

# **UNDERSTANDING FIFTY YEARS OF JAPANESE MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Japan has sought to improve Southeast Asian maritime safety and security as an element of its foreign policy for the last fifty years. Predominantly comprised of capacity building activities (CBAs), the Japanese initiatives have focused on helping Southeast Asian states maintain good order in their nearby waters. In recent years, these policies have received increased public attention given the more direct involvement of Japan's Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in efforts that were previously the exclusive domain of Japanese civilian agencies, non-governmental foundations and private interests. This paper analyzes the evolution of Japan's maritime security initiatives by documenting major events and offering new insights into the most important milestones and inflection points associated with that history. Unlike previous accounts that portray this history as a matter of gradual change, it demonstrates that Japan's initiatives have passed through three distinct phases (1969-1998, 1999-2009, and 2010-present) with the shifts between each being marked by very quick expansions of the Japanese agencies, partner organizations and missions involved. The paper continues by discussing the most prevalent explanations for the way these initiatives have developed by grouping the arguments into four narrative clusters based on the key variables considered. The first narrative cluster focuses on security threats and national power, the second on the domestic competition that creates Japan's foreign policy, the third on U.S.-Japan alliance dynamics, and the fourth on concepts of national reputation and responsibility. The analysis shows that none of the common explanations are satisfactory. Instead eclectic, multi-dimensional and comprehensive studies are required to properly understand the Japanese security policymaking process. The paper concludes by examining what this historical and process analysis suggests may be on the horizon for Japan's future involvement in Southeast Asian maritime security.

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# UNDERSTANDING FIFTY YEARS OF JAPANESE MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

## INTRODUCTION

Japan has exerted a sustained effort to improve Southeast Asian maritime safety and security as an element of its foreign policy for the last fifty years. Predominantly comprised of capacity building activities (CBAs), the initiatives have aimed to help Southeast Asian states maintain good order in their coastal waters. In recent years, these policies have received increased public attention given the more direct involvement of Japan's Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in efforts that were previously the exclusive domain of Japanese civilian agencies, non-governmental foundations and private interests. This paper analyzes the evolution of Japan's maritime security initiatives by documenting major events and offering new insights into the most important milestones and inflection points associated with that history. It also offers critical analysis of the narratives usually invoked to explain the decisions that drove these initiatives and their evolution. It finds that none of the current explanations are fully satisfactory.

The paper first describes the general relationship between Japan's comprehensive security and Southeast Asian maritime security. This section discusses Japanese dependency on regional sealanes of communication (SLOCs), defines critical terms and identifies the most important actors in this relationship. It also reviews the major publications related to Japan's maritime security policies and security relationship with Southeast Asia.

The second section provides a historical analysis of Japan's role in Southeast Asian maritime security, and postulates that Japanese initiatives in this arena have passed through three distinct phases. Unlike previous accounts that portray this history as a matter of gradual change, it demonstrates that the thresholds between each of these phases marked a very rapid expansion of the Japanese agencies and partner organizations involved. In terms of policy goals and agencies involved, there was little change within the phases. During the first phase (1969-1998), the Japanese initiatives focused exclusively on navigation safety. During the second phase (1999-2009), Southeast Asian civilian maritime law enforcement capabilities were also targeted by the Japanese efforts. Expansion of the CBAs to include Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) support for regional constabulary capacity marked the transition into the third phase (2010-present). Throughout all three phases Japan has shown a consistent preference for multinational approaches, but because of the nature of Southeast Asian multilateral institutions, most of the implementation has been done on a mini-lateral or bilateral basis with the coastal states (Nguyen, p. 222; Nankivell, 2018; Koga, 2017, pp. 67-79). Thus, the paper discusses Japan's initiatives implemented in partnership with the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN-related bodies such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+), and bilaterally with coastal states.

In the third section, the paper discusses the most prevalent explanations for the way these initiatives have developed by grouping them into four clusters based on the key variables considered. Commentators and analysts most commonly rely on explanations in the first cluster. These narratives focus on understanding the policies as direct reactions to security threats. Narratives in the second cluster explain that the initiatives are better understood as the outcome of a domestic policymaking competition governed by norms and laws. Third cluster explanations emphasize confidence in the U.S. Alliance, American demands, and other factors related to alliance management as the key variables at play with respect to policymaking. The fourth cluster narratives regard desires to fulfill Japan's national responsibility, foster its prestige and enhance its soft power as the main policy drivers. Each explanation cluster is analyzed in terms of the academic literature

relevant to its narratives. The clusters are also critically evaluated for validity and usefulness. The paper concludes by comparing the merits of the competing explanations and forecasting what is likely on the horizon for Japan's involvement in Southeast Asian maritime security.

## **SECTION I. JAPAN'S COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN MARITIME SECURITY**

Japan is a large and, by many measures, very powerful country. Its economy is the world's third largest, accounting for nearly six percent of total global GDP (Gray A., 2017). This economic strength enables a population of well over one hundred million people to enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living. Japan is also a densely-populated island nation with limited natural resources, so its economic vitality is powered by international trade, most of that carried by ships that traverse Southeast Asian waters (Woolley, 2005). Studies frequently estimate that 95% of Japan's energy imports and 40% of its total trade pass through Southeast Asian waters (Aizawa, 2014, p. 5). Therefore, geography dictates recognition that the safety and security of the SLOCs approaching Japan to be central to Japanese national prosperity (Graham, 2006, pp. 8-31; Storey, 2013, p. 135). Japanese influence, however, may not reflect its relative power and Southeast Asia's SLOCs are neither particularly safe nor secure.

The relationship between maritime safety and maritime security is close, yet nuanced (Bateman, 2000). This is particularly true regarding Japan's relationship with Southeast Asian SLOCs because in recent decades the predominant threats endanger sailors and impede traffic, but do not pose a direct threat of seaborne invasion against the Japanese homeland. Thus, from a Japanese perspective, Southeast Asian maritime safety and maritime security are two sections of a single spectrum that share a blurry and imprecise border. Furthermore, as in other major languages such as French and Chinese, Japanese vocabulary does not clearly distinguish between safety and security. In Japanese, both safety and security are commonly translated into Japanese as "安全" or "*anzen*." Further complicating the situation, in English, there is neither a legal definition nor a consensus regarding the precise meaning of "maritime security." It is commonly accepted, however, that the term includes both traditional and non-traditional threats (Nguyen, p. 215). Therefore, in this paper, "maritime security" conceptually includes safety, non-traditional security, and traditional security in the maritime domain.

### **Japan and Maritime Security Risks in Southeast Asia**

Across Southeast Asia, maritime security is disrupted by non-traditional and traditional threats. In recent decades, cyclones, typhoons, tsunamis and coastal floods have killed hundreds of thousands and impacted millions more (Ahn, Bradford, Newberry, & Wescott, 2012, pp. 54-7). In 2004, a single tsunami killed more than a quarter-million people in Indonesia and Thailand (Elleman, 2007). In recent decades, ferry disasters have claimed thousands of additional victims. Between 2014 and 2017, three airliners crashed into the ocean and a fourth simply disappeared. Each year, tens of billions of dollars' worth of fish and other maritime resources are harvested through illegal, unregulated or unreported (IUU) means thereby undermining good order at sea and perpetuating poverty ashore (Holland, 2017). Analysts warn that Southeast Asian fisheries stocks are on the brink of a collapse that could yield a major regional shock (DeRidder & Nindang, 2018). The pirates operating in these waters draw even more Japanese attention. The Southeast Asian piracy threat appeared to peak in the early 2000s, but the scourge has not been eliminated. In fact, over one thousand attacks against ships have been reported in Southeast Asia in the last dozen years (ICC

International Maritime Bureau, 2006-2018).<sup>1</sup> Even though the current capability of maritime terrorists and pirates is debated, a major attack that interrupts trade remains a dangerous possibility (Miranda, 2016).

