshimasa 1997: 35) It was also reported that the MoE had required the rewriting of some passages in textbooks on Japan's early 20<sup>th</sup> century expansion onto the Asian continent, demanding that the word "advance" (shinshutsu) be used instead of the term "invasion" (shinryaku). Independent investigations by the MoE and the *Asahi Shinbun* later revealed initial media reports had exaggerated the extent of the revision. For example, it turned out the MoE had not required the word change of "invasion" into "advance" for Japan's actions in Korea and China, although it had insisted on this change with regard to Southeast Asian countries. (Fuhrt 2002: 131)

The Korean and Chinese public were nevertheless enraged about the MoE's apparent efforts to tone down descriptions on Japan's atrocities. In late July 1982, Seoul and Beijing officially protested against Japan's textbook policy, demanding swift measures to rectify the situation. The Japanese leadership was divided on how to respond. While the Foreign Ministry was willing to make concessions to avoid further frictions with Korea and China, others, including many bureaucrats in the MoE argued that international protests constituted interferences into domestic affairs. (Seddon 1987: 216) According to Satoh Komei, who was in charge of textbook authorization at the time, the MoE furthermore believed that protests would subside without Tokyo taking any further measures. The MoE thus "did not behave proactively" (sekkyokuteki ni ugokou to wa shinakatta to iu) on the issue. (Satoh 1987: 275)

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Kondo Takahiro observed that the ISEI has not made noticeable contributions in textbook controversies with neighboring countries. Rather, ISEI's demands for textbook revisions in other countries were "counterproductive," he contended. (Kondo 2008a) Indeed, the Korean newspaper *Chosun Ilbo* criticized ISEI for reflecting a double standard in Japanese politics. (Chosun Ilbo 2001) ISEI went bankrupt in November 2004, following years of financial mismanagement. (Japanese Diet 2005)

### *The Neighborhood Clause*

After prolonged haggling, Tokyo finally decided to yield to regional demands. In a press conference on August 26, 1982, Secretary General Miyazawa Kiichi stated Japan was deeply aware of the great suffering its past actions had inflicted on the peoples of Asia. He furthermore pledged Tokyo would revise its textbook authorization criteria in order to reflect this stance. (Xinhua News Agency 1982) In the fall of 1982, the MoE announced a new criterion, the so-called ‘Neighborhood Clause’ (Kinrin shokoku jōkō) in its screening process. According to the clause, Japan would exercise “necessary care, in the interest of international friendship and cooperation” in the treatment of recent history of relations between Japan and its Asian neighbors. (Satoh 1987: 281–82) However, the Japanese government never specified how it would judge whether textbook content was appropriate. The option of holding government-backed consultations with neighbors on this question was never discussed in Tokyo.

After 1982, textbook descriptions on Japanese wartime belligerence and militarism generally increased. The introduction of the ‘Neighborhood Clause’ thus did have an impact on textbooks, despite reluctance within the MoE to enforce the new screening policy. Most importantly, the clause provided a basis for textbook authors, enabling them to write about Japanese atrocities from the victims’ perspectives. (Nozaki 2002: 608, Kondo 2004, Chon 2007: 253, Kondo 2001: 51)<sup>201</sup> Due to the 1982 textbook controversy, the Japanese public also became aware of the different perceptions of Japan’s past role in Asia. According to Hatano Sumio, many Japanese for the first time realized that their country had been an assailant in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Mitani 2007b: 18)

Among conservative-nationalist opinion leaders and politicians, the government’s decision to introduce the ‘Neighborhood Clause’ caused indignation, however. (Togo 2008d, Interview by A. Sakaki) In their view, Asian demands on Japan’s textbook policy had been “interferences into domestic affairs” (naisei), which Tokyo should have turned down. (Tanaka 2007: 163) Conservatives emphasized that initial media reports on the MoE’s distortion policies had been incorrect. Satoh Komei, for example, contended that the entire dispute was based on a “case of mistaken reporting” (gohō jiken). (Satoh 1987: 283) This portrayal of the incident by nationalists had a lasting effect: Even today, there is a widespread misconception among Japanese that the 1982 dispute was sparked by entirely

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<sup>201</sup> For a more critical evaluation of the changes in textbooks after 1982, see (Japan Economic Newswire 1990). The article observes that only three out of the eleven authorized high school textbooks in 1990 mention the fact that Japan forced Koreans to adopt Japanese names during colonial rule.

incorrect reporting.<sup>202</sup> Even the Japanese government's press secretary reflected this view in 2005, when he stated the 1982 textbook controversy "was based on a false report," explaining that Tokyo had added the 'Neighborhood Clause' to its screening criteria "on a separate issue." (Chiba 2005)

### *The 1986 Textbook Controversy*

Frustrated about Japan's official policy, a major right-wing organization, the Citizen's Conference to Protect Japan (Nihon o mamoru Kokumin Kaigi), announced in the fall of 1982 a plan to develop its own history textbook for high schools. In 1986, the MoE authorized the organization's textbook 'Shinpen Nihonshi' (New Edition Japanese History) for use in schools. The approval met with protests from South Korea and China, where the book was seen as biased and white-washing Japan's past. Within Japan, the book was also controversial. (Japan Economic Newswire 1986) Seeking to prevent another major textbook dispute, the Japanese government quietly decided to request further changes in 'Shinpen Nihonshi' after its official approval.<sup>203</sup> (Nozaki 2002: 610) This measure, combined with the low adoption rate of the book in schools, eased Korean and Chinese concerns.

### **1990-2001: Contrition and Conservative Countermeasures**

#### *Facing the Past: The Early 1990s*

In both Japan and South Korea, the end of the Cold War stimulated new debates about historical memory. As Seoul established itself as a mature democracy, former victims of Japanese aggression increasingly spoke out about their tragic experiences. For example, many former 'comfort women,' who were forced to work as prostitutes for the Japanese armed forces during the invasion into Asia, disclosed their grievances publicly. In Japan, the death of Showa Emperor Hirohito in January 1989 elicited debates about war responsibility. Hirohito had been emperor during World War II and had played an important psychological role in motivating the Japanese to fight for their country.

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<sup>202</sup> Volker Fuhrts calls this the "legend of a textbook dispute triggered by false reporting." (Fuhrts 2002: 131)

<sup>203</sup> These changes were made according to a provision for 'last minute corrections' in the authorization process in case some passages are clearly incorrect. Nothing can be added at this screening stage, but incorrect material can be removed.

Tokyo's stance in the 1990s was characterized by a growing willingness to confront wartime responsibility. To an unprecedented extent, the political leadership offered explicit apologies to neighboring countries for Japan's past wrongdoings. In 1993, the monopoly of the LDP was broken for the first time since 1955, and a multiparty coalition including the Socialist Party and the Buddhist party Komeito named Hosokawa Morihiro as Prime Minister. One of Hosokawa's first acts as head of government was to state publicly in August 1993 that Japan's military actions in the 1930s and 1940s amounted to "an aggressive war and a wrong war." (Buruma 1994: 297) Hosokawa's successor, Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi, also expressed remorse over Japan's imperial past. He declared that Japan "through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations." (Umezumi 2000) In his speech, which he gave 50 years after the war had ended, he used the words "remorse" and "apology", which no other prime minister had ever used to address this topic. (Wittig 2002: 42)

The willingness to deal with Japan's past was also reflected in Tokyo's textbook policies. In August 1993, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei revealed the results of a governmental investigation into the 'comfort women' issues, acknowledging there had indeed been cases of women assembled against their will and forced into prostitution. Following this announcement, references to the comfort women issue were included in all high school books approved in 1994, and in all middle school books approved in 1997. (Richter 2003: 1–2) Textbook passages describing other wartime atrocities also increased. (Togo 2008d, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Seeking to promote research on Japan's past role in Asia, Tokyo helped to launch two important initiatives in the 1990s. One project involved the establishment of a historical document center, the other focused on the promotion of academic exchanges between Japanese and South Korean historians. Neither initiative was directly concerned with the contents of history textbooks, but both constituted important elements in Japan's policy of remembrance. As Tokyo continued to reject the creation of a bilateral textbook commission with South Korea throughout the 1990s, the two projects provide key insights into the government's approach to history disputes and the divergent domestic views.

### *(1) The Founding of the Asian Historical Document Center*

The idea of establishing a historical document center was first voiced by Murayama Tomiichi, Japan's first socialist prime minister. Shortly after assuming office, Murayama announced on August 31, 1994 his 'Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative' which would commence the following year in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II. Observing that it was "an imperative for us Japanese to face up (chokushi) to our history with the peoples of neighboring Asia and elsewhere," he revealed his intention to support "historical research, including the collection and cataloging of historical documents and the assistance to researchers." In particular, his government would consider the establishment of an "Asian Historical Document Center" (Ajia Rekishi Shiryō Sentā). (Murayama 1994) A government-appointed committee of fifteen experts enthusiastically endorsed the proposal in June 1995. The committee recommended setting up a digital archives center that would enable researchers from Japan, Korea, China and other countries to search and view historical documents via the internet. Furthermore, it proposed the publication of a wide variety of materials, including records that were not accessible to the public in government libraries and reference centers thus far. (Mizuno 2005: 119)

Not everyone in Tokyo supported Murayama's proposal, however. Foot-dragging in the government continued to delay the project, as many bureaucrats and politicians avoided taking concrete steps. (Fujisawa 2003: 43) Finally in November 1999, a Cabinet decision "on promoting the project for the maintenance of Asian historical records" (Ajia rekishi shiryō seibi jigyo no suishin ni tsuite) paved the way for the establishment of the center two years later as part of the National Archives of Japan, an independent, government-funded institution. It was agreed that the center's mission was to improve accessibility of materials on the history of relations between Japan and neighboring Asian countries, thereby contributing to the "promotion of mutual understanding" (sōgo rikai no sokushin) in the region. (Ishii 2001) Contrary to the 1995 recommendation of the expert committee, the cabinet did not approve the publication of documents that were so far publicly unavailable, however. (Mizuno 2005: 119) Some observers and researchers criticized this publication policy as overly reticent. (Mizuno 2005: 119)

Despite the reduction in the project's scope and the delay, the Asian Historical Document Center now doubtlessly facilitates research about Japan's role in the region. It has made available more than 28 million historical records kept by various government organizations and agencies. (Ajia Rekishi Shiryō Sentā 2001) The digital collection

comprises documents dating from the Meiji era (1868) to the end of World War II (1945), thus covering the most contentious time period of Japan's involvement in Asia. The center's objective is to contribute to meaningful historical dialogue with such countries as South Korea or China. As Ishii Yoneo, the Director General of the Center observes:

“In recent years, debates about ‘historical perception’ (rekishi ninshiki) have frequently flared up between Japan and neighboring countries. However, in order to discuss the sharing of ‘historical perception,’ work is first needed on verifying historical facts (shijitsu o kakunin suru). This entails ascertaining what materials exist and sharing those that are found. We believe it is necessary to hold dialogue on this basis regarding the interpretation of the historical facts.”  
(Ishii 2001)

## *(2) Promotion of Cultural and Academic Exchange*

The second project involving South Korea was also triggered by Murayama's ‘Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative.’ Murayama and other politicians in his government were convinced of the necessity to promote cultural and intellectual exchanges and dialogue in order to foster mutual understanding between Japan and Korea. Katayama Yoshihiro, then at the Ministry of Home Affairs, for example sought to expand people-to-people exchanges to reduce mutual prejudices before engaging in formal discussions on delicate topics such as textbooks.<sup>204</sup> (Katayama 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) In April 1995, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs thus helped to set up the ‘Japan-Korea Joint Research Forum’ (Nikkan kyōdō kenkyū fōramu) to promote academic exchanges between researchers of both countries. The Forum was established as part of the Japan-Korea Foundation for Cultural Exchange (Nikkan bunka kōryū kikin), an independent, government-backed organization set up by Tokyo and Seoul in 1983 with the aim of increasing mutual understanding and trust.

The joint research, which took place between 1996 and 2004, generated some notable results. In total, 21 books were published in the ‘Japan-Korea Joint Research Series’ (Nikkan kyōdō kenkyū sōsho), covering the history of bilateral relations in the cultural, economic and political realms. Even though the most controversial points in Japan-South Korea relations were not covered in the research, the publications include important contributions that shed light on bilateral history disputes. (Okonogi 2008,

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<sup>204</sup> Katayama Yoshihiro became governor of Tottori in 1999. In this position, he actively promoted various cultural exchanges between his prefecture and a province in Korea. (Katayama 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Interview by A. Sakaki) For example, the book series provides a critical examination of mutual perceptions in the two countries and an analysis of the similarities and differences in historical memory. (Miyajima and Kim 2006, Miyajima and Kim 2001) These research findings are not well-known among the Japanese public, however. The book series is both extensive in length and its language and design are clearly targeted at an academic audience. Moreover, the Japanese government took no measures to promote public awareness of the project, explaining that the research was a purely academic undertaking. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

### *The Conservative Backlash*

While these two projects were under way, Murayama's efforts to demonstrate Japanese contrition on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the war in 1995 caused indignation among right-leaning politicians. As will be seen below, the right-wing backlash led to renewed efforts on the Korean side to begin joint historical research. In early August 1995, Murayama distributed to his cabinet members the keynote speech on historical perception that he planned to give on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month. The Prime Minister hoped this would encourage key politicians to exercise prudence when commenting on the war and on Japan's remorse. (Wakamiya 1999: 13) However, his hopes were dashed when on August 9, Education Minister Shimamura Yoshinobu voiced doubts about whether Japan had waged a 'war of invasion.' At a press conference Shimamura maintained that "it is a matter of perspective whether or not it was an invasion" (*Shinryaku ka shinryaku de nai ka wa kangaekata no mondai da*). (Arai and Iga Toshiya 2001: 194, Tanaka 2007: 173) Displaying his opposition to Murayama's efforts, Shimamura furthermore argued: "Two-thirds of the present population was born after the war. We are entering an age of complete innocence of that war, and it makes little sense to keep harping on the past and apologizing for one particular incident after another." (Wakamiya 1999: 13) Amid South Korean and Chinese protests over these remarks, Shimamura was forced to retract his words, while the Murayama government sought to allay neighboring concerns by clarifying the government's position regarding the gaffe. (Tanaka 2007: 174)<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Another former Minister of Education, Okuno Seisuke, caused controversy in August 1995, when he organized an event called the 'Celebration of Asian Togetherness,' which invited representatives of various Asian countries to "thank the war dead and praise Japan for its contribution to the independence of Asian countries." (Wittig 2002: 38, McCormack 1998, McCormack 2000: 56)

However, controversial remarks by Japanese decision-makers on historical issues continued to plague relations with Asian countries, undermining the meaning of concurrent official apologies. In October 1995, Hashimoto Ryutaro, Minister of International Trade and Industry, caused furor by maintaining it was a matter of subtle definition whether Japan waged wars of invasion against Asian nations in the past, given that Tokyo was fighting against the US and Britain. (Arai and Iga Toshiya 2001: 182)<sup>206</sup> A month later, Eto Takami, director general of the Management and Coordination Agency, commented that “Japan also did some good” (*yoi koto mo shita*) during its 1910-1945 occupation of Korea, including the construction of schools, railroads and ports. (Chung 2006: 40, Kawano and Matsuo 2002: 216, Feldman 1998: 52)<sup>207</sup> Even Prime Minister Murayama himself triggered a rift between Japan and South Korea when he insisted in October 1995 that the 1910 Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty was valid under the historical circumstances at the time of the signing. (Wittig 2002: 42)<sup>208</sup>

### *Reluctant Steps towards Joint Talks on History*

In response to the series of controversial remarks and verbal missteps, South Korean Foreign Minister Gong Ro-Myeong in November 1995 voiced the idea of Tokyo and Seoul supporting joint research between both countries’ historians in order to narrow the gaps in historical understanding. Gong stated that “[Seoul] would like to promote research on Japanese-Korean historical perceptions, based on a calm attitude without prejudices.” (Chung 2006: 40) While Gong refrained from touching upon the issue of education and textbooks directly, he insisted, “It is desirable for the results [of this research] to be reflected in government [policy].” (Chung 2006: 40) Japanese Foreign Minister Kono Yohei consented to the Korean proposal, and the two countries affirmed their intention for establishing ‘joint research’ during the following summit meeting.

The creation of the joint panel was delayed however due to diverging opinions of Tokyo and Seoul about the content of research. (Yomiuri Shinbun 1997) Seoul clarified

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<sup>206</sup> Hashimoto also said he felt sorry for the people in the Asia-Pacific region, where Japan fought the war. South Korea and China protested the remarks, but were later satisfied with an explanation by the government regarding the matter. (Kawano and Matsuo 2002: 215)

<sup>207</sup> Subsequently, Eto was forced to step down from his position.

<sup>208</sup> Murayama’s statement reflects the official stance held by the Japanese government. The Korean government objects this view, claiming that the 1910 Treaty was concluded under the coercion of Japanese military power and therefore was illegal. In Seoul, Murayama’s statement was thus seen as an attempt to conceal, play down or justify the actions Tokyo committed while it ruled Korea. (Kawasaki 1996)

that it sought to institute historical research based on a semi-official commission with the potential to produce binding recommendations for the two governments, with implications for history teaching and textbooks. (Korea Times 2000b) The objective of Korean politicians was to avert further bilateral disputes caused by politicians' verbal missteps or distorted textbooks in Japan. Officials in Tokyo, on the other hand, insisted that the panel be purely private. According to media reports, the Japanese government feared "frictions [would] arise about both governments' official stance regarding past treaties" in case of government-backed talks. (Chung 2006: 44) Tokyo's main objective was to improve the quality of Japanese research on Korea through joint work.

After prolonged debates between Japan and Korea, the panel was inaugurated in July 1997 as a private body and called the "Japan-Korea Joint Committee for the Promotion of Historical Research" (Nikkan rekishi kenkyū sokushin ni kan suru kyōdō iinkai). At Tokyo's insistence, the two governments agreed that the commission would "neither conduct joint research on history nor strive towards a common historical perception of the two countries." (Chung 2006: 45) Rather, the purpose was to examine possibilities for joint history research and make recommendations to the two governments accordingly. Many observers accused Tokyo of "buying time" with this arrangement, as the government continued to skirt controversial discussions on historical perceptions with South Korea. (Kondo 2001: 50) The three Japanese and three Korean members of the joint panel, both picked by their respective governments, met several times between 1997 and 1999. In their final report published in May 2000, the researchers urged the two governments to begin joint research and cooperation on the development of history teaching materials in order to promote mutual understanding. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Many observers criticized this result, arguing that the need for joint research with Korea had been known since the 1982 textbook controversy. (Kondo 2001: 50)

However, the Japanese government let the opportunity slip to translate the panel's proposal into action. Japan-South Korea relations had improved significantly under the leadership of South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, and Japanese policymakers – filled with optimism about this development – did not perceive a necessity to initiate textbook talks. To the contrary, they believed the issue of history could be put aside, because a bilateral declaration in October 1998 had stated that both countries would seek to "overcome their unfortunate history and to build a future-oriented relationship." (Togo 2005: 460) Policymakers interpreted this as a pledge by Koreans not to dwell on history

issues anymore, and thus failed to take an initiative regarding teaching materials as proposed by the joint committee in 2000. (Togo 2008d, Interview by A. Sakaki)<sup>209</sup>

In 1997, Japan had already turned down another offer by South Korea for government-led textbook talks. In March 1997, a few months before the final ruling in the Ienaga trial, the head of the Korean UNESCO commission Kwon Tae-Jun suggested the establishment of a joint panel for reviewing history school textbooks. After consultations with Tokyo's Ministry of Education, the Japanese UNESCO panel sent a letter of refusal in May. Ministry officials in charge of textbook authorization explained that studies of this kind "should be conducted by non-governmental researchers" and do "not suit government involvement." (Mainichi Shinbun 1997) They also contended they could not enforce the recommendations that might emerge from such talks, because the Japanese textbook screening system only permitted officials to make factual corrections. (Kondo 2001: 50) The Korean UNESCO commission held one symposium alone, but since Tokyo staunchly opposed participation in the talks, the project was abandoned. (Sakai 2002: 5)

### *The Japanese Right Seeks Influence on History Education*

While the Japanese government thus repeatedly declined proposals for government-backed talks on history and textbooks in the 1990s, right-wing opinion leaders in Tokyo nevertheless voiced frustration about official apologies and apparent 'concessions' to neighboring countries. They were particularly dismayed about the changes in history textbooks since 1982. When the Japanese MoE announced in June 1996 that all history textbooks for middle schools would contain references to 'military comfort women,' various right-wing groups protested and formed associations to resist the government's decision. The most influential of these groups, the 'Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform' (Atarashii rekishi kyōkasho o tsukurukai; abbreviated Tsukurukai) was established in December 1996. It criticizes the "self-tormenting historical perspective," in history books, asserting that Japanese citizens can "no longer take pride in being Japanese" as a result. (Nakamura 1998, Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform 1998: 32) The group demanded a more positive view of Japanese history in textbooks, one that would foster

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<sup>209</sup> According to media reports, Japan refused to discuss history textbooks with Korea a few months before the final report's publication. In March 2000, Education Minister Nakasone Hirofumi visited Seoul to become the first Japanese education minister to visit South Korea since the end of World War II. The thorny issue of history textbooks was dropped from the agenda, however – reportedly at Nakasone's request. In Korea, the talks were criticized as meaningless, since this core issue was left untouched. (Korea Times 2000a)

national pride among the younger generations of Japanese. In criticizing the changes in history education, Nishio Kanji, one of the organizers of the society, argued that Japan's introduction of the Neighborhood Clause in 1982 marked the start of the "diplomacy of apology" of a "diplomatically inept Japan." (Yoshimasa 1997: 36)<sup>210</sup>

Conservative politicians also voiced disapproval regarding the government's policy and undertook efforts to reverse the liberal trend in education policy. A group of over 100 LDP lawmakers lent behind-the-scenes support and financial backing to the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform. Among them were key decision-makers such as Abe Shinzo, Nakagawa Shoichi and Furuya Keiji. (McNeill 2005) Furthermore, a number of politicians openly criticized changes in textbooks. On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1998, Minister of Education Machimura Nobutaka stated before the Diet:

"[...] when I read several books, I felt there were some points on which there was a lack of overall balance. Especially looking at the Japanese history since the Meiji Era, [...] I personally had the impression that there were many history textbooks that [...] write too much about the negative aspects. Regarding this point, isn't it possible to maintain a bit more balance during textbook screening or during the phase before, the writing phase [...]? Isn't there some more room to improve the authorization stage? These issues are being discussed at the moment in the council regarding textbook authorization." (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan June 8, 1998)

On July 31, 1998, the newly appointed Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Nakagawa Shoichi, complained about descriptions in Japanese history textbooks that described the comfort women issue. He maintained it was not certain that the women were forced to work as prostitutes for Japanese soldiers, and therefore school textbooks should not treat this subject. (Arai and Iga Toshiya 2001: 184) The statement contradicted the government's official stance that there had been cases of forced prostitution (the 1993 Kono statement) and sparked strong protests from South Korea. Faced with domestic and international pressure, Nakagawa was forced to retract his words at a press conference on the same day. (Yomiuri Shinbun 1998)

Nevertheless, efforts continued among conservative politicians to reestablish a more 'positive' view on Japanese modern history in textbooks. In January 1999, the Ministry of

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<sup>210</sup> Togo Kazuhiko observes that three issues incited indignation among right-wing leaders in the 1980s: (1) the neighborhood clause in 1982, (2) Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro's announcement not to visit the controversial Yasukuni Shrine honoring Japan's war dead again after 1985, (3) Nakasone's decision to dismiss his Minister of Education Fujio Masayuki in 1986 after it was revealed that Fujio planned to publish an article in the journal *Bungei Shunjū* stating that "Korea bears some responsibility" (Arai and Iga Toshiya 2001: 179) for the annexation by Japan. These three 'concessions' were harshly criticized by the right-wing. In the 1990s, Tokyo's apologies to neighboring countries and changes in textbook contents thus further intensified frustrations among right-wing leaders. (Togo 2008d, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Education approached publishers with an unofficial appeal, asking them to “take more balance” in history textbooks for middle schools. (Arai and Iga Toshiya 2001: 184, Nozaki 2002: 616) Reportedly, the Prime Minister’s Cabinet Secretariat further increased pressure at the end of the year, placing a phone call to all publishers, asking them to be careful regarding descriptions on the comfort women issue. (Chung 2006: 77) The Ministry’s informal requests seems to have been effective, as middle school textbooks passed in the 2001 screening process had markedly decreased passages treating Japanese war atrocities and the comfort women issue in particular. While all seven middle school textbooks authorized in 1997 had made references to forced wartime prostitution, three of the seven editions in 2001 had removed all such references. (Nozaki 2002: 616) Furthermore, books made fewer mentions of the Korean resistance to Japanese colonial rule or the medical experiments on prisoners of war conducted by the infamous Unit 731. (Chon 2007: 253)

### **2001-2010: Talks on History and Textbooks amid Growing Tensions**

#### *The 2001 Textbook Controversy*

Tokyo’s stance regarding government-backed talks changed gradually amid a fierce dispute about Japanese history textbooks that erupted following the announcement of the textbook screening results on April 3, 2001. The authorized middle school books included one issued by the controversial Society for History Textbook Reform. The Korean side reacted with outrage, arguing that the book embellished Japan’s past. Seoul criticized the textbook for stressing the inferiority of Koreans, for avoiding mention of the comfort women issue, and for glorifying Japan’s imperial expansion as a rightful struggle against the Western imperialists in the name of the Asian nations. (Lee 2001) The Korean government briefly summoned its ambassador home from Japan and temporarily canceled military exchanges and drills with Japan. Furthermore, Seoul asked Tokyo to revise 35 items in textbook descriptions. (Lee 2002: 15)

The government under Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro rejected Korean demands for textbook revisions. Officials explained that there were “no factual mistakes” in the narratives on modern history and that the MoE had screened all approved textbooks with full consideration of the Neighborhood Clause so as to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation in the region. (Arai and Iga Toshiya 2001: 187; Machimura 2001) The government furthermore declared that it would not meddle with the process of textbook

authorization for diplomatic reasons, citing the constitutional right on the freedom of expression. As Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka explained, “the judgment whether a historical perception of an author is right or wrong would violate the Constitution’s provision protecting the freedom of thought and conscience,” and therefore Japan does not conduct its textbook authorization “from the standpoint of deciding on a particular historical perception.” (Machimura 2001)

The Japanese government’s argument reflected fundamental inconsistencies, however. Firstly, Tokyo suggested that it could not be held responsible for how individual authors chose to contextualize and interpret historical facts. However, given the MoE’s involvement in screening and selecting textbooks, the Japanese state inevitably shares responsibility for the contents of authorized books. Secondly, Tokyo’s insistence that it could not make corrections to historical perceptions and interpretations is questionable. Numerous cases including the Ienaga Saburo’s lawsuit and the 1999 appeal to publishers for ‘more balance’ in narratives reveal the MoE’s influence on textbook depictions beyond the correction of factual errors. The 1982 Neighborhood Clause is perhaps the most patent demonstration of the inconsistency in Japan’s stance. The pledge to take into account the feelings of its neighbors in the authorization process of textbooks suggests Tokyo’s willingness to consider the presentation and contextualization of facts. Since Tokyo had evidently failed to meet the expectations of regional countries in 2001 with the enormous outcry from South Korea and China, Kondo Takahiro went as far as to declare the Neighborhood Clause “de facto meaningless.” (Kondo 2004)

After the Japanese government rejected demands for textbook revisions, Koreans shifted their attention to the adoption rate of the controversial textbook in schools. The Society for History Textbook Reform had set a target adoption rate of 10%. However, in the summer of 2001, it became clear that only about 0.04% of junior high schools had opted for the textbook, causing the issue to lose some of its significance in bilateral relations (Fuhrt 2005: 53)<sup>211</sup> Koreans nevertheless remained suspicious of the Japanese government’s stance and intentions, especially given bilateral tensions over Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro’s announcement that during his term he planned to visit the infamous Yasukuni Shrine every year on August 15, the day of Japan’s surrender in World War II.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> The market share of 0.04% corresponds to about 520-570 copies sold to schools. (Nozaki 2002: 619)

<sup>212</sup> Koizumi did visit Yasukuni Shrine every year during his term from 2001 to 2006. However, his first five visits did not take place on August 15, because of strong international protests.

*Koizumi's Unexpected Proposal for Joint Talks on History*

In October 2001, Tokyo's attitude towards government-backed joint talks on controversial historical issues changed unexpectedly. On October 15<sup>th</sup>, Prime Minister Koizumi paid a visit to Seoul – his first since coming into office in April – in an attempt to heal the rift in bilateral relations caused by the disputes about the Tsukurukai textbook and Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine. In his meeting with Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, Koizumi proposed the creation of a joint research committee on bilateral history. (Chung 2001: 115) Although Koizumi's idea did not involve talks on textbooks specifically, the initiative was clearly linked, given the recent disputes about historical perceptions. After Tokyo decade-long rejection of government-backed talks, it came as a surprise that a nationalistic leader like Koizumi would suddenly advocate such an endeavor.