Escalating tensions and increasingly aggressive state actions related to contested territorial claims in the South China Sea also threaten Japan's security. Japanese strategic thinkers worry about the subsequent interruption to commerce that would likely occur if tensions boil over into conflict, (Jimbo, 2012). Furthermore, it is generally understood that a maritime war, blockade, or other state action impeding freedom of navigation in the South China Sea would be catastrophic to the Japanese economy (Graham, 2006, pp. 8-31; Yamamoto, 2016, p. 75). These South China tensions are also of great strategic concern to Japan because China, the most aggressive of South China Sea claimants, seems to be using similar strategies to gain the upper hand in disputes with Japan over the control of islands and sea space in the East China Sea. Therefore, for Japanese strategic thinkers, the East and South Chinas Seas are inextricably linked (Storey, 2013, p. 137).

Southeast Asian states maintain various levels of capacity to prevent and respond to these maritime threats. For example, Indonesia and the Philippines suffer from severe shortfalls in terms of resources needed to provide maritime security in their vast archipelagos and gigantic exclusive economic zones (EEZs). Other states have greater maritime security capacity in proportion to the size of their populations and waters, but still find the challenges difficult. Malaysia suffers from recurring maritime raids on the east coast of Sabah and its waters have witnessed more than 60 pirate attacks in the last five years (ICC International Maritime Bureau, 2017, p. 6). Thailand and Vietnam have been under threat of European Union sanctions because of their inability to police the fishing operations of their vessels. In contrast, Singapore, a wealthy state with sophisticated security forces, ensures the safety and security of its relatively small sea territory against non-traditional threats. No Southeast Asian state has the naval strength to deter Chinese military actions and thus they rely on diplomatic tools and extra-regional support.

Japan has employed its state power to counter these maritime threats through various avenues. Predominantly, it has encouraged private industry to protect itself and take appropriate precautions against non-state threats while relying on the U.S.-Japan Alliance to deter state actors. Beyond safety legislation and advocacy aimed at private sector operations, the Japanese government has fostered CBAs through non-governmental foundations that are established through and operated under the basis of tight public-private linkages. The most important of these has been the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation (JSIF), an organization founded by 1962 legislation. This organization, initially headed by Ryoichi Sasakawa, an influential political organizer and financier closely tied to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, was vested with legal authority to use profits from motorboat racing gambling operations regulated by the Transportation Ministry to administer grants fostering the development of the Japanese shipping industry (Nippon Foundation, *Foundation History 1951-1970*, n.d.). Since motorboat racing is one of the few legal forms of gambling in Japan, these profits have been quite significant. In fact, in 1976 the concessions entrusted to the JSIF reportedly equaled Japan's entire defense expenditures for the previous fiscal year (Central Intelligence Agency, 1981). Over time, JSIF's mandate grew to include a wide range of international philanthropies including international maritime security. Ryoichi Sasakawa passed away in 1995 and

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<sup>1</sup> Although acts of robbery must meet very specific criteria to be defined as piracy under international law, this paper draws on previous scholarship from Japan's National Institute of Defense Studies (NIDS) to conceptualize piracy as, "a broad concept including all acts of robbery, seizure of cargo, and seizure of vessels in ports and harbors, territorial waters, exclusive economic waters, and on the high seas." Susumu Takai, "Suppression of Modern Piracy and the Role of the Navy," *NIDS Security Reports*, No. 4, NIDS, Tokyo, March 2003, pp. 38-58.

in 1996 JSIF changed its name to the Nippon Foundation (Nippon Foundation, Foundation History 1991-2010, n.d.). Throughout this history, the organization has played a prominent role in Southeast Asian maritime security, coordinating with the Japanese government to pursue shared goals (Nankivell, 2018). Other private organizations involved have included the Japan Maritime Foundation, the Japan Shipowners' Association, and the Japan Maritime Center (Khalid, 2009, p. 9).

Japanese ministries and relevant agencies have also been active in maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia. In June 1962, Japan established the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency, an organization renamed the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 1974. This is Japan's lead agency for providing bilateral aid in the form of technical cooperation, Japanese overseas development assistance (ODA) loans and grant aid (Japan International Cooperation Agency, n.d.). The Ministry of Transportation (merged with other ministries to form the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism or MLIT in 2001) has also played a large role by executing CBAs to protect the safety of Japanese shipping. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and other agencies have made additional contributions. For ease of reference, this paper follows the convention of Japanese government publications and normally refers to the ministries and agencies by their current names.

### **Japan's Maritime Forces**

Japan maintains two highly capable maritime forces. The Imperial Japanese Navy was dissolved in 1945 and many of its experts were employed by the Maritime Safety Agency (MSA) that was established under the MLIT in 1948. Its original mission was to protect Japanese fishing vessels and clear coastal waters of the approximately 100,000 sea mines laid during World War II. In 1952, the maritime Guard Forces was formed under the MSA and equipped with former U.S. Navy frigates and landing craft. With the 1954 creation of the SDF, this body became the JMSDF and focused its early energy on minesweeping and anti-submarine activities employed to contain North Korea and the Soviet Union. In the proceeding decades, the JMSDF took on the function of a Navy responsible for national defense and SLOC defense and became especially active in military surveillance (Bradford, 2017, p. 767). The MSA remained a coast guard body responsible for law enforcement and maintaining the security of Japanese waters against non-military threats; its name was officially revised in English to Japan Coast Guard (JCG) in April 2000. Currently the JCG has a role in providing for the safety and security of sealanes (*kaijo kotsu no anzen kakuho*), but does not have a mandate to defend SLOCs against military threats. Though some analysts suggest the militarization of the JCG, this distinction is firmly entrenched in service doctrine and in the minds of government officials and the officer corps of the JCG and JMSDF (Samuels, Japan's Emerging Grand Strategy, 2007, p. 78).

Figure 1 adapts Ken Booth's classic formulation of the roles of maritime forces and builds on its variations found in various international naval doctrines to display the roles of the JCG and JSMDF as three sides of a triangle: diplomatic, military and constabulary roles (Booth, 1977, pp. 15–6). Both the JCG and JMSDF are involved in diplomatic activities. Only the JMSDF performs in the military role, though Chinese "gray area activities" in Japanese-claimed waters have pressed the JCG into closely related functions when confronting Chinese coast guard and maritime militia activities. Overlapping jurisdictions involved in constabulary roles that support good order at sea through activities such as law enforcement, search and rescue, disaster response, peacekeeping, anti-piracy and counter-terrorism make the third side of the triangle more complex. While the JCG is responsible for maritime security within Japan's waters, both the JMSDF and JCG play roles in countering non-state threats beyond Japan's EEZ. Here the term "constabulary" is used as in Ian Speller's formulation rather than Booth's "policing" to avoid the confusion that could emerge because the JMSDF has no authority to conduct law enforcement activities (Speller, 2014, pp. 150-

3). This formulation is more similar to Australian naval doctrine where law enforcement is a subset of constabulary, than British doctrine where there is no such distinction or U.S. doctrine that very rarely uses the term “constabulary.”

**Figure 1. The Three Roles of Japan Maritime Forces**



In Southeast Asia, Japan has chosen to almost exclusively promote maritime security by helping strengthen the capacity of the coastal states which, by nature of geography, hold the bulk of the legal responsibility for providing safety and security in the region’s relatively narrow seas. This effort began in the 1960s. A scholarly definition of maritime security capacity building is, “activities which are directed at the empowerment of governments and coastal communities to efficiently and efficaciously govern and sustainably exploit the maritime domain, including territorial waters and exclusive economic zones” (Beuger, 2014, p. 4). Japan’s MOD puts it more simply: capacity building activities, e.g. “help another country improve its own capacity by utilizing Japan’s capacity” (Japan Ministry of Defense Capacity Building Assistance, n.d.). To date, Japan’s maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia have included grants, loans, infrastructure projects, expertise sharing, training programs, scholarships, maritime exercises, and equipment transfers. All arms of the Japanese state’s maritime power: foundations, relevant ministries and agencies, the JCG and JMSDF have become involved in this effort. All-in-all, Japan competes with the United States as the leading extra-regional contributor to Southeast Asian maritime security capacity building, doing much more than the United States in some sectors (Koh S. L., 2018). More specifically, it is regarded as the primary extra-regional contributor to the maintenance and improvement of safety of navigation in the Strait of Malacca (Permal S. , 2017).