At least three factors seem to have driven the decision for reversing the government's stance. Firstly, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the US, Tokyo and Seoul were anxious about increasing regional tensions surrounding North Korea, and they felt the need for better mutual cooperation. Secondly, leaders in both countries knew that improved bilateral relations were a key requisite to ensure a successful joint hosting of the Soccer World Cup in 2002. Thirdly, the Japanese government apparently recognized the dispute over historical perceptions had grown more serious than ever, seeing the need to respond diplomatically. (Kondo 2008b) Former members of the Japan-Korea Joint Committee for the Promotion of Historical Research openly criticized the government's passive and reactionary stance, arguing that the 2001 dispute could have been avoided if Tokyo had translated the committee's 2000 proposal for joint research into action. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki, Yomiuri Shinbun 2001)<sup>213</sup>

Japan and Korea established a joint committee, called the Japan-Korea Committee for Joint History Research (Nikkan rekishi kyōdō kenkyū iinkai), which met between May 2002 and March 2005. In setting up the bilateral commission of historians, the Japanese and South Korean governments chose the Japan-Korea Cultural Foundation (Nikkan bunka kōryū kikin) as the institutional framework providing the necessary organizational support. The Foundation is an autonomous institution focused on the promotion of cultural and academic exchanges between the two countries. As both Tokyo and Seoul supply funds to the Foundation in order to finance the bilateral textbook talks, the institution may be

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<sup>213</sup> One Japanese former member openly criticized Tokyo's failure to carry out the proposal, saying: "Their motto seems to be 'once on shore, we pray no more'," implying that the government is quick to forget about past crises once they have passed. (Yomiuri Shinbun 2001)

classified as a parapublic institution, as defined above. The selection of Japanese committee members was led by Tokyo University Professors Mitani Taichiro and Kitaoka Shinichi and Keio University Professor Okonogi Masao, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Mitani, who became the Japanese side's chair of the joint committee, emphasized the need to establish a scholarly arena not directly influenced by the government. He sought to include scholars with expertise in Japanese-Korean history from across the political spectrum. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

From the start of the joint project, Tokyo and Seoul disagreed about whether the expected research results would have an impact on the content of textbooks in the two countries. Korean Foreign Minister Han Seung-Su maintained “the research results should be reflected in textbook narratives.” (Chosun Ilbo 2002) Similarly, the President of the Korean National Party (Hannara Party) Lee Hoi-Chang warned that the link to textbooks was essential, since the commission would otherwise be no more than an “escape route” (*nigemichi*) used to deflect attention away from the real problem. (Chung and Kimura 2008b: 126) The Japanese side rejected Korean demands, but promised to “take measures to make widely known (*shūchi tettei*) those research results that can be used in the compilation of textbooks.” (Chung and Kimura 2008b: 126) Prime Minister Koizumi even went as far as to state that Japan would “use or mention” (*katsuyō, heiki*) the results in textbooks. (Kim 2002) As before, Tokyo explained its restrained stance by the need to protect the freedom of expression. Officials maintained they could “not force the research results onto publishers in the screening system” but stated it was “desirable for the results to spread as common Japanese-Korean perception and for textbooks to reflect [results] eventually.” (Chung 2006: 84) Seoul responded with disappointment, arguing Japan's response amounted to “no more than a postponement of the problem.” (Chung and Kimura 2008b: 126)

### *Complications in Joint Work*

Both Japanese and Korean members of the 2002-2005 Japan-Korea Committee for Joint History Research expressed strong frustration about political and public pressure complicating the cooperative work. One participant explained he and his colleagues felt compelled to act as “national representatives” (*kuni no daihyōsha*), charged with defending the national interest. (Member of the Japan-Korea Joint Research Commission on History 2007, Interview by A. Sakaki) Another Japanese researcher similarly described his

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impression of the committee: “The atmosphere was very formal and ceremonious, because both sides were carrying the weight of their governments on their shoulders.” (Asahi Shinbun 2007c)<sup>214</sup> Several factors seemed to have contributed to such perceptions about a lack of academic freedom. Firstly, disputes over the Japanese government’s historical perception continued to trouble relations. Koizumi’s stubborn insistence on paying annual visits to Yasukuni Shrine infuriated Korean policymakers and raised doubts about Tokyo’s willingness to listen to Korean concerns. Controversial remarks by cabinet members heightened Korean apprehension. For example, in November 2004, then Education Minister Nakayama Nariaki stated that he thought it was “good that such terms as sex slaves of the Japanese Imperial Army and forced Asian labor [are] less frequently mentioned in [recently authorized] school history books.” (Asahi Shinbun 2005a) Among Koreans, such statements generated doubts about Tokyo’s support for the joint project. Complaints about budget shortages on the Japanese side of the project reinforced suspicions about a lack of political backing. (Kuroda 2006: 99)<sup>215</sup>

Secondly, the choice of participants in the talks did not reflect a clear separation of academics and politics, because some researchers were concurrently involved in government activities. This problem existed among both Japanese and Korean committee members. On the Japanese side, Kitaoka Shinichi and Okonogi Masao previously served in various advisory positions for the government and thus had close ties to the political establishment. Kitaoka was furthermore appointed Japan’s ambassador and deputy permanent representative to the United Nations in 2004. On the Korean side, Yi Mun-Yol and Kang Chang-Il embarked on political careers, the latter resigning his post in the committee mid-way through the talks. (Chung 2006: 129) In Japan and Korea, researchers’ involvement in government activities was criticized as causing “ambiguity” and jeopardizing the neutrality of the joint committee. (Chung 2006: 52, Kuroda 2006: 99)

Thirdly, there seems to be considerable opposition to joint history talks with South Korea in the Japanese public. Kimura Kan, a first and second round participant, observed that approximately 85% of emails he received from Japanese citizens expressed disapproval with his work, making it difficult for him and his colleagues to sustain motivation. (Kimura 2007) This strong opposition is at least partially rooted in common misunderstandings

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<sup>214</sup> See also: Chung 2008 and Chung and Kimura 2008b: 131. Chung Nami and Kimura Kan conducted a comprehensive, anonymous opinion survey with both Korean and Japanese members of the 2002-2005 talks. Their study also finds that participants felt like “national teams” that “represented” or “carried the weight” of the state. (Chung and Kimura 2008b: 131)

<sup>215</sup> Reportedly, no such complaints were voiced by Korean participants. (Kuroda 2006: 99)

about the goals of such research projects, often reflected in Japanese publications and media reports. For example, the respected journal *Nihon no Ronten* published an article in 2006 arguing that it was impossible to achieve a shared historical interpretation through joint talks. According to the author, the German-Polish project reached agreements only on historical facts, leaving the interpretation of these facts up to each country. The article described the German-Polish recommendations as little more than a “data-book of historical facts” – demonstrating the author’s lack of knowledge about the joint endeavor. (Matsumoto 2006: 257) Even Kitaoka Shinichi, participant in Japanese-South Korean project, seems to harbor similar doubts about the possibility of reaching a shared understanding about disputed historical issues. In his 2007 book, he insists:

“Historical perception is different according to each individual. [...] It is impossible to force the development of a common perception. However, it is possible to confirm the facts that should be shared. [...] Even if it is impossible to create a common textbook, it may be possible to develop a reference book.” (Kitaoka 2007: 224)

The widespread public skepticism about joint textbook talks appears to have further complicated the commission’s work.

### *The Joint Report of 2005*

In June 2005, the Japan-Korea Committee for Joint History Research finished its work with the publication of a report comprising more than 1,000 pages, covering bilateral history from ancient times to the modern era. In different chapters, committee members from each side present their viewpoints on particular historical events and contents. (Nikkan Rekishi Kyōdō Kenkyū Iinkai 2005) Thus, rather than furnishing a common interpretation of the past, the report presents the diverging viewpoints. In Japan, opinions were divided on whether the report was a success or failure. Critics argued it had achieved little more than making explicit the differences in historical perceptions between the two countries. (Kang 2006: 254) On the other hand, committee member Okonogi Masao defended the report, maintaining the project’s goal had been precisely to determine where divergences existed. He furthermore pointed out the report was accepted by conservative opinion leaders who had feared Japan would give in to Korean demands too easily, arguing this was an encouraging sign. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

While the joint committee was undoubtedly successful in helping academics familiarize themselves with each other's viewpoints, the effect on the broader public was minimal. The committee's report is not well known in Japan, and it has received only limited publicity. Although it is accessible on the internet, the report is not available for purchase in bookstores, which means anyone interested has to print the lengthy document. (Chung 2008) Furthermore, average citizens and even history teachers will find it difficult to read the report, given its large volume and technical content. (Kondo 2008b)

### *The 2005 Textbook Controversy*

Just as the joint committee published its final report in June 2005, criticism regarding Japanese textbooks and historical consciousness resurfaced in Korea. In April 2005, the MoE announced that the second edition of the controversial middle school textbook by the Society for History Textbook Reform had cleared the MoE's screening. South Korean politicians protested Tokyo's decision, criticizing the book for distorting Japan's colonial past and whitewashing wartime atrocities. Furthermore, Seoul's leaders voiced irritation about the fact that descriptions on the comfort women issue had disappeared in all eight authorized textbooks. (Richter 2005: 97)

In line with previous policies, Japan responded to criticism from Korea and elsewhere by emphasizing that its textbook screening system was designed to limit government input and protect the freedom of expression. Assistant Press Secretary Chiba Akira insisted the "authorized textbooks do not represent the official history or perception by the Japanese Government." The government's resolve not to evaluate historical perceptions, "serves as proof that freedom of speech and freedom of thought prevail in Japan," Chiba argued. (Chiba 2005) Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi urged South Korea not to let already strained bilateral relations deteriorate further. He acknowledged the existence of "a gap between the Japanese and South Korean positions," but maintained that "any country could face criticism" and that it was "important to control emotions." (Kyodo News 2005)

South Korean lawmakers were not easily mollified by such reactions, however. Two recent controversies had heightened Korean concern about Japanese historical perceptions. Following an approval by Shimane's Prefectural Government in March 2006 of an

ordinance bill to designate February 22 as ‘Takeshima Day,’<sup>216</sup> tensions rose over the South Korean-controlled island of Takeshima, claimed by both countries. Another bilateral row was stirred by a statement by Shimomura Hakubun, a parliamentary secretary in the MoE and a Lower House parliamentarian.<sup>217</sup> In early March 2005, Shimomura strongly criticized the 1982 Neighborhood Clause, contending that “ever since this provision was created, schools have become more Marxist-Leninist in leaning” and there is a tendency to “teach a masochistic view of Japanese history.” He furthermore observed with satisfaction that recently authorized textbooks mentioned the comfort women issue less frequently. (Asahi Shinbun 2005a) These disputes combined to send Japan-Korea relations to a new low.

### *The Establishment of Joint Talks on History Textbooks*

Amid serious diplomatic tensions, Prime Minister Koizumi on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005 went to Seoul in an attempt to mend relations. While Koizumi and South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun were unable to heal the bilateral rift over history-related disputes completely, the two leaders agreed to establish a second panel of researchers to continue the work of the Japan-Korea Committee for Joint History Research. This time, Prime Minister Koizumi agreed that a sub-committee would cover the issue of history textbooks. (Chon 2007: 260) It was the first time that Japan showed itself willing to establish a government-backed joint committee to deal with textbooks. However, there was disagreement among Japanese policymakers on the question whether the results of the second round of bilateral talks should be considered in textbook screenings in the future. Some officials especially from the MoE argued that Japan would not and could not consider any recommendations in textbooks, given the need to respect the freedom of thought. (Mainichi Shinbun 2005) Other politicians stated the results should be taken into account. (Kyodo News 2007)

Participants in the bilateral talks remain skeptical about the likelihood that changes will be made in Japanese textbooks, citing the reluctance of MoE officials and conservative politicians. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) A researcher at the Ministry of Defense affiliated National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS) explained that many Japanese lawmakers are pessimistic that the ‘history disputes’ can ever be settled. Political elites believe the issue can merely be “managed” with pragmatism and the growing

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<sup>216</sup> 2005 was the hundredth anniversary of a Japanese announcement of jurisdiction over the island on February 22, 1905.

<sup>217</sup> The post of parliamentary secretary (daijin seimukan) is the third highest rank in the ministerial hierarchy for politicians after the minister and senior vice minister. (Asahi Shinbun 2005a)

maturity of relations. According to the researcher, many Japanese lawmakers see the second round of joint talks with Korea as a “device to manage the issue,” allowing both sides to vent their anger and calm down, while “agreeing to disagree.” (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008b, Interview by A. Sakaki)

After the Koizumi-Roh summit, debates about the selection of Japanese participants for the second round ensued, delaying the start of the project. Many first round participants feared that this project would be even more politicized than the previous, given the plan to treat textbook issues. A number of academics and researchers thus refused to participate in the second round of talks. (Member of the Japan-Korea Joint Research Commission on History 2007, Interview by A. Sakaki) Conservative politicians indeed sought to affect the choice of participants to ensure the Japanese side would not offer major ‘concessions’ to the Korean side. The right-leaning Prime Minister Abe Shinzo and his cabinet exercised strong influence, resulting in a commission whose members were significantly more nationalistic in their viewpoints. (Member of the Japan-Korea Joint Research Commission on History 2007, Interview by A. Sakaki) One participant argued that the Abe administration was mainly interested in “assertive diplomacy” (*shuchō gaikō*) with Japan insisting on its own viewpoint, rather than a true exchange of opinions to reach mutual understanding. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Participants and observers were thus skeptical whether the second round of talks could be concluded successfully.<sup>218</sup> One of the Japanese first round participants in March 2008 predicted the project would be abandoned quietly to save face in both Tokyo and Seoul. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki)

### *Controversies in Education*

While the second round of talks was in progress, three issues triggered new debates about the Japanese government’s historical consciousness and educational policies: (1) the revised Basic Law on Education of December 2006, (2) the treatment of Okinawa’s history in textbooks authorized in March 2007, and (3) the new Teaching Guidelines for social studies in 2008.

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<sup>218</sup> A Korean participant of the second round talks, Chung Jae-Jong confirmed that the political pressure on committee members was significantly higher than before. (Chung 2008)

(1) *The 2006 Basic Law on Education*

In December 2006, Tokyo passed a revised version of the country's Basic Law on Education (*Kyōiku kihonhō*), after seven years of protracted deliberations. (Sakata 2007: 7) The revision marked the first change of the law since it came into effect in 1947. The new law, used as a basis for the MoE's textbook screenings, includes a controversial passage requiring schools to instill national pride in students. It calls for an education that "fosters an attitude in which tradition and culture are respected, and in which our country and our homeland [...] is loved [...]" (*dentō to bunka o sonchō shi, sorera o hagukundekita waga kuni to kyōdo o ai suru [...] taido o yashinau koto*). (Sakata 2007: 93) The encouragement of patriotism among students was not entirely new in Japanese education policy. The Ministry of Education had already added the goal of "deepening [students'] love for our country's history" (*waga kuni no rekishi ni tai suru aijō o fukume*) in its Teaching Guidelines (*Gakushū shidō yōryō*) for Middle Schools in 1999. (Monbusho 1999: 14)<sup>219</sup> These Guidelines, which are revised every few years, are also considered in the screening process by the MoE. (Sato 1987: 40–41)

Nevertheless, the change in the Basic Law on Education was noteworthy, because in Japan this legislation is attributed great significance as a "dogmatic law" (*baiburuteki hōritsu*) that has "quasi-constitutional character" (*jun-kenpōteki seikaku*). (Sakata 2007: 10) Critics attacked the revised law as reminiscent of the wartime Japanese education system, in which children were instructed to sacrifice themselves for the emperor and nation. The introduction of the new law heightened concern domestically and internationally that Japanese textbooks might increasingly play down Japanese atrocities in their pursuit of patriotism. In particular, critics questioned the government's intentions in view of the frequent controversial statements by Japanese politicians, including a recent comment by MoE official Shimomura criticizing the "masochistic view of Japanese history" taught in many schools. (Asahi Shinbun 2005a)<sup>220</sup> Concerns about the law being applied to whitewash Japanese wartime atrocities were fueled by far-right opinion leaders. Fujioka Nobukatsu of the Japanese Society for Textbook Reform for example expressed his delight about the law, arguing that it "filled a gap" in the original law by cultivating "love in Japan

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<sup>219</sup> I would like to thank Professor Klaus Vollmer for bringing this point to my attention.

<sup>220</sup> Suspicion also grew amid a verbal misstep of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo in March 2007. Shinzo caused a furor in the region and the US when he said there was no evidence that the Japanese military had coerced women into sex slavery in World War II - contradicting the 1993 Kono statement. Abe later offered an apology to the former comfort women, arguing that his real intentions and remarks had not been conveyed accurately by the media. (Asahi Shinbun 2007a)

and one's hometown as the goal of education.” (Lebowitz and McNeill 2007) In Korea, opinions regarding Japan's revised law were divided. Some opinion leaders saw the law as fundamentally unproblematic, while others argued the reference to patriotism was another worrying sign of Japanese revisionism. (Researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies 2008b, Interview by A. Sakaki)<sup>221</sup>

## (2) *Screening Decision on the Description of the Battle of Okinawa*

A second issue casting doubts about the government's role in educational policies concerned the treatment of Okinawa's wartime history in high school books authorized in March 2007. Public outrage ensued when it was revealed the MoE had ordered publishers to tone down descriptions on the military's involvement in mass suicides by Okinawans during the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. The MoE explained there was no evidence to confirm direct orders from the military, and it had therefore asked publishers to modify passages stating citizens were forced to commit suicide. (Aniya 2008) The announcement triggered a wave of protest in Okinawa, with mass demonstrations in Ginowan City in September 2007. The island's citizens asked the MoE to retract its screening decision, criticizing its stance as untenable. References to military coercion had been approved in previous textbooks and there had been no change in academic understanding of the issue justifying the change in screening policies, they argued. (Okinawa Times 2008)

The 2007 Okinawa dispute was the first time the government's textbook authorization policies were questioned in a domestic context by citizens, who could not be dismissed as left-wing idealists willing to give in to unreasonable demands from neighboring countries.<sup>222</sup> The protests from Okinawan residents drew widespread sympathy domestically, with well-known public figures such as Nobel Prize winner Oe Kenzaburo declaring their backing. The question of handling the issue was highly controversial, however. In an editorial, the centrist newspaper *Yomiuri Shinbun* warned that a retraction of the screening decisions would set a “precedent for overturning government screening results by political intervention (seiji kainyū).” The paper argued Tokyo would be put in a bind if the Chinese government and others similarly sought textbook changes through

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<sup>221</sup> In this context, it is notable that individual state constitutions in Germany mention similar educational goals as the new Japanese law. For example, the Constitution of Northrhine-Westphalia calls on educators to bring up students “in love to the people (Volk) and their homeland.” (Article 7, section 2) (Nordrhein-Westfalen 1950)

<sup>222</sup> In 1982, descriptions regarding military atrocities in Okinawa were reportedly also toned down, but this did not lead to the kind of mass demonstrations seen in 2007. Moreover, the 1982 textbook controversy was dominated by protests from South Korea and China. (Nozaki 2002: 606)

protests. (Yomiuri Shinbun 2007) Similarly, the right-leaning *Sankei Shinbun* cautioned Japan would “be forced to respond” to Chinese or Korean demands regarding descriptions or the Nanjing Massacre of the comfort women issue if it reacted to Okinawan protests. (Sankei Shinbun 2007)

Fukuda Yasuo, who succeeded the nationalist Abe Shinzo as prime minister in late September 2007, sought a quick and pragmatic solution to the dispute. While Fukuda and his cabinet needed to respond to public pressure, they wanted to avoid discrediting the government’s screening policies by reinstating previous descriptions. Tokai Kisaburo, Minister of Education, announced in October that publishers could apply for modifications in textbook descriptions, which would be referred to the Textbook Authorization and Research Council. (Japan Times 2007) In December, the government revealed its decision to permit textbook descriptions about the military’s ‘involvement’ in mass suicides. (Japan Focus 2008) The MoE stopped short, however, of allowing publishers to put back original references to the military ‘coercing or ‘forcing’ Okinawans into suicide, reiterating that no supporting documents had been found.<sup>223</sup> Tokyo emphasized the changes were based solely on applications from textbook publishers, contending they did not represent a retraction of the original screening decision. At the same time, the government rejected an appeal by Okinawan lawmaker Kina Shokichi to insert a special clause in textbook authorization guidelines that would give “special consideration” to passages about the Battle of Okinawa – similar to the 1982 Neighborhood Clause. (Ito 2009) While the government’s policies were not fully satisfactory to everyone, they did succeed in calming protesters. The implications for potential future Japan-Korea disputes about history textbooks are difficult to gauge. Tokyo’s posture regarding domestic criticism did not reflect a fundamental change in thinking about screening practices. On the other hand, Okinawan accusations against the MoE’s attempts to embellish Japan’s past in textbooks may have made the Japanese public more susceptible to criticism from Korea or China. Moreover, the MoE is faced with growing pressure to improve transparency regarding its screening methods.

### (3) *The New Teaching Guidelines for Social Studies: Claiming Takeshima*

The third issue triggering discussions about Japan’s educational policies concerned the 2008 revision for Teaching Guidelines (*Gakushū shidō yōryō*) for social studies in

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<sup>223</sup> For a good comparison of the textbook modifications made in the course of the dispute, see Okinawa Times 2008.

middle schools. In May 2008, the Japanese Ministry of Education revealed a plan to state clearly that the Seoul-controlled islet of Takeshima (Tokdo in Korean) is an “integral part of our country” (*waga kuni koyū no ryōdo*) in the guidelines for use from fiscal year 2012. (Yomiuri Shinbun 2008a) Proponents of this change argued that although the current guidelines urged publishers and teachers to “pay attention to issues involving our nation’s territories”, especially the Northern Territories dispute with Russia, few textbooks mentioned Takeshima. (Japan Times 2008b) Three years earlier, then Education Minister Nakayama Nariaki had criticized this condition and proposed to include Takeshima in the new guidelines. During a Diet meeting in March 2005, Nakayama argued the new guidelines should “clearly refer to our claim” on Takeshima. (Japan Times 2005)

The announcement of the MoE’s plan in May 2008 sparked outrage in Seoul, where the island is claimed as part of Korean territory. President Lee Myung-Bak urged Japan not to follow through with its plan, warning it would dampen future-oriented bilateral relations. (Mainichi Shinbun 2008) In Japan, opinions were split on how to react to Korean criticism. One MoE official rejected a change in plan, stating: “The content [of the revised guidelines] will not be altered after being told to do so by foreign countries.” (Fukada 2008) Other politicians, however, were more cautious, explaining they might give up on the plan, if it jeopardized improving relations with Seoul. Chief Cabinet Secretary Machimura Nobutaka emphasized his government had not made a final decision on how to describe the territorial issue in the supplement. (Japan Times 2008b)

After prolonged discussions and considerations about various proposals on the guideline’s wording, the government announced its final version of the manual. Japan decided to show diplomatic consideration to South Korea by calling on educators to bring up the disagreement between the two countries over Takeshima. In particular, the guidelines recommend “touch[ing] upon the differences (*sōi*) in claims between our country and Korea regarding Takeshima,” asserting it was “necessary to deepen [students’] understanding about our country’s territory as [in the case] of the Northern Territories.” (Mainichi Shinbun 2008) This wording, which suggests the Takeshima issue will be treated from both countries’ perspectives, was a small, but encouraging sign in the ongoing history textbook dispute between Japan and South Korea.

Given this apparently conciliatory attitude, South Korea was all the more taken aback by Japan’s announcement in March 2010 of its elementary school textbook screenings. All five social studies texts authorized for use in 2011 clearly identify

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Takeshima as Japanese territory, compared to only three books that did so previously. (Brown 2010) Reportedly, the Ministry of Education had demanded publishers to draw a national border line between South Korea and the islets. (Kang and Lee 2010b: 113) Political leaders in Seoul strongly protested the decision, voicing disappointment over Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio's government. Hatoyama as well as other DPJ members had previously raised hopes in Korea and other Asian countries by emphasizing their resolve to face history squarely and give more priority to regional relations.<sup>224</sup> On April 2, 2010, the Korean National Assembly approved a resolution condemning Japan's territorial claim and demanding the government to withdraw its authorization of the elementary school textbooks. (Kang and Lee 2010a: 130) Furthermore, on June 28, Korean Education Minister Ahn Byong-Man announced South Korea's intention to increase the amount and depth of references to Takeshima in its school textbooks to counter Japan's repeated territorial claim. (Japan Times 2010)

### *The Weakening of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform*

Developments surrounding the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, whose textbook had triggered the 2001 and 2005 disputes, allow a cautiously optimistic assessment for Japan-South Korea relations. After it was revealed in the summer of 2005 that a meager 0.4% of Japanese schools had chosen the controversial book, the Society's leadership and the publishing company Fusōsha clashed over how to proceed. In the end, some key members left the Society for History Textbook Reform, launching a separate project with the Organization for Revitalization of Japanese Education (Nihon kyōiku saisei kikō) in October 2006. This organization has similar objectives to the original project, stressing patriotism, tradition and morals. Nationalists continue their efforts in changing Japanese education, but their movement has been weakened due to the organizational split.

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<sup>224</sup> For example, Hatoyama Yukio clearly stated his party's view on history issues in a May 2005 speech: "The past administrations in Japan continuously failed to take necessary measures to remedy and heal the wounds of the victimized nations in World War II, which showed a sharp contrast with Germany. The DPJ considers it essential that Japan should sincerely reflect itself on the fact that its wartime actions inflicted pain and damage on the neighboring peoples and build its future course on the lessons learnt from the past." (Hatoyama 2005) Nevertheless, not all DPJ members seem to share this critical view of the past. In March 2007, a number of DPJ members reportedly gathered with LDP politicians to hear a controversial historian talk about why the Nanjing Massacre is a 'complete fabrication.' (Hongo 2007)

In April 2009, the MoE announced the third edition of the textbook by the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform had passed the screening process.<sup>225</sup> Seoul protested the authorization, arguing that the new book – like its two predecessors – “embellishes past mistakes” (*kako no ayamari o bikka*) and justifies the country’s brutal colonization policies. (*Sankei Shinbun* 2009) Korea’s response to the 2009 screening announcement was more restrained compared to 2001 and 2005, reflecting the different foreign policy priorities under Seoul’s conservative government. Upon his inauguration in February 2008, President Lee Myung-Bak had vowed to take a tougher stance than his predecessors vis-à-vis the North Korean regime, while improving bilateral relations to the US and Japan in order to shore up security through Washington’s alliance system. North Korea’s test launch of a long-range ballistic missile on April 5, 2009 – days before Japan’s textbook screening announcement – was a poignant reminder of Seoul’s need to maintain cooperative relations with Tokyo. (Kang and Lee 2009: 126) South Korea’s muted criticism was thus rooted in pragmatic reasoning about strategic requirements amid a tense security environment.

### *The Joint Report of 2010*

The second round Japan-Korea Committee for Joint History Research released its report on March 23, 2010, after nearly three years of discussion. Like the first report, the new publication of more than 2,000 pages covered bilateral history from ancient to modern times, with each side presenting its viewpoints in separate chapters.<sup>226</sup> (*Nikkan Rekishi Kyōdō Kenkyū Inkaï* 2010) Of particular interest was the school textbooks subgroup, charged with examining the two countries’ history textbooks. The subgroup’s report comprises almost 500 pages and deals with issues such as the evolution of the bilateral textbook dispute, the textbook authorization systems, and the depiction of Japan’s colonization of Korea in textbooks of both countries. (*Nikkan Rekishi Kyōdō Kenkyū Inkaï* 2010) Without doubt, participants were able to further deepen their understanding of each other’s viewpoints through the second round of talks. However, they failed to provide

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<sup>225</sup> The book, published by Jiyūsha, is almost identical in terms of structure and content to the 2005 edition of the Society’s book published by Fusōsha. The Organization for Revitalization of Japanese Education plans to work with publisher Fusōsha in writing a new textbook.

<sup>226</sup> Each chapter is followed by a commentary from the other side.

any joint guidance to Japanese and Korean textbook publishers and authors on how to depict bilateral history.<sup>227</sup>

Rather, the publication highlights many points of contention in historical descriptions. (Nikkan Rekishi Kyōdō Kenkyū Inkai 2010) The Japanese side for example criticized the lack of references in South Korean textbook to the Peace Constitution and to expressions of remorse by Japan's leaders regarding the colonial period. South Korean participants, on the other hand, maintained that Japanese books treated wartime atrocities in a superficial way, pointing out that descriptions about comfort women have decreased since 1996. (Asahi Shinbun 2010, Higashioka and Makino 2010) The *Asahi Shinbun* concluded that the report "once again illustrated the difficulty of understanding each other's historical consciousness." (Asahi Shinbun 2010) The *Tokyo Shinbun* similarly observed there were many gaps in how the countries viewed their history, although it "evaluate[d] highly that differences in opinion are not concealed in the report." (Tokyo Shinbun 2010)

#### *A Joint History Textbook?*

Although the DPJ-led government under Hatoyama disappointed the Korean side with its screening decision on elementary school textbooks, it did generate some optimism with a proposal put forth by Foreign Minister Okada Katsuya on October 7, 2009. Speaking at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, Okada said it would be "ideal" if South Korea, China, and Japan published a common history textbook to clear up controversies over the interpretation of historical events, although he warned that such a project would take considerable time. (Yoo 2009) It was a major policy step, because for the first time a Japanese government representative officially raised the possibility of a shared textbook with Korea and China.<sup>228</sup> In the same month, representatives of Korea's ruling Grand National Party and Japan's DPJ met informally in Seoul to begin examining whether a joint textbook could be developed with government cooperation. (Park and Nagano 2009)

Following the publication of the second report by the Japan-Korea Committee for Joint History Research, Okada reiterated his hopes for a common textbook with Korea. In a

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<sup>227</sup> Perhaps due to the lack of joint suggestions or recommendations, Japanese officials did not publicly discuss the implications for the content of Japanese textbooks. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs published an announcement that merely stated the results were expected to "further deepen mutual understanding between Japan and Korea on their history." (Gaimusho 2010)

<sup>228</sup> In this context, it is important to note that Japan and China have also undertaken joint history research, concluding with a 549-page long report in late January 2010.