**Previous Examinations of Japan’s Maritime Security Posture in Southeast Asia**

Given the attention that has been focused on matters of Southeast Asian maritime security, it is surprising that the literature, especially that published in English, examining Japan’s role in regional maritime security remains sparse. There are no books on the topic in English, though some books do address fields related to Japan’s maritime security posture. Auer (1973), Wooley (2000) and Patalano (2015) provide definitive histories of the JMSDF and thereby lay essential foundations for this paper. However, these books tell us little about the motivations of Japan’s maritime security strategic decision-making processes beyond those directly involving the JMSDF. Woolley (2005) and Graham (2006) examine these wider strategic policy questions: Graham focuses on Japan’s reactions to maritime vulnerabilities while Woolley describes Japan’s strategic decisions as a product of geography. However, neither devote much energy looking specifically at initiatives in Southeast Asia and both were published more than a decade ago, leaving many years of strategic policymaking unevaluated. The more up-to-date Black (2014) argues that domestic and international anti-militarist norms caused Japan to be exceptionally innovative in its maritime security efforts with the JCG

having been given an exclusive role. The book further argues that this development did not necessarily presage militarization as would be assumed based on the assessments of other works describing the evolution of Japanese security policies such as Green (2001) and Hughes (2007). Black (2014) compiled a great deal of data and made a meaningful contribution to understanding Japan's maritime security strategy (Kotani, 2015; Hughes, 2016). The work, however, is only of limited value now that the SDF has become an active participant in Southeast Asian maritime security CBAs.

There are also some doctoral theses relevant to this discussion, but they focus on topics different from the material discussed in this paper. For example, Black (2006) examines Japan's anti-piracy initiatives in Southeast Asia as one case study alongside Japan's response to North Korean spy boat activities and global maritime terrorism, but does not discuss maritime security topics beyond piracy nor look at the activities of the JMSDF. Patalano (2008) discusses the influence of history and tradition on Japan's naval strategy. Bienvenue (2014) compares Japanese and Chinese maritime diplomacy in Southeast Asia, but does not consider capacity building and does not discuss developments after 2009.

A handful of journal articles and book chapters discuss topics related to the strategic decision making involved with Japanese maritime security initiatives in Southeast Asia during the second phase. None, however, get to the heart of questions regarding what Japan has been doing and why it has been making specific policy decisions. Among the oldest, Bradford (2004) discusses Japanese policy motivations for anti-piracy initiatives and coastal state responses early in the second phase of Japan's maritime security CBAs. It does not analyze maritime security efforts beyond anti-piracy and incorporates only a thin analysis pertaining to Japanese policymaking decisions. Manicom (2009) builds directly on these foundations by updating the data and arguing that Japan's focus on Southeast Asian SLOC security in the Post-Cold War was motivated by four factors: (1) the structural insecurity of the region, (2) the institutionalization of Japanese organizations with vested interests in maritime security, (3) the actual threat of piracy, and (4) the rise of PRC naval power (Manicom, 2010, pp. 34-5). Together, these two articles offer solid treatment of the second phase, but neither predicted the changes in policy that ushered in the third phase.

Since the start of the third phase, the Japanese CBAs have received more analytical attention and are brought up more frequently in academic articles and book chapters. Storey (2013) explores questions regarding Japan's interests in the South China Sea and analyzes its policy responses, but capacity building is given only two pages of discussion. Midford (2015) discusses Japan's use of regional multilateralism, ODA and JCG activities to support capacity building in ASEAN states, but also focuses its analysis to the contemporary South China Sea territorial disputes. Yamamoto (2016) stands out for its excellent analysis of the evolving relationship between ODA and security in Japanese foreign policy. This insight is essential to contextualize Japan's maritime security CBAs, but the maritime security issues themselves are not analyzed. Shoji (2016) is one of the first works to include an assessment of the MOD-led capacity building assistance programs that began in 2012. It argues that the MOD CBAs are one of the strategic options employed by Japan to strengthen security ties with Southeast Asia during a period of increased competition between major powers and to sustain freedom of navigation based on the rule of law. Patalano (2017) describes the strategic value of JMSDF diplomatic activities in Southeast Asia as contributing to Japan's wider strategic goals in the region. When these works are read together, the collective analysis is gapped and often conflicting. Despite this recent wave of articles, there remains no single source analyzing the history of Japan's maritime security CBAs nor a dedicated analysis explaining why the CBAs have taken their shapes.

## SECTION II. THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE MARITIME SECURITY INITIATIVES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THREE PHASES

The fifty-year history of Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia can be understood as having passed through three distinct phases. The first phase spanned from the late 1960s to around the year 1999. This phase can be thought of as the “Navigation Safety Phase” because efforts were focused on preventing accidents such as groundings, collisions and polluting discharges. These initiatives were delivered by Japanese foundations and the relevant ministries and agencies. The second phase began around the year 1999 and can be called the “Navigation Safety + Maritime Law Enforcement Phase” because Japan, with the JCG now assuming a central role, began assisting Southeast Asian law enforcement agencies to develop their capacity to deal with maritime security threats. The third, and current, phase began in 2010, when the MOD and SDF became involved in these initiatives and Southeast Asian Defense Ministries and militaries became regular partners. However, MOD and JMSDF CBAs have been limited to maritime security capacity and have not supported partners’ military roles. Therefore, the third phase can be called the “Navigation Safety + Maritime Law Enforcement + Naval Constabulary Phase.”

Figure 2 summarizes the timelines and organizations involved in the three phases. Drawing on the central concept of Nankivell (2018) that persuasively argues that the new Japanese maritime security activities in Southeast Asia represented a “status quo plus” situation, the table uses a “+” to show which roles and organizations were added to Japan’s policy efforts at the start of phases two and three. Another way to think about this evolution is to think of navigation safety, maritime law enforcement and naval constabulary activities as three layers, with a new layer being added at the start of each new phase.

**Figure 2: The Three Phases of Japan’s Maritime Security CBAs in Southeast Asia**

Phase	Name	Approximate Period	Japanese Organizations Involved	Southeast Asian Partner Organizations
1	Navigation Safety Phase	1969-1998	Foundations, JICA, MLIT, MOFA	Transportation & Infrastructure Authorities
2	Navigation Safety + Maritime Law Enforcement Phase	1999-2009	Foundations, JICA, MLIT, MOFA + JCG	Transportation & Infrastructure Authorities + Maritime Police and Coast Guards
3	Navigation Safety & Maritime Law Enforcement + Naval Constabulary Phase	2010-Present	Foundations, JICA, MLIT, MOFA, JCG + MOD & JMSDF	Transportation & Infrastructure Authorities, Police & Coast Guards + Defense Ministries & Navies

### Phase 1: Navigation Safety Phase (approx. 1969-1998)

The first phase, or “Navigation Safety Phase,” of Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia began in the late 1960s. At this time, Japan’s merchant fleet had become the world’s second largest and its rapidly expanding industrial economy had become reliant on Southeast Asian SLOCs. Indonesia’s confrontation with Malaysia ended in 1966 restoring stability along that maritime border thus enabling the commonwealth navies to stand down from their patrols and setting the stage for the 1969 birth of ASEAN. However, by the end of the decade it was clear that in the war taking place on the western littorals of the South China Sea, South Vietnam, the United States and their Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) allies were losing against the communist forces

marshalled by North Vietnam. The 1969 Nixon Doctrine suggested an American withdrawal of its commitment to conventional conflicts in the region, putting Japanese shipping in a more vulnerable position.