July 13, 2010 interview with the Korean newspaper *JoongAng Ilbo*, he stated, “Although this is a thing of the future, it would be ideal (*risōteki*) for Korea and Japan to jointly compile a history textbook.” (JoongAng Ilbo 2010) He noted that “Because publishers in Japan freely produce textbooks, there is the question of the extent to which the government can contribute.” Nevertheless, “The joint historical research between our two countries signifies the first step towards [creating] a joint textbook.” (JoongAng Ilbo 2010)

Nevertheless, it remains an open question whether Japan and Korea can successfully establish a government-backed commission to compile a common textbook. The two rounds of talks so far provide reason to be skeptical, as participants have complained about overwhelming political pressure, limiting their ability to come to joint conclusions on the portrayal of bilateral history. One Japanese participant of the second round of talks conveyed his doubts about Okada’s proposal, saying “we’ve reached the limit of joint research.” (Brown 2010) Another participant similarly cautioned “the attitudes [among Japanese and Koreans] towards history research are too different.” (Tokyo Shinbun 2010)

## **Explaining German and Japanese Policies**

### *Characteristics and Analysis*

The case study reveals significant differences in German and Japanese behavior regarding textbook disputes with Poland and South Korea, respectively. While Berlin’s policymakers generally played an active support role in textbook talks, Tokyo’s lawmakers have been markedly more hesitant or even opposed to such an undertaking. To characterize and compare each country’s approach in detail, it is useful to consider *four stages* in textbook talks: the initiation phase, the conference phase, the implementation phase, and the follow-up phase.<sup>229</sup> In the *initiation stage*, the period leading up to the start of talks, German policymakers played a key role in launching the bilateral textbook commission with Poland and demonstrating strong support to the goal of reconciliation. Although there was considerable skepticism regarding the project among the public and some conservative groups, leading government representatives stepped forward to express their backing for the talks. The high-level political endorsement cast significant legitimacy on the joint project. Japanese policymakers, on the other hand, repeatedly rejected offers to begin government-

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<sup>229</sup> The division into phases is adopted from Pingel 2007b. Falk Pingel suggests three main phases corresponding to the first three stages in this chapter. Here, a fourth phase is added to delineate the new developments in German-Polish talks since the end of the Cold War.

backed joint work on schoolbooks with South Korea until 2005. While Tokyo introduced the ‘Neighborhood Clause’ as a screening criteria in 1982 in response to regional protests over alleged distortions in textbook depictions, it never clarified how it would judge whether textbooks exercised the required care in the treatment of recent history.

In the *conference phase*, the period during which government-backed bilateral textbook talks are held, German and Japanese behavior also differed considerably. The initial set of conferences between Germany and Poland took place between 1972 and 1976. In Japan’s case, textbook talks in the narrow sense only began in 2007, but the time period since 2002 may be included in the analysis, since the first round of talks by the Japan-Korea Joint History Research Committee was connected to the textbook dispute. Relying on a number of tactics, German politicians were able to establish a beneficial balance between providing political backing while simultaneously shielding the joint commission from overwhelming nationalistic pressures. In contrast, researchers in the Japanese-Korean talks since 2002 have complained about overt interferences by government leaders. By putting pressure on the commission through the choice of participants or through controversial public statements, leading Japanese politicians have significantly undermined efforts by historians from both sides to hold constructive dialogue.

The institutional choices made by German political elites contributed to a more favorable balance between political support and non-interference. The UNESCO framework was one means by which German and Polish politicians were able to support the commission’s work, but Japanese decision-makers have explicitly rejected the UNESCO model. Furthermore, while both Germany and Japan relied on parapublic institutions to provide institutional support for the joint talks, the nature of the two institutions is somewhat different. The Georg-Eckert-Institute (GEI) is charged specifically with the task of holding international textbook talks and making recommendations to enhance the objectivity in German education and textbooks. The Japan-Korea Cultural Foundation, on the other hand, focuses on the promotion of cultural and academic exchanges between Japan and Korea, and thus – as an institution – does not hold a mandate to make recommendations for textbook improvements. Furthermore, with its focus on cultural exchange, the Foundation seems unlikely to develop the extensive expertise, experience and reputation in textbook talks as the GEI.

The *implementation phase* covers the time period in which politicians undertake efforts to reform history education and modify textbooks based on the results from bilateral

talks. For Germany, this phase lasted roughly from 1976 to the end of the Cold War. Strictly speaking, the implementation phase in Japan's case has not started yet, since bilateral talks on textbooks have only been concluded recently. However, it is possible to draw conclusions from policymakers' current statements and their stance regarding the 2005 and 2010 reports by the Japan-Korea Joint History Research Committee. As seen above, high-level German politicians in favor of the joint recommendations encouraged consideration of the commission's work in history teaching by appealing to individual state leaders within Germany and by distributing thousands of copies to schools and history teachers.

Japanese policymakers, on the other hand, have shown more reluctance in initiating changes. Although the first and second round joint research reports are available for download on the internet, few Japanese are aware of their existence. Tokyo has not made particular efforts to raise public understanding about the joint project or inform history teachers about the results. Furthermore, Japanese officials have not been entirely clear about whether they seek to reflect the results of the joint commission in textbooks. When the possibility of textbook talks was discussed in 1997, policymakers argued that Japan did not have government-designated textbooks and thus could not implement any changes suggested by a joint commission. Recently, government leaders have taken a somewhat more forthcoming attitude, however. Several lawmakers have explained that while they cannot 'force' changes on publishers, they can make sure the results are well known within Japan. However, there seems to be considerable opposition among conservative politicians and in the MoE to reform textbooks due to Korean 'interference into domestic affairs.' Significant doubts thus remain about Foreign Minister Okada's recent proposal to compile a joint textbook.

In this context, it is noteworthy that the position of the Japanese government is characterized by a fundamental inconsistency: On the one hand, Japanese leaders have maintained that the MOE cannot make corrections to the historical perceptions and interpretations expressed in textbooks, on the other hand, Japan has pledged since 1982 to take into account the feelings of its neighbors in the authorization process of textbooks, which suggests that historical perceptions are considered. Due to the ambiguity reflected in this stance, it remains to be seen whether Japanese politicians will match the efforts of their German counterparts to make changes in textbooks.

The final stage in textbook talks, the *follow-up phase*, involves new joint projects in the context of history education, after major changes in textbooks have already been implemented. Only German-Polish talks have reached this stage. Berlin's policymakers have continued to back cooperation with Poland actively since 1990, helping to launch one regional and two federal initiatives in the area of textbooks. Political leadership was exercised most prominently by Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who first proposed the development of a joint textbook in 2006. Progress on joint teaching materials during the follow-up phase was overshadowed, however, by renewed tensions over the commemoration of the expulsion issue.

Overall, the analysis reveals radically different attitudes towards textbook talks in Germany and Japan. According to Kondo Takahiro, Japan has taken a "posture diametrically opposed" (*seihantai no shisei*) to that of Germany when it comes to dealing with history disputes. (Kondo 1993: 3) While politicians in Berlin consistently and actively encourage and support textbook talks, their counterparts in Tokyo seem to lack the political will for holding such talks. Moreover, nationalist-rightists among the Japanese political elite have seriously disrupted and spoiled bilateral initiatives with South Korea through controversial remarks on history. Projects aiming to foster reconciliation have thus been followed by strong nationalist backlashes.

Lawmakers from both countries furthermore differ significantly in their expectations for joint textbook commissions. Political elites in the Federal Republic consistently saw bilateral talks as a means to overcome nationalism and foster reconciliation. Opponents of the joint project with Poland in general did not oppose the idea of talks itself, but rather questioned the feasibility of holding objective discussion with a communist country during the Cold War. In Japan by contrast, many decision-makers are skeptical about the fundamental goal of a transnational reconstruction of the past. There is a widespread conviction among politicians that history disputes can only be 'managed' by letting both sides vent their anger in textbook talks and by 'agreeing to disagree.'

However, the picture is more complex than that of 'a good Germany and a bad Japan.' In the Federal Republic's case, the question of how to commemorate the plight of German expellees from Eastern territories has led to growing frictions with Poland since the end of the Cold War. The Association of Expellees' nomination of Erika Steinbach to the foundation council for the planned 'Center against Expulsion' met with severe protest

from Poland, especially since the CDU-CSU supported party member Steinbach.<sup>230</sup> On the other hand, there has been some limited progress on history-related issues in Japan's case. Today's textbooks depict Japanese wartime atrocities with greater detail and accuracy than those of the late 1970s. As Kathleen Woods Masalski observes, the efforts of many progressive researchers and teachers have "produced a far more self-critical narrative," including issues like the Nanjing massacre and anti-Japanese resistance movements in Korea. (Masalski 2000: 284) Moreover, an overwhelming majority of Japanese schools have opted against the use of the controversial, nationalist book by the Society for History Textbook Reform. It seems that most Japanese thus acknowledge and recognize their country's past mistakes and wartime responsibility.

A striking characteristic in Japan's policy is that efforts to make textbook contents more acceptable for neighboring countries have been offset in part by domestic backlashes. Among neighboring countries, the apparent policy ambiguity causes frustrations and elicits suspicions about Tokyo's objectives. Park Soon-Won for example maintained Japan has recently played a "double game" regarding textbook talks with South Korea. He observed that while Tokyo had agreed to set up a bilateral commission, it still authorized right-wing textbooks. (Park 2008) In Germany, reforms in textbook also elicited counter-moves by conservative opinion leaders, especially in the 1980s after Kohl lamented the "spiritual-moral crisis" (*geistig-moralische Krise*) in the Republic. However, these conservatives never received a critical level of backing and did not have a detectable effect on education policies. Moreover, German conservatives never launched an organized movement as Japanese nationalists did by establishing the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform. Overall, German conservative backlashes were more confined in scope and had the effect of strengthening the Federal Republic's culture of contrition.

### *The Explanatory Power of Role Conceptions*

Germany's supportive stance on textbook talks can be well explained by examining the country's role conceptions. Politicians in the Federal Republic are "determined *never again* to allow militarism and nationalism to threaten European stability" and peace. (Maull 2004: 89, emphasis added) The associated role conception 'contributor to regional

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<sup>230</sup> One could also point out that German policymakers have not pursued all reconciliation initiatives with equal vigor: For example, reconciliation with the Czech Republic still lags behind that with Poland in many aspects. Moreover, Ann Phillips points out that Germany attached more priority to Franco-German reconciliation compared to German-Dutch reconciliation after World War II. (Phillips 1998: 67)

cooperation' helps to account for German acceptance of foreign participation in crafting a new narrative of the country's past. After 1945, policymakers in the Federal Republic era embraced a new vision of an integrated region comprising equal and tamed states. Their fundamental objective was to overcome narrow-minded nationalist thinking, which had given rise to disastrous wars in the past. The theme of atonement towards the victims of National Socialism has thus prevailed in German policy since 1945. Decision-makers were prepared to promote an international narrative of the past in textbooks, treating history from various viewpoints rather than presenting a linear national perspective. Germany's inclination towards supranationalism furthermore explains why policymakers were not overly concerned about letting other countries participate in the creation of a new narrative. The Federal Republic's faith in international organizations, reflected in its role set, also explains Bonn's decision to conduct joint textbook talks under the auspices of the UNESCO.

Secondly, the general receptiveness to the idea of holding bilateral talks with Poland can be understood in light of the role conception 'regional stabilizer.' Policymakers display enthusiasm for advancing multilateral consultations, bargaining and compromise, seeking to ensure compatibility between national interests and viewpoints among neighbors. This role conception gained particular relevance in the 1970s, as the government under Chancellor Brandt's leadership stepped up efforts to establish cooperative relations with communist countries. Textbook talks with Poland were thus an important means for German politicians to reduce tensions and encourage bilateral exchange and rapprochement. It should be kept in mind, however, that Brandt's policies towards Eastern Europe met with considerable skepticism among conservatives in the initial years. Thus, the Chancellor's visionary and determined leadership was a key factor in establishing reconciliation as a "high profile component of [Germany's] relations with [central-east Europe]." (Phillips 1998: 65)

Erika Steinbach's possible role in the planned establishment of the 'Center against Expulsion' caused considerable irritation in Poland during the past months. In view of the above-mentioned role conceptions, it seems puzzling that German politicians did not act more decisively by quickly rejecting Steinbach's nomination. The analysis suggests two reasons, which are not directly linked to Germany's role set. Firstly and most importantly, expellees and their organizations enjoy strong and well-established ties especially to the CSU, sister party of the CDU, providing them with considerable political clout. (Phillips

1998: 78) Steinbach herself is a CDU parliamentarian, reflecting the close relationship and making it difficult for fellow party members to oppose her nomination. Secondly, a growing number of politicians and opinion leaders seem to sympathize with the expellees' demands for remembering their fate. Fearful of historical revisionism and eager to demonstrate contrition, German lawmakers during the Cold War often suppressed debates on the expulsion issue. However, more and more intellectuals – including those from the left-wing – have criticized this policy and called for a more adequate commemoration in recent years.

Explaining Japan's behavior regarding history textbook disputes with South Korea is more complex. The general reluctance and rightist-nationalists' outright opposition to textbook projects are at odds with the role conceptions of 'contributor to regional cooperation' and 'reliable partner.' According to the former role conception, Japan seeks to play a constructive and supportive role in bi- and multilateral cooperation, although not with the same focus on overcoming nationalism as Germany. The disputes over Japanese history textbooks have triggered significant rifts in Tokyo's regional relations, impeding progress in various fields of cooperation. The role conception would thus suggest that Japan make a more determined effort to resolve history-related disagreements – for example by holding textbook talks – in order to ensure other regional projects are not negatively affected.

Similarly, the role conception 'reliable partner' would suggest a more cooperative and forthcoming attitude in solving history-related quarrels with South Korea. According to this conception, Japanese policymakers seek to support the US in providing military deterrence in the region. For Washington, it is essential that Tokyo and Seoul maintain good relations, because they comprise the 'third leg' of the US alliance system in Northeast Asia. (Cha 1999) In other words, cooperation between Japan and Korea can significantly bolster the credibility of US deterrence. The role conception of 'reliable partner' would thus imply active steps by Japan to resolve history-related disputes in order to guarantee a functioning alliance system. A closer examination of Japan's behavior reveals this role conception indeed has some impact on Tokyo's behavior. Particularly in times when the security situation in East Asia was tense – for example when North Korean made a show of force by launching missiles – Japanese policymakers exhibited a more forthcoming stance in dealing with history-related issues. Thereby, they responded to alter-part expectations by the US to strengthen ties with Seoul. However, the prevalent reluctance to hold history

textbook talks demonstrates that alter-part expectations have not been internalized by Tokyo's lawmakers. Rather, such expectations have been taken into account only through temporary adjustments.

Why has Japan's policy not been in line with the two role conceptions of 'contributor to regional cooperation' and 'reliable partner?' Japanese lawmakers have repeatedly rejected government-backed textbook talks by referring to their country's role as 'promoter of universal values,' defending democracy and human rights. Japan must respect and protect the freedom of speech and thought in the process of textbook screening by refraining from imposing particular interpretations of the past, they argue. Even if textbook talks with Korea result in joint recommendations, Tokyo allegedly has no power over publisher's decisions whether to reflect the findings in textbook depictions. However, Japan's stance is unconvincing and appears cynical. Since Tokyo has influenced historical interpretations and depictions in textbooks through its screening process in numerous cases, the focus on the freedom of speech seems to be no more than an excuse to avoid textbook talks.

A more convincing explanation for Japan's stance is the nationalistic tendency among the political elite. As seen in the analysis, many decision-makers resent foreign criticism of Tokyo's treatment of its past – an aspect observed in the role conception 'respected and trusted country.' Politicians seek to move beyond the humiliating memory of war and set Japan on equal footing with other countries. Frustration about persistent foreign criticism of Japanese textbooks has resulted in a tendency towards self-assertion and defiance. Textbook talks are seen as counterproductive to the goal of establishing Japan as a 'respected and trusted country,' as they call new attention to past mistakes and aggressive policies.

A *distinction* must be made between far-right nationalist politicians and more moderate leaders, however. A *minority of vocal far-right* opinion leaders seem to hold a role conception based on narrow-minded historical revisionism emphasizing Japan's superiority and uniqueness. They deny mistakes in Japan's wartime foreign policy conduct, focusing rather on the alleged positive impact of Japanese rule in Asia and arguing that Tokyo was acting out of self-defense. Right-wing nationalists furthermore reject the condemnation of Japan's past as 'victor's justice.' The *majority of more moderate decision-makers*, however, do not deny Japanese atrocities and war crimes. (Togo 2008c, Togo 2008b) Why have these politicians not provided stronger backing for textbook talks?

The analysis suggests a number of reasons.<sup>231</sup> Firstly, due to the sharp split in the political elite regarding questions of war responsibility and atonement, government efforts to reflect the views of neighboring countries in history education tend to trigger backlashes among nationalists.<sup>232</sup> Faced with these circumstances, supporters of reconciliation with Korea have focused on the promotion of academic and cultural exchanges – activities that are relatively uncontroversial in Japan. As Okonogi Masao observes, politicians are aware that domestic opposition is powerful when joint research activities are declared to have the explicit aim of “reconciliation” (*wakai*). Proponents of improved relations with Korea tend to prefer a “gentle” (*yurui*) approach on history-related issues, he maintained. (Okonogi 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) In other words, lawmakers realize that policies of atonement may be diplomatically counterproductive if they prove to be domestically polarizing.<sup>233</sup>

In this context, it is furthermore important to recognize that the struggle between the rightist-nationalist and moderate forces in Japan extends beyond the mere issue of history education and textbooks. The battle is closely connected to debates about Japanese national identity and the founding principles of post-1945 Japan, embodied for instance in the ‘Peace Constitution.’ The evaluation of Japan’s past raises important questions about the country’s future: What is to be learnt from historical experiences? What kind of country should Japan strive to be? Many rightist-nationalist seek to free Japan from the constraints of its past, which in their eyes causes Tokyo to act with undue subservience and submissiveness *vis-à-vis* regional neighbors and the US. By presenting the country’s history in a more ‘positive’ light, they hope to raise national self-esteem and encourage Japan to exercise full self-determination in its domestic and foreign policies without constantly paying heed to other country’s viewpoints. The battle over history education and textbook is thus tied to far-reaching questions about Japan’s future foreign policy course, explaining why it is fought with such immense passion and vigor.

Secondly, moderate politicians are concerned about the potential personal consequences if they enthusiastically endorse textbook talks. Especially those lawmakers in the ‘catch-all’ party LDP fear damage to their career. Broad support from different LDP factions is crucial for being chosen as a party leader and to be made prime minister. By

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<sup>231</sup> In addition to the factors discussed below, one could also point out that the Ministry of Education, which conducts textbook screenings, has been a stronghold for rightist-nationalist thinking.

<sup>232</sup> In contrast, a broad, bi-partisan consensus developed in the post-1945 era among German policymakers denouncing wartime atrocities. The consensus was encouraged and solidified through the policies of the occupation powers in the immediate post-war period.

<sup>233</sup> Also see the work by Jennifer Lind on this aspect. (Lind 2008)

standing up for textbook talks, a politician is likely to stir opposition among rightist-nationalist party members and thereby lower his own chances for advancing within the party hierarchy. Furthermore, politicians also fear “losing the most passionately nationalist segments of their constituency” by staking out critical positions on Japan’s wartime role and calling for textbook talks. (Hein and Selden 2000: 25)

Thirdly, there is widespread skepticism even among moderate decision-makers that textbook talks can accomplish more than an ‘agreement to disagree.’ There are at least two reasons for this skeptical attitude. The Japanese domestic polarization complicates both the selection of participants for a joint project and the process of reaching agreements even among the Japanese researchers themselves. In the eyes of many lawmakers, such obstacles lower the chances of a successful conclusion of international textbook talks. Furthermore, many Japanese worry that the history issue may be used for political purposes, especially by China. Such fears are not completely unfounded: When Prime Minister Murayama offered a series of apologies and proposed various reconciliation initiatives in 1995, for example, Beijing reacted with a major exhibition at Chinese middle schools on Japanese war atrocities in Nanjing. This raised doubts among Japanese politicians whether China is really interested in a joint reflection on the past. (Togo 2008d, Interview by A. Sakaki)

Overall, role conceptions offer a convincing explanation for Germany’s supportive stance on textbook talks. In Japan’s case, the analysis finds a role conflict between the conceptions of ‘contributor to regional cooperation’ and ‘reliable ally’ on the one hand, and the nationalist tendencies reflected in the role of ‘respected and trusted country.’ The analysis above considered additional factors to understand why moderate politicians do not challenge rightist-nationalist tendencies more vigorously. The next section will examine further factors that influence Germany’s and Japan’s policies.

### *Consideration of other Factors*

An important difference between Germany and Japan lies in the influence and role of the political left. In Germany, critical examinations of the country’s past had gradually developed under the conservative governments by the late 1960s, for example through textbook talks with France.<sup>234</sup> Nevertheless, some of the most unsettling issues, including

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<sup>234</sup> In contrast, Japan was insulated from war responsibility through its alliance to the US. At the same time, South Korea and China were economically too weak to force Japan to confront its past.

the Holocaust, were still avoided in political as well as academic debates. (Kansteiner 2006: 117) The SPD government under Chancellor Willy Brandt, himself a former resistance fighter against Nazism, provided new impetus to confront Germany's past squarely. Most importantly, in the context of his *Ostpolitik* of rapprochement, Brandt was willing to clearly recognize German responsibility for committing atrocities against its Eastern neighbors. The change in the governing party thus stimulated further essential debates about the country's historical role.

In Japan, the main opposition party, the left-wing's Socialist Democratic Party (SDP), similarly sought a critical examination of wartime crimes and responsibility. However, the SDP did not gain government control during the Cold War and was therefore unable to influence memory politics directly. In June 1994, Murayama Tomiichi became the first socialist prime minister in the post-war era, and his policies did reflect a willingness to confront Japan's mistaken past policies. During his short time in office (18 months), Murayama launched two important projects related to history issues: the Asian Historical Document Center and the Japan-Korea Joint Research Forum for academic exchanges on bilateral history. Thus, the inauguration of a left-leaning head of state in Japan spurred new efforts in coming to terms with the country's past. However, compared to its German counterpart, the Japanese left came into office significantly later, for a shorter time period, and its power was more constrained due to the coalition with the LDP. Its impact on Japanese perceptions of the past was therefore more limited.

Furthermore, the German and Japanese left differ significantly in their view on the government's role in history education and consequently in textbook talks. Ever since historian and textbook author Ienaga Saburo filed his lawsuit in 1965, key Japanese left-wing representatives have charged the MoE's textbook screening as being unconstitutional. They argue MoE demands for corrections in textbook depictions are biased and therefore violate the Constitution's freedom of speech. Left-wing representatives, who were willing to face Japan's past squarely and work with historians from other countries in addressing disputed points, were therefore intensely suspicious about government involvement in educational issues. In Germany, no comparable lawsuit to Ienaga's was filed, and left-wing leaders saw government-backed textbook talks as an effective means to reexamine wartime history from different perspectives. In Japan, left-wing leaders never became proponents of such talks. Ironically, rightist-nationalist politicians capitalized on the left's argument,

using it as an excuse to avoid government-backed textbook talks and justify the authorization of the controversial Tsukurukai book in 2001.

Secondly, there are several important differences in the two country's education systems, facilitating a critical treatment of recent history in Germany more than in Japan. The Federal Republic's system emphasizes the role of history education in nurturing students' political perspectives. (Miyakawa 2001) Seeking to encourage critical thinking, classroom teaching and exam questions are strongly geared towards discussion and interpretation. It is thus relatively easy to incorporate multiple perspectives into textbook narratives, giving students an opportunity to engage with the views of neighboring countries and former victims of German aggression. The Japanese system, on the other hand, is dominated by the need to prepare students to pass high school and university entrance exams. (Nicholls 2006: 51) Most of these exams contain multiple choice questions emphasizing right or wrong answers. Schools tend to choose those textbooks deemed best for students' exam preparations, and these are often books presenting a single linear account of history rather than discussing multiple perspectives. History education in Japan is thus strongly oriented towards the retention and memorization of facts and dates. In order to incorporate different interpretations and views of past events, Japan's education system would require important reforms.

A further difference in education systems is that German schools teach history as a single subject – comprising both national and world history – whereas Japanese schools offer these two components separately. (Mitani 2007a: 243) In Japan, the result is an often artificial division of history, in which the linkages between domestic and international circumstances are neglected. The split between national and world history also makes it more difficult to compare different viewpoints and discuss the effects of Japanese foreign policy on other countries. (Chon 2007: 253)<sup>235</sup> In contrast, the combined subject of 'history' in Germany facilitates the transnational reconstruction of the past.

A final difference in the two countries education systems is the curricular structure. In Germany, each school year is assigned a particular era or time period for history classes, with topics generally covered in a chronological order. In Japan, history teaching is also conducted chronologically, but students begin their studies with ancient times in each of the three school types, elementary school, middle school, and high school. Theoretically,

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<sup>235</sup> Korean schools also teach national and world history as separate subjects. However, in recent years the Korean Ministry of Education began reforms to integrate the two subjects into one, with the declared purpose to "overcome nationalism" in its education. (Asahi Shinbun 2007c)

students are thus supposed to cover Japan's early 20<sup>th</sup> century colonial and wartime history at the end of each schooling level. The problem is that teachers are often behind schedule, running out of time at the end, and thus do not cover modern history in detail. (Katayama 2008, Interview by A. Sakaki) Due to time constraints, critical classroom discussions on Japan's wartime role are often limited. In German states, on the other hand, a whole school year is devoted to discussions on Nazism, the Holocaust, and wartime policies.

Thirdly, in contrast to Japan, German policymakers were able to look back on an example of successful textbook talks when they initiated the bilateral project with Poland in the 1970s. Two decades earlier, the German-French commission had held consultations and issued joint recommendations for history teaching in the two countries. Given this experience, the Federal Republic's politicians had some confidence that textbook talks with other countries were feasible in principal. Japan, on the other hand, does not have a precedent to serve as a model for textbook talks with Korea. Domestic skepticism and misunderstandings about such bilateral work is thus widespread among Japanese leaders and the public.

In conclusion, German and Japanese role conceptions provide important insights into each country's policy on history textbook disputes, although other factors further enlighten the different approaches and decisions. Challenges in textbook narratives remain for both Germany and Japan. Textbooks in the two countries continue to reflect an asymmetry of knowledge vis-à-vis their neighbors Poland and South Korea. While German and Japanese students learn relatively little about the history of their neighbors, Polish and Korean students cover Germany and Japan in detail. (Chon 2007: 253) In the case of Japan and South Korea, textbook talks are indispensable to familiarize both countries' historians with each other's perspectives and gradually create textbooks reflecting multiple views and arguments. Although Germany and Poland have made significantly more progress in developing a transnational narrative on their bilateral history, a number of obstacles remain. Warsaw's post-Cold War integration into the EU strengthened political ties with Berlin, but it also revived some old prejudices and fears. While Germans have been anxious about an influx of cheap labor from Eastern neighbors, the Polish public has harbored suspicions about Berlin's dominance in the EU. Textbook talks will need to address such concerns in order to prevent the emergence of new bilateral misunderstandings and frictions. Moreover, as seen in the dispute about the 'Center against Expulsion' in Berlin, Germany and Poland

will need to cooperate in finding an acceptable narrative on the expulsion of ethnic Germans.

## CONCLUSION

This study systematically demonstrates how cognitive and ideational variables affect the foreign policymaking in Germany and Japan. The analysis reveals that decision-makers hold distinct ideas and beliefs about the roles their respective countries should play in regional security affairs. The comparative method, developed to help identify role conceptions in major foreign policy speeches, is based on inductive categorization techniques. National objectives are thus explored through the eyes of German and Japanese politicians. The case studies in this dissertation illustrate how cognitive and social factors motivate and legitimate particular decisions and actions in the investigated policy fields. Distinct *attitudes* and persistent patterns of *reasoning* and *behavior* are identified in both Germany's and Japan's policies on missile defense and history textbook disputes. As seen, role conceptions exert a powerful influence on how issues are framed and on the range of options perceived by policymakers in formulating their response.

Despite broad similarities in the aims, the qualitative analysis reveals marked differences in policy preferences and strategies between the two countries. While the German role set is characterized by a *transformationalist* mindset about international relations, the Japanese one comprises *transformationalist* as well as *traditionalist* elements. In other words, German policymakers are confident they can overcome the security dilemma in international relations by nurturing mutual interdependence, advancing multilateral cooperation and mediation, and fostering supranationalism. Japanese policymakers, on the other hand, pay more attention to the balance of power and regard the US-Japan alliance as a deterrent and thus anchor of stability in East Asia. The deeply ingrained norm of prioritizing the bilateral alliance permeates Tokyo's overall approach to regional security. Multilateral cooperation is thus considered a supplement rather than an alternative to ensure stability. Nevertheless, some aspects in Japan's normative framework suggest policymakers do not have an exclusively 'realist' outlook on international relations. Like their German counterparts, Japanese policymakers prefer economic over military forms of power, exhibit an aversion to exercising unilateralism and dominance over other countries, and reflect a strong attachment to universal values such as democracy and human rights.