The landmark event signposting the start of the Navigation Safety Phase was the March 1969 founding of the Malacca Strait Council (MSC), a Tokyo-based organization sponsored by the Nippon Foundation. They began immediately working closely with MLIT and JICA to provide for improved navigation safety and environmental protection around the Strait of Malacca (Malacca Strait Council; Kato, 2013). The MSC's first-year activities included the installation and commitment to maintain aids to navigation in partnership with MLIT and the commencement of hydrographic surveys conducted with JICA funding. In the 1970s the MSC's maritime security CBAs included the removal of shipwrecks, the provision of an oil skimming vessel to Singapore, the donation of a buoy tender to Malaysia, and dredging work in the Singapore Strait (Kato, 2013; Kato, 2015).

As the first phase progressed, the Nippon Foundation's CBAs continued and JICA and MLIT began working directly with the partner governments. The JCG developed a modest and quiet role that did not include ship deployments or extended period of training. Instead, the JCG's capacity building assistance was more limited to the provision of specific expertise and channeled through other Japanese actors. These efforts were neatly aligned with Japan's expanding ODA activities in Southeast Asia that enabled regional development, then evolved into the basis for political cooperation, and eventually became a key ingredient of Japan's economic-centric security posture that emerged in the late 1970s (Shoji, 2015, p. 99). Then-Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda made a 1977 speech that became known as the Fukuda Doctrine, laying down key principles for Japan's relationship with Southeast Asia: heart-to-heart relationships, support for ASEAN, and an active political role in Southeast Asia (Er, 2013, p. 11).

After the Fukuda Doctrine, Japan's ODA remained low-profile and decoupled from political objectives and Japan's contribution to Southeast Asia would not include a military role or seek to fill the power vacuum left by the withdrawal of U.S. forces (Yamamoto, 2016, p. 73; Hughes, 2004, p. 13; Koga K., 2017). By the early 1980s this relationship nestled within a foreign policy that academics have described using adjectives such as "mercantilist" (Johnson, 1982) and "reactive" (Calder, 1988). This became an important element of what would become known as Japan's "comprehensive security" doctrine (Chapman, Grow, & Drifte, 2012; Yamamoto, 2016, p. 74). The few Japanese initiatives that included law enforcement aspects were carried out by private foundations. These included a subsidiary of the Nippon Foundation providing seed-money for the founding of the International Maritime Bureau Piracy Center established in Kuala Lumpur in 1992 (Nguyen, p. 222).

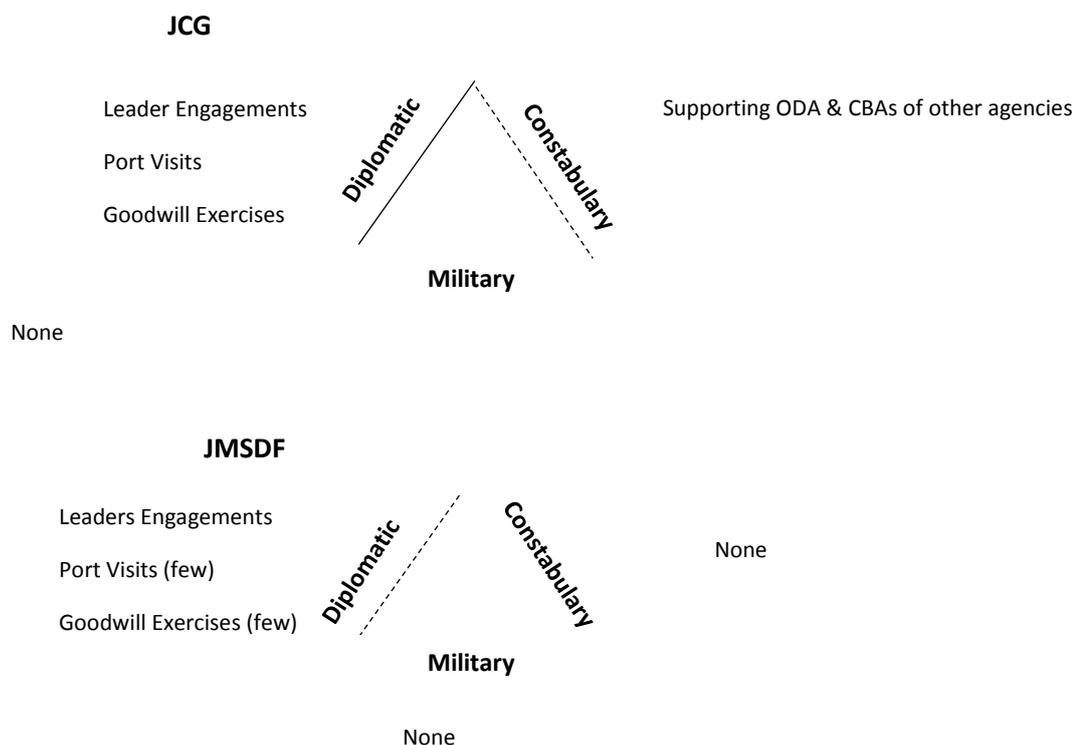
During the first phase, the SDF was not involved in Southeast Asian maritime security; its activities in the region were strictly limited to occasional diplomatic roles. Then-Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki's 1981 announcement that the JMSDF would begin defending SLOCs up to 1000 nautical miles (nm) from Japan was specifically measured to stop short of the South China Sea (Auer, 1996). This doctrine and the acquisition of P-3C maritime patrol aircraft was squarely focused on countering Soviet forces operating from Pacific ports (Hook, 1996, p. 49). Looking south, Japanese policymakers from the period relate that this was not out of sensitivity for China, a country not regarded as a credible threat due to its lack of maritime capability, but out of respect for Southeast Asian sensibilities (Hoshuyama, 1996; Nishiro, 1995).

Two other landmark events for Japanese security policy involved SDF ships using Southeast Asian SLOCs: the 1991 deployment of vessels to support mine clearance after the Gulf War and the 1993 deployment of JS *Towanda* as part of Japan's support for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in

Cambodia. Neither of these operations could be considered capacity-building nor had a direct impact on regional maritime security. The JMSDF also undertook a small number of port visits and goodwill activities in Southeast Asia that are best categorized as diplomatic efforts. Most notable of the activities in the category are the intermittent regional port visits that took place in conjunction with the JMSDF's annual training cruise; senior leader meetings; and nascent navy-to-navy talks, the first of which were held in 1997 (Katzenstein & Okawara, 2001, p. 159).

The roles of the JCG and JMSDF in Southeast Asia during this phase are shown in Figure 3. In this depiction, the sides of the triangles each represent one of the three roles of Japanese maritime forces: Diplomatic, Constabulary and Military. Solid lines show that, during the period being depicted, the force was actively engaged in activities and operations related to that role. A dashed line represents a situation where the force has conducted some activities in support of the roles, but was not routinely doing so. The lack of a line means that the force was not active in that role. The lines depict actual activities; the authorities to perform in that role are certainly related factors, but are not explicitly shown in these diagrams.

**Figure 3. Roles of Japan Maritime Forces in Southeast Asia During Phase 1 (1969-1998)**



**Phase 2: Navigation Safety + Maritime Law Enforcement Phase (approx. 1999-2009)**

The second phase of Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia took root in discussions regarding new roles for Japan's maritime forces that took place in the mid-1990s. In particular, studies launched in 1996 at the National Institute of Defense Studies (NIDS), the government's premier security research institution, yielded the Ocean-Peace Keeping (OPK) concept under which regional navies could contribute to standing forces that would provide comprehensive maritime security in both international and national waters. NIDS promoted the concept through a series of publications and conferences, also introducing it to maritime meetings, including the

Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP) Maritime Working Group and the General Assembly of the Independent World Commission on Oceans (Takai & Akimoto, 2000, pp. 58-69). Although the OPK concept was eventually disregarded as impractical and an unconstitutional use of the SDF, these discussions sowed seeds for expanded roles for Japan's maritime forces. The rapidly growing piracy problem in the Strait of Malacca, including a spate of attacks against Japanese ships, that took place in the wake of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis catalyzed the change. In particular, the 1999 hijacking of *Alondra Rainbow*, a ship only recovered after the Indian Navy acted with force, captured headlines and spurred discussion among policymakers (Bradford, 2004, pp. 489-90). After that event, Japan's maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia expanded very quickly to include maritime law enforcement efforts and to involve a new major role for the JCG.

Then-Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi kick-started the second phase at the December 1999 ASEAN +3 summit when he sought international cooperative action against piracy by proposing a three-part action plan consisting of the establishment of a regional "Coast Guard body," the strengthening of state support for shipping companies, and the improvement of regional coordination to respond to attacks (Chanda, 2000). This proposition was quickly discarded due to strong resistance from China, Japan pressed ahead with less ambitious initiatives (Huang, 2006, p. 93). In April 2000, MOFA, MLIT, and the JCG co-hosted a Regional Conference on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships and in September Foreign Minister Yohei Kono dispatched representatives from MOFA, MLIT, JICA and JCG on The Mission for Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships. This group travel to the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia to conduct a survey and exchange opinions on specific cooperation and assistance measures with these countries (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.). Under the leadership of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, the government of Japan continued this effort as an element of its broader effort to strengthen regional cooperation to address non-traditional security issues such as terrorism, piracy and human trafficking (Shoji, 2015, p. 99).

The October 2000 terror attack on *USS Cole* and September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States highlighted the risk of maritime terror to all of Japan's SLOCs, and were followed by the passing of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law under which the JMSDF provided refueling support to the invasion of Afghanistan. Successful operations by Al-Qaeda affiliates in Southeast Asia, such as Jemaah Islamiyah and the maritime-savvy Abu Sayyaf, and high-profile maritime terror attacks, such as that against *MV Limburg*, underscored the potential for a maritime terror attack that disrupts Southeast Asian SLOCs (Richardson, 2004). The piracy and terror threats were sometimes conflated as both could use similar tactics or exploit similar weakness in the maritime traffic system. After piracy emerged as a major threat around the Gulf of Aden, Japan began deploying JMSDF ships and aircraft in 2009 with support from the JCG and other branches of the SDF to collaborate with the international naval response. Meanwhile, in Southeast Asia, Japanese efforts retained their focus on improving navigation safety and expanding anti-piracy capacity as the primary maritime security objectives with counter-terrorism as a lower order concern (Fouse & Sato, 2006). The implementing bodies remained Japanese foundations, relevant ministries and agencies, and the JCG.

At the October 2001 Asian Cooperation Conference on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships at the ASEAN+3 meeting hosted in Tokyo, the Japanese delegates pressed for joint patrols and offered regional forces equipment, vessels, and training (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Takei, 2003). The following month, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi proposed preparation of a legal framework for promoting regional cooperation to effectively cope with piracy problems in Asia. That effort culminated when fourteen Asian states launched the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) in November 2006 (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ajia kaizoku taisaku chiiki kyōryoku kyōtei, n.d.).

Working in parallel to these diplomatic efforts, the Japan Coast Guard quickly stepped in to take a larger, more direct, and higher profile role in Southeast Asian maritime security CBAs. The most visible element of this expansion is the initiation of ship deployments to conduct bilateral anti-piracy exercises with regional partners. In 2000, the year following Obuchi's ASEAN + 3 proposal, the JCG held its first exercises with India and Malaysia (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.). The inaugural exercises with the Philippines and Thailand followed in 2001, with Brunei and Indonesia in 2002, and with Singapore in 2003 (JCG International Criminal Investigation Division, 2004). Since then, the bilateral exercises have become a regularly repeated series and in 2017 the Japan-Philippines exercise hosted multinational partners (Parameswaran, ASEAN-Japan Coast Guard Cooperation in the Spotlight With Philippines Exercise, 2017).

After nearly two decades of cooperation, the JCG exercises in Southeast Asia are now sometimes casually referred to as "patrol exercises." Because they now routinely occur in high-crime areas such as the Sulu Sea, they are thought of by some analysts as de facto cooperative enforcement operations where the JCG lacks authority, but provides high-end law enforcement operational assistance (Nankivell, 2018). Also in 2000, the JCG began deploying experts to Southeast Asia for periods of long term residency. After the first position was established in the Philippines (Search and Rescue focused), additional positions were added in 2002 (working with the nascent Philippine Coast Guard), 2003 (working with Indonesia's Ministry of Communication), 2005 (working with the newly established Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, abbreviated to MMEA), and 2007 (working with the newly established Indonesian Maritime Security Coordinating Board, or *Badan Koordinasi Keamanan Laut*, abbreviated to BAKORKAMLA). In 2012, the JCG entered into a cooperative arrangement with the Vietnam Maritime Police (VMP), but cooperation was constrained until 2013 when the VMP changed its English-language name to the Marine Coast Guard and removed legal linkages to the Vietnamese Ministry of Defense (Nguyen, 2013, p. 224; Shoji, 2015, pp. 108-9).

During the second phase, JCG maritime law enforcement CBAs were neatly coupled with those that had long been underway with Japanese foundations and other government agencies. In some cases, the existing line of effort which focused on navigation safety continued without JCG involvement. For example, in 2003 the Malacca Straits Council transferred the buoy tender vessel *Pedoman* (second ship with the same name) to Malaysia and the buoy tender vessel *Jadayat* to Indonesia (Malacca Straits Buoy Tender Replaced, 2002; Ceremony Held to Celebrate Completion of Buoy Tender KD Jadayat for Indonesia, 2004). In others, the efforts of the foundations and civilian government agencies were intertwined. Nippon Foundation money was central to the 2004 launch of the Heads of Asian Coast Guard meetings, the first of which was held in Tokyo in June 2004 under the sponsorship of MOFA and the ARF (Nguyen, p. 224). Similarly, in 2005 a maritime security seminar co-hosted by MOFA, MLIT and the JCG attracted representatives from regional civilian maritime security bodies (Fouse & Sato, 2006). Both the MMEA and BAKORKAMLA were established with noteworthy ODA and JCG support (Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency, n.d.; Raj, 2009). Through this period, ODA was generally seen as the central pillar of the comprehensive security package to deal with piracy and its sources (Hughes, 2004, p. 224.)

As the second phase progressed, the SDF also more regularly ventured into Southeast Asia in its diplomatic role. JMSDF ships routinely called in Southeast Asian ports while in transit to and from their operations in the Indian Ocean. These visits were often complemented by small-scale professional exchanges and simple goodwill exercises. Due to the ad hoc nature and lack of specific training objectives, these goodwill exercises cannot be categorized as CBAs. They did however, build familiarity with the region and establish relationships that would be useful in the third phase.

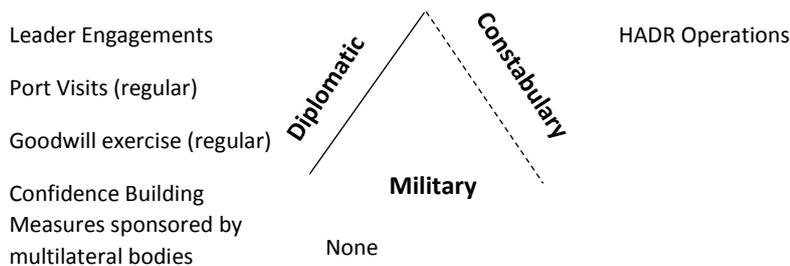
The JMSDF also began to participate in confidence building activities sponsored by multilateral organizations. For example, in 2001, it began sponsoring Next-Generation Naval Officer training programs for members of the Western Pacific Naval Symposium and in 2005 the JMSDF participated in the inaugural Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) at-sea exercise that was hosted by the Republic of Singapore Navy in the South China Sea (Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College; Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs). After this WPNS exercise, maritime exercises sponsored by multilateral organizations such as WPNS, ARF and ADMM+ became regular features in Southeast Asia and the JMSDF has been a devoted participant (Shoji, 2015, p. 102). In the early years, many of these exercises sponsored by multilateral organizations were exclusively focused on HADR, but some were labeled “maritime security” and involved constabulary functions such as anti-piracy. During these years, multinational maritime security exercises were generally very simple and better categorized as confidence building than capacity building (Bradford & Adams, 2016, p. 6).