The case study on territorial missile defense was particularly useful for exposing these different attitudes of German and Japanese decision-makers. Political elites in Berlin are reluctant to consider the strategic need for a territorial defense system, while being remarkably receptive to Russian criticism about US plans. They emphasize that adequate security can only be achieved diplomatically through consultation and compromise with Russia as well as Iran. Focused on promoting multilateral mediation, policymakers neglect MD as an option for dealing with urgent security risks. Based on their *transformationalist* outlook, they seek to escape the security dilemma through multilateralism and negotiation.

In Japan, politicians tend to evaluate a territorial missile defense system positively, arguing that it is conducive to regional stability under current circumstances. Through participation in the US project, Japan confirms loyalty to its alliance partner, thus cementing the bilateral relationship with its deterrence function. Furthermore, developing the MD potential ensures that Japan “does not itself become a power vacuum that would be a destabilizing factor in [the] regional environment,” especially in view of North Korea’s and China’s growing missile capabilities. (Ministry of Defense Japan 2007) This reasoning indicates the *traditionalist* mindset of Japanese politicians, who aspire to a regional balance of power. Japanese policymakers equally stress that MD as a non-offensive system corresponds to Japan’s defensive, non-militarist strategy. The latter argument reflects the *transformationalist* element in Japanese thinking, focused on overcoming the security dilemma through self-restraint.<sup>236</sup> Many contemporary observers and commentators overlook this line of reasoning, as they pay exclusive attention to the ‘realist’ aspects of Japanese MD policy.<sup>237</sup>

Overall, role theory proves to be a useful tool for explaining policy choices identified in the case studies, although additional factors often help to further illuminate why decision-making elites favored particular approaches. The analysis confirms that a “purely structural understanding of international politics is impoverished,” because power structures and foreign policy choices are meaningless in the absence of a set of shared normative convictions and ideas. (Malici 2006: 58) Power and material interests matter, but they are perceived and evaluated through a cognitive lens comprising the norms and values embodied in the role set. Thus, an explanation of Germany’s and Japan’s post-Cold War

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<sup>236</sup> As was seen in chapter 2, the transformationalist outlook is confined, however, by policymakers’ sensitivity to the balance of power and their unwillingness to delegate sovereignty to the supranational level.

<sup>237</sup> As seen in chapter 3, part 5, Andrew Oros may be cited as an example of this tendency. Oros maintains that norm- and culture-based explanations “cannot account for Japan’s initiation of joint research with the United States on missile defense.” (Oros 2008: 157)

regional security policies must pay attention to the normative standards of behavior guiding the decisions and approaches of government representatives.

The remainder of this concluding chapter will address five central issues pertaining to this study. Firstly, we will return to the key questions underlying this study: Are Germany's and Japan's post-Cold War policies characterized by change or continuity? Drawing on a classification scheme adopted from Charles Hermann, this section seeks to evaluate the type and extent of change in the two countries. (Hermann 1990) It finds that incremental adaptations in foreign policy preferences can be identified in both Germany and Japan. However, recent depictions of a drastic change in Tokyo's foreign policy course are misguided and exaggerated. The second section discusses the nationalistic sentiments reflected in Japan's recent foreign policy thinking. The subsequent section succinctly evaluates major strengths and weaknesses of role theory. It readdresses the issue of role conflict, applying the empirical findings of this dissertation. Although this study sheds light on the question of how nations cope with role conflict, the difficulty of predicting behavior remains a weak point in the role theoretical approach and needs to be investigated further. Fourthly, the conclusion takes a broader perspective by asking whether role conceptions will continue to guide foreign policies in Germany and Japan for the foreseeable future. Although recent trends in both countries may indicate a diminishing influence, the section concludes that it is too early for a definitive answer. Finally, potential areas of further study are discussed.

## **Change and Continuity in German and Japanese Foreign Policies**

### *Evaluation of the Findings*

Based on role theoretical analysis, this dissertation seeks to reevaluate the question of continuity and change in German and Japanese regional security policies. Has Japan – in comparison to Germany – indeed been undergoing sweeping changes in its foreign policy orientation, as numerous scholars claim? Neither the qualitative analysis of foreign policy speeches nor the case studies corroborate such a judgment. Rather, a remarkable degree of continuity is found in *both* German and Japanese *speeches* and *patterns of foreign policy behavior*. Nevertheless, the question warrants further attention, because of its academic relevance.

A major problem in recent foreign policy studies is that the term of 'change' is generally "under-theorized" and lacking conceptual clarity. (Hagström and Williamsson 2009: 243) Most scholars seek to *explain* foreign policy change rather than *defining* and *assessing* it. In order to evaluate with more precision the extent and type of change in German and Japanese foreign policies, Charles Hermann's classification model proves useful. (Hermann 1990) Hermann identifies four graduated levels of foreign policy change, adapted here to fit the role theoretical approach (see Figure 3). Before classifying the changes identified in German and Japanese foreign policy, the four levels are described below:

- (1) *Change in the scope or salience of a national role conception (NRC)*: The first and most limited type of change involves a modification in the scope of activity covered by an NRC. A country may alter the *level of effort* or the *range of recipients or target countries* of its policies. At the same time, "What is done, how it is done, and the purpose for which it is done remain unchanged." (Hermann 1990: 5) This type of change most likely results from a reevaluation of the salience of a NRC within a role set after an experience of perceived policy success or failure.
- (2) *Partial NRC change regarding preferred means*: The second type of change refers to an adjustment in collectively shared understandings about the appropriate instruments or means associated with a particular role conception. However, continuity persists in the fundamental aims and purposes underlying the NRC. Change thus pertains to the *means* of foreign policy, while the general *goals* of an actor remain stable. This kind of change most likely occurs when previous policy instruments prove ineffective or inefficient under new circumstances.
- (3) *Complete change of one NRC*: The third type of change implies more fundamental change with regard to one of the NRCs in the role set. A new role conception comprising a distinct set of purposes and instruments emerges, either replacing a previously held NRC or complementing the existing role set. The change does not concern more than one NRC in the role set, however. This kind of change may arise for example when new policy challenges necessitate the definition of additional goals and roles or when external developments recurrently challenge a shared understanding or idea.
- (4) *Change of role set*: The fourth and most extensive type of change involves the simultaneous emergence of multiple new NRCs in the role set, replacing former shared understandings. As policymakers reject prior ideas, the role set changes

significantly. This type of change is most likely to occur when a country is at a turning point amid a major foreign policy event, shaping new considerations about the state's objectives in international affairs.<sup>238</sup>

<b>CLASSIFICATION OF ROLE CHANGE</b>			<b>Hermann's corresponding category</b>	
		<b>Description</b>		
		<b>Change regards:</b>	<b>Continuity regards:</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Change in scope/ salience of NRC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in NRC regarding either:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Level of effort oriented towards goal <i>or</i></li> <li>– Range of activity (e.g. scope of recipients/ targets of policy)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role conceptions not altered in main content (aims, instruments)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Adjustment change"</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Partial NRC change regarding preferred means</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in views of appropriate instruments/ means</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and aim of policy remain fixed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Program change"</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Complete change of one NRC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergence of new NRC with distinct set of aims, purposes, instruments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other NRCs in role set remain in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Problem/ goal change"</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>Change of role set (multiple NRCs affected)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergence of multiple new NRCs</li> <li>• Rejection of prior ideas and foreign policy approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little / no continuity in role set</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "International orientation change"</li> </ul>

**Figure 3: Categorization of Change**

Adapted from Charles Hermann's classification scheme. (Hermann 1990)

From a role theoretical perspective, which of these types of change can be considered 'drastic'? Without doubt, the fourth type has far-reaching consequences on foreign policy orientation and behavior, based on a profound redefinition of the normative guidelines in foreign policy. The third type, the complete change of one NRC, implies more circumscribed but nevertheless substantial change in foreign policy goals and behavior, as new, shared normative understandings emerge. In contrast, the aims and objectives in

<sup>238</sup> A major foreign policy event for both Germany and Japan was clearly the two countries' defeat in World War II. Both countries significantly altered their foreign policy outlook after 1945. See for example (Berger 1998).

foreign policymaking remain unaffected in the first and second types of change. Here, the structure of normative beliefs is amended rather than fundamentally altered. These two types of change led to a modification of behavior, but – from a role theoretical perspective – they do not entail complete redefinitions of guiding principles. In other words, these two types of change do not imply *new* foreign policy strategies on account of rejecting earlier ones. Rather, the existing framework of orientation is *refurbished and adjusted*.<sup>239</sup>

The adapted categorization scheme could be further refined, for example by adding grading levels or categories to classify alterations like the one in Germany's role conception of 'contributor to regional cooperation,' which does not fit clearly into the above scheme. Although the content of this role conception did not change significantly, the underlying rationale for pursuing it seemed to shift over the time period investigated. Whereas policymakers in the early 1990s frequently raised emotional, history-focused arguments to justify their commitment for European multilateralism, a decade later debates were dominated by practical reasoning (e.g. economic advantages), although historical motives did not disappear completely. Germany's policy was portrayed more as a deliberate choice rather than an inevitable destiny. The shift had no obvious effect on Germany's role conception in terms of behavioral prescriptions (what and how something should be done). The NRC was apparently 'updated' for a new post-war generation of politicians and voters by introducing a new rationale, while shared ideas about appropriate policy conduct and instruments remained unaffected.

Aside from this particular case of change, the four categorization levels adapted from Hermann's research seem sufficiently detailed to assess the other changes observed in German and Japanese regional security policies. The qualitative content analysis does not reveal *type three or four changes* in either Germany or Japan, as no new role conceptions are identified throughout the time period investigated. Some *type one change* is found in both Germany's and Japan's role conception of 'exporter of security.' Speeches in both countries clearly reflect the intention to play a more extensive role in ensuring global security and to exert a greater effort towards it. However, the most important change in both German and Japanese policies is a *type two change*: a reevaluation of the utility and legitimacy of military force in connection to the role conceptions of 'exporter of security' and 'non-militarist country.' Seeking to ensure global security and stability, both countries'

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<sup>239</sup> Interestingly, Charles Hermann defines the last three forms of change (termed program change, problem/ goal change, international orientation change) as "major foreign policy redirections." He does not explain this categorization, but his perception may be related to the fact that his analysis is focused on the *visibility* of change, which is significantly lower in the first type.

policymakers were increasingly willing to dispatch military forces to multilateral missions. As a result, the number of *Bundeswehr* and Self-Defense Force personnel engaged in missions abroad grew throughout the post-Cold War era. As seen in chapter 2, Japan's adjustment with regard to the use of military force has involved a greater conceptual step than in Germany's. The qualitative analysis shows that in the early 1990s, Japan held a more restrictive notion of being a non-militarist country, accepting the use of military means only for national self-defense. Germany, on the other hand, did not principally reject collective self-defense and exhibited a willingness to send troops to multilateral missions to assist other NATO members. The dispatch of troops to global missions in conflict areas thus corresponded more closely to Germany's previous foreign policy concept.<sup>240</sup>

However, in both countries incremental changes regarding international dispatches were anchored firmly within the established normative guidelines. This highlights the limited nature of the type two changes and the overall continuity in the role sets. Firstly, policymakers in both countries exhibited – and still do – a deep skepticism about using military measures, instead favoring diplomatic means of conflict resolution. Tokyo and Berlin rely on narrowly defined rules of engagement for their troops, focusing on reconstruction efforts rather than offensive combat missions. Secondly, the increased global engagements in security affairs were predicated on traditional foreign policy parameters: While Germany concentrated on the institutionalized and multilateral contexts of the UN, NATO and the EU in guiding its policies, Japan's international contributions rested primarily on the allegiance to the US, although Tokyo sought to reinforce UN-led activities as well. In gradually reconstructing their role in international security, both countries thus relied on familiar frameworks as normative reference points.

Two concurrent processes drove the expansion of Germany's and Japan's military roles.<sup>241</sup> Firstly, *alter-part expectations* were crucial in initiating extensive debates and internal reassessments about military contributions for international security. As they sought to uphold their reputations as 'reliable partners,' Berlin and Tokyo were particularly inclined to accommodate the demands for assuming more responsibility in security affairs after the Cold War. The influence of alter-part expectations was reflected in such terms as 'responsibility,' 'duty,' 'burden-sharing,' and 'solidarity' in German as well as in Japanese

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<sup>240</sup> It must be stressed that to this day, German global military contributions are more extensive in both size (i.e. number of troops deployed) and type of mission (for example, involvement in combat) than Japanese ones. Thus, it would be mistaken to conclude that Japan's role set has necessarily undergone greater change than Germany's.

<sup>241</sup> These processes are also discussed in Harnisch 2001, Maull 2006b, Maull 1999, and Webber 2001.

debates. Secondly, the realization that global dispatches of military troops may be necessary to secure peace in conflict areas triggered a *learning process* in both countries' foreign policy outlook.<sup>242</sup> Berlin grew markedly more willing to send troops abroad as policymakers recognized the potentially disastrous humanitarian consequences in case of diplomatic failure, like during the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts. Similarly, Japanese politicians gave up some of their reservations against military missions and sent troops to such instable areas as Zaire and Kenya in order to alleviate the tragic plight of refugees. At the same time, Tokyo eased some of the stringent restrictions and conditions imposed upon its UN contributions, for policymakers acknowledged them to be unrealistic and irresponsible.<sup>243</sup>

As depicted above, the role theoretical analysis permits a reassessment of recent academic evaluations of Japan's foreign policy course. Scholars have clearly overstated and misconstrued the changes underway by asserting that Japan is undergoing a fundamental "transformation" (Samuels 2007b: 64) and that it stands on the "threshold of a new era" (Pyle 2007a: 374) in its international orientation. Firstly, many observers have exaggerated the *extent of change* in Tokyo's foreign policy. Like their German counterparts, Japanese decision-makers have not fundamentally challenged the normative framework guiding their country's foreign policy behavior. New foreign policy strategies are discernible in neither Berlin nor Tokyo, as deeply ingrained role conceptions continue to shape preferences and decisions. As seen above in the application of Hermann's classification, change in both countries was essentially limited to the preferred instruments of foreign policy and the level of effort exerted towards particular policy goals. Although these changes are doubtlessly important, they do not reflect a fundamental reorientation.

Secondly, many scholars have misinterpreted the *purpose and motivation* driving the changes in Japan. Accusations that Tokyo was developing military ambitions linked to national interests and discarding its postwar ideals are mistaken. Like in Germany, the primary motivation for Japan to expand its international security role has been the desire to take on a greater share of the burden of maintaining regional and international stability, thereby demonstrating solidarity with key partners, especially the US.<sup>244</sup> For both Germany

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<sup>242</sup> For a detailed examination of foreign policy learning, see Levy 1994.

<sup>243</sup> Nevertheless, Japan maintains strong constraints on the use of military force in operations not directly related to the defense of its own territory, as seen in chapter 2. See also Ishizuka 2004.