**Figure 4. Roles of Japan Maritime Forces in Southeast Asia During Phase 2 (1999-2009)**

**JCG**



**JMSDF**



Also of note during the second phase were the SDF’s disaster response operations in Thailand and Indonesia following the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The events associated with this disaster also led the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to begin organizing HADR exercises where the SDF, including JMSDF ships, became regularly involved. Similarly, the 2005 iteration of the major annual U.S.-Thailand military exercise Cobra Gold was reoriented toward disaster response and, in the same year, Japan joined that series for the first time (Slavin, 2005). However, as shown in Figure 4, throughout the second phase, the SDF’s role in Southeast Asia remained limited. Apart from the sparse activities previously mentioned, SDF operations in Southeast Asia and CBAs with Southeast Asian Ministries of Defense and militaries remained circumscribed until the start of the third phase.

Several changes in Japan's security posture that took place during the second phase set the stage for the third phase. In August of 2003 Japan's ODA Charter, previously completely isolated from security policy, was revised to specify "human security" as one of the areas where ODA could be applied (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs Overseas Development Assistance, n.d.). This new concept was demonstrated with the June 2006 ODA loan to Indonesia for three patrol vessels (Manicom, 2010, p. 37). These various activities were brought together under a single strategic umbrella with Foreign Minister Aso's announcement the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity Doctrine in 2000 (Patalano, 2017, p. 104).

### **Phase 3: Navigation Safety & Maritime Law Enforcement + Naval Constabulary Phase (2010-present)**

The third (and current) phase of Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia started in about 2010. Japan faced an increasingly strong and assertive Chinese posture regarding the territorial dispute in the East China Sea. At the same time, China clearly increased pressure on rival claimants in the South China Sea. In this period, the MOD and JMSDF began engaging regional defense ministries and militaries to build their constabulary capacities. Although MOD and JSDF support to regional armed forces remains limited to their constabulary capabilities and excludes projects that focus on building their capacities to conduct military operations, it is meaningful that Southeast Asian navies, frontline regional forces, now benefit from Japanese CBAs. The foundations, civilian agencies, and JCG continued, and the range of CBAs expanded to include actions taken by new Japanese organizations with new partners targeting new capabilities. In these years, Japan has faced an increasingly strong and assertive Chinese posture regarding the territorial dispute in the East China Sea and China has increased pressure on rival claimants in the South China Sea.

Transition into the third phase was marked by Japan's National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) of 2010, the first official stipulation that the JSDF would engage in CBAs with foreign militaries (Japan Ministry of Defense Capacity Building Assistance, n.d.). The inaugural operational event of this third phase was the 2010 deployment of the JMSDF amphibious transport ship JS *Kunishi* as a capacity building "boat of fraternity" that worked alongside the American hospital ship USNS *Mercy* in Cambodia and Vietnam under the umbrella of *Pacific Partnership*. Conceptualized after the successful deployment of *USNS Mercy* in response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, *Pacific Partnership* is an annual mission sponsored by the U.S. Navy that brings together NGOs, host nations and third-party national partners to improve capacity, enhance regional partnerships, and increase multilateral cooperation for HADR preparedness (Bradford, 2012; Task Force 73 Public Affairs, 2016; U.S. Pacific Fleet, n.d.). Per then-Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, this first ever JMSDF deployment to build capacity among Southeast Asian partners was designed to demonstrate, "that the Japanese government is proactively extending humanitarian assistance" (Japan May Use MSDF Vessels to Provide Medical Assistance to Disaster—Hit Areas Abroad, 2009). The SDF's planned participation for the 2011 iteration of *Pacific Partnership* was scaled back after the March 2011 Great Eastern Japan Earthquake, but in June 2012 JMSDF ships again joined the operation, supporting events taking place in the Philippines and Vietnam. The JMSDF and other Japanese bodies have been consistently involved ever since (Japan Maritime Self Defense Force, n.d.; Valdez, n.d.).

When, in 2010, the ADMM+ was established as a community that would go beyond "talk" and confidence-building to promote practical cooperation in non-traditional security, Japan immediately stepped in as an eager and active participant. Soon the ADMM+ became a key avenue for Japan to support the strengthening of its comprehensive relationship with ASEAN. The SDF were directed to provide active support for this organization's agenda to become a pillar of regional security

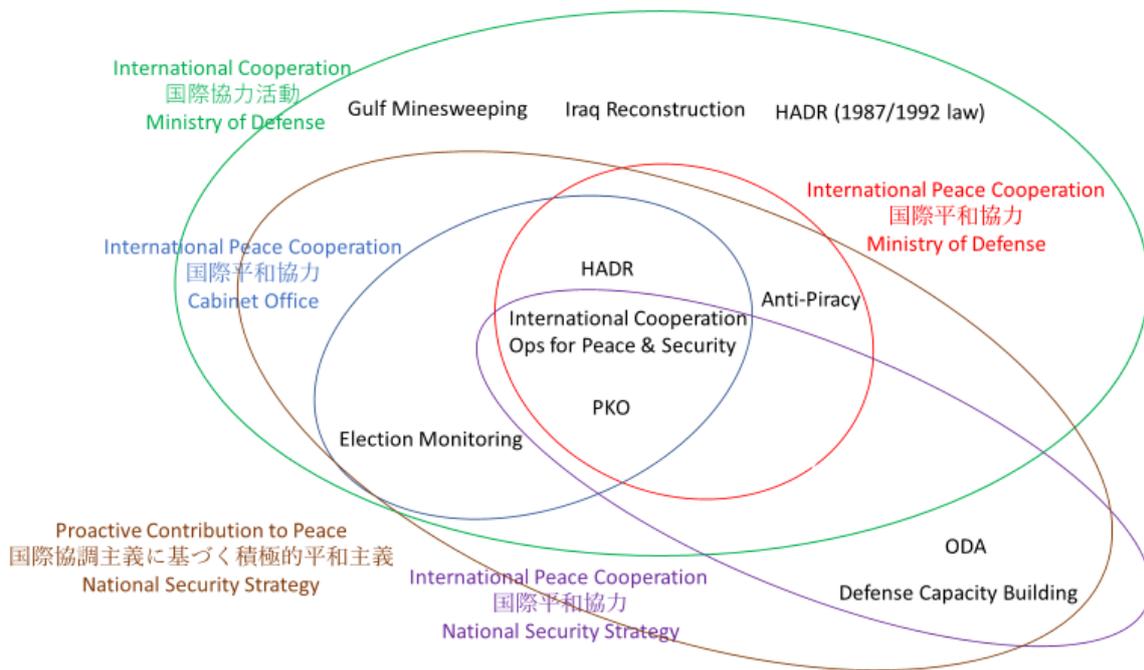
cooperation (Shoji, 2015, p. 102). Since then the JMSDF has often contributed the largest and most capable presence to multilateral maritime security exercises sponsored by the ADMM+ and other hosts in Southeast Asia

Under the management of a Capacity Building Assistance Office established within the MOD, the SDF began executing bilateral capacity building activities directed by the 2010 NDPG. The first event was an underwater medicine seminar held with the Vietnamese Navy in October 2012. This was followed by a February 2013 maritime security seminar focused on oceanography at the Indonesian Navy Maritime Operations Center in Jakarta. In 2014, the SDF's maritime security capacity building program expanded to Myanmar with an underwater medicine seminar held at Yangon, Second Military Hospital. These maritime security events have progressed alongside other SDF CBAs focused on building HADR and PKO in a total of ten countries (Japan Ministry of Defense, International Policy Division, Bureau of Defense Policy, 2016, pp. 2, 8-10; Japan Ministry of Defense, 2014, pp. 273-4).

The publication of Japan's first ever National Security Strategy (NSS) in December 2013 further solidified the role of the MOD and SDF in Southeast Asian maritime security CBAs. Key passages of the section titled, "ensuring maritime security" tells readers that, "Japan will take necessary measures to address various threats in searoutes of communication, including anti-piracy operations to ensure safe maritime transport and promote maritime security cooperation with other countries" (Japan National Security Council, 2013, p. 16) and, "Japan will provide assistance to those coastal states alongside the searoutes of communication and other states in enhancing their maritime law enforcement capabilities, and strengthen cooperation with partners on the searoutes who share strategic interests with Japan." (Japan National Security Council, 2013, p. 17). Later, the section describing "Promoting International Peace Cooperation" as an element of Japan's Proactive Contribution to Peace reads, "in order to implement seamless assistance in security-related areas, including through further strategic utilization of ODA and capacity building assistance, as well as coordination with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Japan will develop a system that enables assistance to potential recipient organizations that cannot receive Japan's assistance under the current schemes" (Japan National Security Council, 2013, p. 30). This statement was the first formal articulation of the securitization of Japan's ODA efforts (Yamamoto, 2016, p. 73).

Under the NSS, Japan's relationship with ASEAN steadily shifted away from its traditional economic focus to include security (Shoji, 2015, p. 97). Under Abe's Free and Open Seas doctrine announced in the same year, it was clear that Southeast Asian coastal states would be among the highest priority partners for security assistance. Even though, as authorized by the 2010 NDPG, MOD had been involved with maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia since 2010 and led dedicated bilateral activities since 2012, the NSS played an essential role in placing MOD-led defense capacity building together with ODA and NGO-led activities in stable orbit among Japan's international peace and security cooperation activities by including Defense Capacity Building as an element of both Japan's, "Proactive Contribution to Peace," and "International Peace Cooperation." Figure 5 draws upon various Japanese government websites and brochures to map these activities by the labels they are given in those sources.

**Figure 5: Japanese International Peace and Security Cooperative Activities**



In Nov 2016, Japanese Defense Minister Tomomi Inada announced the Vientiane Vision at the second ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting. This document was designed to serve as holistic guiding principle for Japan's defense cooperation with ASEAN. It centered Japan's efforts around three points: supporting order based on the principles of international law, especially in the field of maritime and air space; promoting maritime security through the building of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and Search and Rescue (SAR) capacities; and capability growth in other security fields (Japan Ministry of Defense, n.d.). Clearly focusing on maritime issues, the Vientiane Vision serves as the center of gravity for MOD activities and the signature Abe policy toward Southeast Asia, but it did not break new ground in terms of new authorities or funding streams.

The 2016 deployment of JS *Ise* exemplifies how, under the guidance of the Vientiane Vision, Japan would mobilize to both support the development of a multilateral security community and enhance the capacity of its neighbors. It also exemplified a JMSDF operation to support both the service's diplomatic and constabulary roles. *Ise* was the largest ship at the April 2016 *Komodo* multinational exercise hosted by Indonesia and then transited to the South China Sea with a cadre of midshipmen from WPNS navies onboard for training. During that transit, she also conducted a trilateral passing exercise with ships from Australia and the United States (Parameswaran, US Conducts Trilateral Naval Drill With Japan, Australia After Indonesia Exercise, 2016). After a goodwill visit to Manila, *Ise* was then the largest ship involved in the May 2016 ADMM+ Maritime Security/Counter-Terrorism Field Training Exercise that began in Brunei and concluded in Singapore. The following year, the largest ship in the JMSDF fleet, JS *Izumo*, made a similar deployment to Southeast Asia conducting a maritime security training program for officers from ASEAN navies while the ship was in the South China Sea, hosting President Rodrigo Duterte during a port visit to Manila and otherwise operating in a multi-role function.

As the SDF became more involved in Southeast Asian maritime security, Japan was reforming its arms export policies. In December 2010, Japan's Three Principles of Arms Exports were relaxed to allow supply of equipment for maintaining peace and international cooperation under a set of

narrow circumstances (Mizokami, 2011). Then, in 2014, the Government of Japan took a step further by replacing the “Three Principles on Arms Exports” with the “Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology” as a “set of clear principles on the overseas transfer of defense equipment and technology that fits the new security environment.” (Japan Ministry of Defense, Japan's Security Policy, n.d.). These reforms essentially ended many restrictions on weapons exports and enabled the 2017 transfer of two used JMSDF TC-90 training aircraft directly from the SDF to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) where they were redesignated as C-90s for use in maritime patrol. Three more aircraft were transferred to the AFP in 2018. These transfers are exceptionally notable because they represent the first examples of Japan providing military systems to a partner and, because they occurred directly between the defense ministries, not involving the ODA process. Although offering a significant boost to the Philippine’s ability to develop maritime domain awareness, this new capacity falls squarely into the AFP’s constabulary role. The C-90s are incapable of carrying weapons and do not incorporate the sort of electronic information collection and sharing system required for effective military surveillance.

**Figure 6. Roles of Japan Maritime Forces in Southeast Asia During Phase 3 (2010-Present)**



During the third phase, the JMSDF has also performed very limited military roles in Southeast Asia. In June 2011, a trilateral JMSDF-USN-RAN exercise in the South China Sea is noteworthy as the first use of the JMSDF in a military (vice diplomatic or constabulary) role in the space between the 1000nm SLOC defense arc and the Indian Ocean (Mizokami, 2011). Similarly, SDF officers observed the U.S.-Philippines Balikatan exercise in 2012 and annually thereafter with the observing details including two destroyers and a submarine in 2018. JMSDF submarine visits to Philippine port are also becoming regular. The Philippines has hosted other groundbreaking JMSDF deployments as maritime patrol exchange that involved a JMSDF P-3 and took place simultaneously with the U.S.-Philippines exercise CARAT 2015. In 2018, the JMSDF deployed a P-1 to the Philippines where it did more cooperative training. Previously, the P-1 had only been deployed overseas for airshows and for

a brief counter-piracy mission flying from Djibouti. These deployments are primarily diplomatic and many support constabulary CBAs, but they also may be considered military because some of the training may include defense-oriented skills and the South China presence offers some level of deterrence against state that wish to adjust the status quo contrary to international law and Japanese interests. Therefore, as shown in Figure 6, during the contemporary third phase the JMSDF’s roles in Southeast Asia clearly include supporting regional constabulary capacity, but only very limited military missions.

### SECTION III. EXPLANATIONS FOR JAPANESE MARITIME SECURITY CBAS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Although no dedicated study has sought to fully explain how the Japanese maritime security initiatives developed and adopted their forms, many narratives can be found in literature, meta-literature, and research discourse that offer partial explanations or assert assumptions about the drivers of those initiatives. Given the sparse nature of the literature specifically addressing these topics, most of the narratives emerge in conference discussion, in conversations between experts, and in the sub-text of publications on related topics. While the concept of the three-phase CBA history is unique to this paper, many of the narratives do recognize some sort of evolution. These narratives can be grouped into four clusters organized by the key variables they consider to be the predominant policy drivers. In this case, clusters are more useful than rigid categories because there is notable variety among the explanations and some are quite complex. Few of these narratives fall squarely into a single school of strategic studies research, but almost all reflect at least some established concepts. Some of the narratives may include thinking that crosses into more than one cluster, but almost all place sufficient weight on a certain set of key variables that they can be classified. It is also worth noting that these clusters do not necessarily all operate at the same level of analysis. In fact, the clusters reflect the explanations as they have been presented, not how they might be reformulated if their proponents were to directly debate one another. The clusters are summarized in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Key Elements of Explanation Clusters Associated with Japanese Maritime Security CBAs in Southeast Asia**

Explanation Cluster	Key Variables Considered	Related Strategic Studies Concepts
1. Response to Security Threats and Acquisition of State Power	Threats (traditional and non-traditional), Balance of Power, National Interest	Realism/Neo-realism, Liberalism/Neo-liberalism
2. Constrained Policy Making Competition	Norms, Legal Restrictions, Interests of Policymaking Groups, Relative influence of Policymaking Groups	Constructivism, Government/Bureaucratic Politics, Cultural Models, Organizational Models, Strategic Culture, Institutions, Securitization,
3. U.S.-Japan Alliance Management	U.S. Commitment and Capacity	Alliance Studies, Realism/Neo-realism, Liberalism/Neo-liberalism
4. National Reputation and Responsibility	Image, Prestige, Leadership Ideology	Soft Power, Nationalism, Honor

### **Explanation Cluster 1: Response to Security Threats and Acquisition of State Power**

Commentaries most frequently assume the Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia have been executed to build national power or otherwise respond to security threats. The prevalence of such narratives is unsurprising given the parsimony of explanations that draw upon Japan's dependence on maritime trade passing through Southeast Asian chokepoints. The explanations in this cluster see the three phase shifts as aligning with changes in the threats Japan faced within the evolving international security situation, typically either an emerging threat to Japanese SLOCs or realignments in the regional balance of power.