<sup>244</sup> In academic debates, the process of Japan's foreign policy learning is frequently underestimated or overlooked. Many scholars maintain that a revision of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution would signal the final renunciation of the lessons Japan learned from its World War II experience. (Oros 2007) Richard Samuels appears to discount foreign

and Japan, role conflicts between the conception of ‘anti-militarist country’ on the one hand and those of ‘reliable partner’ and ‘exporter of security’ on the other hand gave rise to discussions about necessary adjustments. Changes in both countries resulted from the interrelated processes of transnational socialization and learning and were accompanied by intense debates and domestic soul-searching. Scholarly accounts of Japan’s ‘militarization’ tend to overlook the enormous US normative pressure on Tokyo to extend its international contributions. Japan has not renounced its anti-militarist values, but sought to redefine its shared understandings in order to fulfill perceived duties in the bilateral alliance with the US and in multilateral security missions. Thus, Japanese anti-militarism has *evolved*, rather than *weakened*.

On the whole, both Germany’s and Japan’s regional security policies are characterized by a “modified continuity.” (Harnisch 2001: 48) Despite some gradual adjustments, overall continuity has prevailed in both countries’ role sets. This finding raises a further question: Why have scholars *perceived* more change in Japan’s foreign policy than in Germany’s? Part of the answer may be that most of the academic work is not comparative, as pointed out in the introduction. However, this answer is not fully satisfying.

### *Perceptions of Change in Academic Debates*

The analysis in this dissertation suggests three reasons for the different academic perceptions of the two countries. Firstly, compared to Germany, change has been more patent in Japan. During the Cold War, Tokyo was generally seen as a passive and reactive actor in security affairs and international issues, whose foreign policy was linked to the pursuit of economic interests. In contrast, Germany became actively involved in regional political and security issues through the development of multilateral European institutions from the early stages of the Cold War. Bonn evolved into a key actor in promoting regional cooperation and integration and proposing new initiatives and projects. Furthermore, Germany developed its own distinctive foreign policy ideas, especially with its *Ostpolitik* of the 1970s. Thus, as the expansion of Germany’s international security role corresponds to the tradition of earlier foreign policy activism, it appears less striking. On the other hand, Japanese changes in its restrictive notion of being a non-militarist country are easily

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policy learning as a cause for change, as he stresses that Japan’s “revisionists began to paint Article 9 as an obstacle to ‘international cooperation,’” “opportunistically slic[ing] away at antimilitarist restrictions” and “secur[ing] several major legislative victories in the 1990s.” (Samuels 2007b: 81 and 91)

traceable. During the Cold War, Tokyo's normative framework was enshrined in an array of laws and non-binding diet resolutions, such as the peaceful use of space resolution or the three non-nuclear principles. Changes in these regulations are conspicuous.

Secondly, the realist elements in Japan's role set may cause analysts to overestimate current changes in foreign policy. As seen in the content analysis, Tokyo's attention to power constellations reflects a partially realist outlook on international relations. Politicians' statements and decisions thus often lend credence to the predictions and interpretations of realist IR theory. When applied to Japan, realism is inclined to perceive major change in Japan's policy, as the country departs from its 'abnormal' state of affairs and embarks on policies of power maximization. Explicitly or implicitly, realist theory has informed many of the recent accounts of Japan's foreign policy, leading to erroneous descriptions of the country's course.

Thirdly, the expansion of Japan's international security role has been accompanied by nationalist rhetoric, fueling perceptions of a fundamental change. Far-right groups, such as the Association for Textbook Reform (Tsukurukai) spawn an image of a Japan abandoning the lessons of history and reverting to pre-war militarism. As a result, the Japanese domestic movement to amend the Constitution has frequently been misinterpreted. Many observers fear that changing the current ban on using military force in international conflicts would amount to a renunciation of Japan's postwar ideals. (Watanabe 2005) However, as seen in the qualitative content analysis, this interpretation does not match with the mainstream views in Japan. The majority of politicians do not aspire to a muscular Japan with genuine independence from the US.

### **Japan's Nationalist Tendencies: The Importance of Trust and Respect**

Japan's nationalist tendencies should not be ignored, however. The case studies reveal a growing trend towards self-assertion and defiance in the country's foreign policy in recent years, due to a rise in nationalist sentiments. At the core of the issue is Japan's role conception of being a 'trusted and respected country.' Rather than resolving the unsettled history issue through unequivocal apologies and compensation, a domestic cycle of negative emotions and frustration has pulled Japan in a different direction: Tokyo increasingly takes an uncompromising, nationalistic stance on many foreign policy issues. Self-assertion and defiance are fueled by an *unfulfilled desire* to become a trusted and

respected country – a country neither constantly admonished for its past wrongs nor relegated to a subservient follower role in its alliance relationship with the US.

After World War II, both German and Japanese policymakers sought their country's international rehabilitation in order to gain leeway in regional and global affairs and to establish the basis for a positive and confident national spirit. However, while Tokyo's elites display a sense of failure in their endeavor, Berlin's leaders generally seem content with the level of respect and trust Germany receives. The analysis in this dissertation exposes multiple reasons for these differing outlooks. Berlin's decision-makers gradually achieved equality toward key partner countries through the mutual relinquishment of sovereignty to the European supranational level. Furthermore, they gained room to maneuver by establishing their country as a privileged link between France and the US. They demonstrated persistent support for European integration and provided bold and unambiguous apologies for past misdeeds, and thus were able to build up trust reserves as a key asset for exercising international influence. The peaceful reunification of Germany after the Cold War enhanced the sense of achievement and confirmation about the adopted strategy among political elites. In contrast, Japanese decision-makers were unable to boost their country's international influence by cultivating equality vis-à-vis the US alliance partner. They failed to build up trust among regional neighbors due to a cautious and reluctant stance in dealing with Japan's record of aggression. The economic recession has furthermore damaged Japanese self-confidence and cast doubts on Tokyo's ability to earn international respect.

The tendency towards a more defiant and self-assertive posture does not indicate that Japanese politicians are abandoning the basic parameters guiding their foreign policy, however. Lawmakers are likely to challenge Washington occasionally, while being careful not to jeopardize the alliance relationship itself, which remains the centerpiece of Japan's regional and global security strategy. Furthermore, lawmakers may refuse to automatically give in to Korean or Chinese demands on history issues, but they will simultaneously support multilateral regional cooperation and assure neighbors of Tokyo's peaceful intentions. Based on Japan's current role set, Tokyo's foreign policy will most likely be characterized by somewhat paradoxical and contradictory behavior for the foreseeable future.

## **Advantages and Disadvantages of Role Theory**

Among role theory's many strengths, two stand out. Firstly, as a constructivist approach, role theory pays attention to individual state characteristics rather than presuming homogenous actor preferences based on universal assumptions about foreign policy conduct, as other mainstream theories do. Thus, it is suitable to explain variations in policy approaches and preferences across different countries, such as the ones found between German and Japanese regional security policies. As Ted Hopf accurately observes, "the promise of constructivism is to restore a kind of partial order and predictability to world politics that derives not from imposed homogeneity, but from an appreciation of difference." (Hopf 1998: 200) It should be noted, however, that focusing on individual state characteristics has ramifications for research projects. The identification of national role conceptions requires extensive efforts in data collection and analysis. In order to heighten sensitivity to particular connotations or meanings, chosen materials should preferably be analyzed in the original language. Moreover, since NRCs may be modified or altered, role theoretical analyses for different countries will need to be updated from time to time. Nevertheless, as shown, such analyses offer insights into distinct foreign policy styles that may be inexplicable through structural accounts.

Secondly, role theory stands out among constructivist approaches in providing concrete research tools. Through the analysis of key foreign policy speeches or other government documents, it enables the systematic examination of how cognitive and ideational factors are translated into policy preferences. Many of the existing constructivist works have been criticized for their conceptually, empirically, and methodologically loose application of the term 'identity.' (Ashizawa 2008: 573) In contrast to other constructivist approaches, role theory keeps a clearly defined analytical focus on national role conceptions and offers tools for empirical investigation and comparison of normative-ideational factors. It furthermore recognizes and captures the effects of different levels of analysis to the extent that such aspects are reflected and absorbed in the collectively-held conceptions. Role theory can thus reveal how material factors are interpreted, given meaning and related to behavioral guidelines by policymakers.

As an interpretive-explanatory approach, role theory has an important shortcoming: It has difficulty in predicting state behavior. NRCs motivate rather than cause state behavior and often contain ambiguity and room for interpretation. Behavioral inferences are particularly challenging in cases of role conflict, because of the variety of coping strategies

countries can resort to. The number of such cases evaluated in this dissertation is too limited to draw definite conclusions about preferred coping strategies. It seems, however, that politicians generally refrain from negotiating completely new role conceptions, unless they are under severe domestic and international pressure. As was seen, both Germany and Japan changed their shared understandings only partially with respect to preferred policy instruments, after reevaluating the utility and legitimacy of military force. However, the analysis suggests that decision-makers tend to utilize semantic techniques in case of role conflict, drawing on conceptual ambiguities in their conceptions. Thereby, politicians avoid obvious NRC violations and redefinitions of shared conceptions. This finding confirms that role conceptions are generally 'sticky' and cannot be changed easily or quickly.

### **Role Conceptions and their Impact on Policymaking**

Role theory proved to be a useful tool in explaining the observed patterns of behavior in German and Japanese foreign policy. But will shared role conceptions continue to guide politicians' decisions in the future? In fact, several recent developments indicate that role conceptions may lose some of their impact on the foreign policymaking in the two countries. Although these trends should not be overestimated at this point, they merit further attention. First of all, economic stagnation and growing national debts have led to shrinking resources in foreign policy in both countries. Fiscal constraints may severely complicate Germany's and Japan's abilities to live up to their international commitments. In particular, experts in both countries have complained about lacking resources for the military, prohibiting them to invest in new equipment and technology for troop deployments in crisis areas. As a result, there is a growing gap between the declared goal to play a more active role in international security and the material capacity to meet the resulting commitments.<sup>245</sup> In a June 2010 interview, SPD parliamentarian Hans-Peter Bartels reflected on the potential negative consequences of Germany's cost-cutting program, as the country seeks to comply with a legal ruling whereby it is bound by the 'Schuldenbremse,' or debt-brake. Referring to a potential German withdrawal from the MEADS project, Bartels cautioned that the Federal Republic runs the risk of relying on the "debt-brake as a strategy substitute" (Schuldenbremse als Strategieersatz) in foreign policy. (Bartels 2010, Interview by A. Sakaki)

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<sup>245</sup> Wolfgang Wagner analyzed Germany's failure in implementing the European Security and Defense Policy commitments, in particular the European Rapid Reaction Force. (Wagner 2005) Similar observations are made in Hellmann et al. 2005.

In the future, the intensifying resource crunch may have effects on other important areas of foreign policy as well. Berlin may react to demands for financial transfers to poorer EU member states with increasing reluctance and objection. Furthermore, Germany's willingness to promote regional cooperation may weaken as the country is no longer able to "contain the negative side-effects of further integration through side payments in the domestic realm." (Harnisch 2001: 46) Lobbyists may put pressure on decision-makers to pay closer attention to national rather than regional interests. In Japan, political leaders are also forced to deal with numerous urgent domestic policy issues such as the growing income disparity, pension payments, and health care costs. As they seek to allocate resources to these policy areas, Japan's massive financial support for US troops stationed in the country (the so-called 'sympathy budget') may cause public controversy, with major ramifications for the alliance relationship.

Secondly, a number of scholars have called attention to the process of "domestication" in Germany's foreign policy, a development that could undermine the influence of role conceptions on decision-making in certain policy areas.<sup>246</sup> The term 'domestication' refers to an increasing number of domestic political actors, who seek to shape foreign policy. Because of the strong tradition of federalism in Germany, the *Länder* have played a particularly important role in this process. Over the past years, EU competencies have increasingly intruded upon policy areas, which traditionally had been the sole preserve of the German *Länder*. In response, individual states have sought to exercise more influence within intergovernmental negotiations, through the Committee of the Regions for example, providing them with a direct voice within the EU's institutional framework. Therefore, the *Länder* are practicing an auxiliary foreign policy (Nebenaußenpolitik), based on their particular interests. (Knodt 2001: 173) Nevertheless, the *Länder*'s influence should not be overestimated. The German states do not hold consistent interests that would allow them to operate as an autonomous player through coordinated efforts.<sup>247</sup>

Thirdly, in Japan recent reforms and changes in the political system have opened up the process of policymaking to societal pressures. This increases the risk of politicians engaging in shortsighted populist behavior and thereby deviating from established role

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<sup>246</sup> See for example, Maull 2006a, Harnisch 2009, Overhaus 2004.

<sup>247</sup> Sebastian Harnisch points out that the *Länder*'s ability to speak with one voice "has diminished since unification because of the growing gap between financially strong and weak states and the growing number of coalition governments that bridge traditional party cleavages and blur former party loyalties." (Harnisch 2001: 48)

conceptions. The 1993 electoral reform and subsequent administrative restructuring significantly strengthened the prime ministerial position, while weakening the power of the bureaucracy in decision-making. By introducing a mixed member election system in the Upper House that combines proportional and majoritarian voting systems, individual party leaders gained more influence. Prime ministers and other top level politicians have thus relied more and more on popularity, skillfully using the media to buttress their domestic standing. Former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo for example owed his prominence to his tough stance on North Korea in the emotional ‘kidnapping issue.’ The opportunity to gain public approval on attention-grabbing policy issues may deflect Japanese leaders’ attention away from long-standing normative guidelines of foreign policy.

### **Research Perspectives**

This dissertation’s findings suggest three promising issue areas for further research. Firstly, the inductive method for qualitative content analysis, specially devised to conduct the study at hand, could be applied to other countries in order to investigate and compare their role sets. The approach helped to determine similarities and differences between Germany and Japan, thereby enabling a deeper understanding of the distinct foreign policy strategies. It thus seems sensible to examine whether this method can yield good results in other cases as well. Quite likely, the inductive approach will prove most useful for comparing countries with broad similarities, since the coding process involves the identification of corresponding themes to group specific foreign policy ideas.

Secondly, the issue of role conflict and coping strategies should be examined in more detail in future studies. In the limited number of observed incidents, this dissertation was able to expose the way Germany and Japan dealt with such conflicts, drawing some preliminary conclusions about preferred strategies. However, further research is indispensable to substantiate these results, to develop a clearer understanding of the conditions under which particular strategies may be favored, and to compare the coping behavior of different countries.

A third area for further investigation concerns such concepts as reputation, respect, dignity, esteem, and trust in international relations. These concepts apparently played an important role in both the German and the Japanese foreign policy perspectives (especially reflected in Tokyo’s NRC ‘trusted and respected country’). Reputation and the above

mentioned terms mirror a country's 'soft power' resources.<sup>248</sup> Such resources are particularly valuable for nations lacking substantial military capabilities like Germany and Japan. Further constructivist research on these concepts may shed light on how different countries conceive of their international reputation and how much it means to them. Furthermore, such research may reveal whether a perceived lack of respect from important partner countries generally prompts nationalist tendencies, as in the Japanese case.

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<sup>248</sup> On the notion of soft power, see Nye 2004.

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