Cluster one explanations adopt the perspective of Japan as a unitary actor executing rational policies in its national interests. As such, the narratives within this cluster of explanations generally sit nicely in realist and neo-realist perspectives of Japanese foreign policy and regional dynamics. Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer are frequently mentioned authors when the explanations draw on concepts from academic international relations. Michael Green is a Japan specialist whose works are also often referenced in these narratives. Although books such as Green (2001) certainly acknowledge the roles of internal policy making and norms, he focuses on relative power and threat dynamics as the primary policy drivers. Pyle (2007) is another example of a realist analysis of Japan's security policy in Asia. Other discussions within this cluster share a focus on Japanese actions as being responses to security threats, but better align with neoliberal traditions emphasizing that Japan and the Southeast Asian states will cooperate when doing so is perceived to be net-beneficial to their interests. These narratives rarely mention, but frequently reflect, classic works of neo-liberalism such as Koehane (1985) and Oye (1986). Woolley's (2005) focus on the geographic determinations of Japan's strategic decisions and Graham's (2006) emphasis on Japanese dependency on SLOCs serve as examples of books focused on Japan's maritime affairs that support cluster one narratives.

When first cluster narratives, recall the 1960s, they see a period when the Japanese commercial fleet rapidly expanded, Japan's growing economy redeveloped its dependence on Southeast Asian SLOCs, U.S. support for regional security also appeared to crest, and the European former colonial powers completed their retreats from the region. Therefore, Japan launched the first phase navigation safety initiatives to protect its ships from prevalent dangers and to foster the economic viability of Japan's maritime sector. Because many of these safety-focused CBAs involved infrastructure development, they simultaneously protected Japanese shipping and aligned nicely with Japanese efforts to use investment as a means to increase leverage on Southeast Asian states.

Analysis from this cluster explains that when the piracy problem ballooned in the late 1990s, the CBAs entered the second phase because capacity building to counter these emerging criminal threats became a logical next-step forward in Japan's comprehensive approach to improving the security of Southeast Asian SLOCs (Kawamura, 2011). While most of the commentaries and analytical works emphasize non-traditional threats, some suggest that initiatives were a step toward expanding SDF military roles in Southeast Asia to counterbalance nascent Chinese maritime power. The PRC government appeared to share this suspicion while some Southeast Asian states seemed to welcome the Japanese initiatives for the very same reasons (Hughes, 2004, p. 23; Chandra, 2000; p. 29).

First cluster narratives explain that as the 2000s progressed, China became increasingly capable and assertive, thereby compelling Japan to respond by introducing new CBAs involving the MOD and SDF. The 2007 PLAN attack on a Vietnamese fishing boat that killed one sailor is sometimes mentioned as an important inflection point for Japanese concerns (Yamamoto, 2016, p. 75). More

frequently, the September 2010 detention of a Chinese fishing trawler captain who rammed JCG vessels in vicinity of the disputed Senkaku islands and the subsequent Chinese retaliatory measures are identified as the critical events setting the stage for the Phase Three responses. Exemplifying this line of thought, Kotani (2014) and Envall (2017) point to the Senkaku ramming incident as being among a string of others such as the March 2010 sinking of a South Korean Navy ship by North Korea, the April 2010 passage of ten PLAN ships through the Miyako Strait, the buzzing of JMSDF destroyers by PLA helicopters and North Korea's shelling of Yeonpyeong Island as providing a "wake up call" for the Japanese defense community that triggered a more robust maritime posture that included the new CBAs.

Shoji (2015) similarly tells readers that around 2010 Japan added additional maritime security elements to its relations with Asia to remain relevant in ASEAN in face of great competition with China, to improve the coastal states' ability to check China, and to ensure continued maritime security in Southeast Asian waters (p. 97, 101). A Japanese member of an East-West Center program explained the efforts are to strengthen the resilience of ASEAN members to employ their diplomatic power in resistance of China's "creeping expansion into contested territorial waters" (Limaye & Kikuchi, 2016, p. 6). Jimbo (2012) similarly explains that Japan's engagement toward ASEAN was reformulated in line with a regional security-oriented approach and that maritime security capacity was a policy focus to maintain a balance of power in the South China Sea that was favorable to Japanese interests. Similarly, Pugliese (2018) says that the activities serve to "balance against China by fostering the capacity building of South-East Asian countries concerned with their maritime safety." Analysis from STRATFOR similarly assesses the Vientiane Agreement to be a matter of military relationship-building that Japan is employing in response to growing Chinese maritime power and shortfall in Japanese deterrence capabilities (Fleming-Williams, 2017). Maslow (2018) seems unaware of Japan's long history of involvement in Southeast Asian maritime security casting maritime exercises, port calls and equipment transfers as a part of an Abe effort that has, "swiftly moved to entangle his country in securing the maritime order in the South China Sea."

According to some cluster one explanations, Japan's efforts in the third phase are confined to diplomatic and constabulary activities and labeled as *maritime security* to improve the Japanese strategic positions while minimizing new frictions with China and softening security dilemmas (Jimbo, 2012, p. 4). To many with this view, the non-state actor threats are merely cover issues used by Japanese government to mobilize resources against China. In other commentaries, the Japanese CBAs are understood as having been designed to promote Japan's security interests in the face of both traditional and non-traditional threats in the maritime domain (Permal S., 2017; Parameswaran, 2017). Storey (2013) tells readers,

As regards the South China Sea, Japan has rejected a military response as inappropriate. Japan is not a claimant, and such an approach would further inflame tensions with China. Instead, much as it did in response to increasing piracy attacks in Southeast Asian waters in the early 2000s, Japan seeks to mitigate its security concerns by promoting multilateral cooperation, supplemented by bilateral support for individual ASEAN members (pp. 149-50).

Although the capacities transferred to regional maritime forces are constabulary in nature, cluster one proponents generally assume they are expected to foster fungible capabilities that can either be reoriented to military roles or used in such a way that security resources currently dedicated to constabulary duties may be shifted to military roles. Maritime patrol and maritime domain awareness assets, such as the C-90 aircraft received by the Philippines, provide good examples of CBAs that are primarily constabulary in nature, but may have some military utility.

Cluster one explanations are attractive due to their parsimony. However, that simplicity is also a source of weakness. In fact, reviewing history through an analytical lens that correlates responses to threats and opportunities to gain power reveals questions about why Japan has at times seemed to show too much restraint and at other times appeared to over-invest in maritime security initiatives. These narratives poorly explain why Japan did not expand its activities throughout the thirty-year first phase, a period when Japan faced several notable shifts in the regional balance of power and new threats emerged. A purely realpolitik view would have predicted an expansion of Japanese power in Southeast Asia as U.S. power declined through the 1970s. Japan also might have reacted in a more meaningful way to Chinese seizures of the Paracel Islands, the entrenchment of the Soviet Navy in Cam Ranh Bay, the skirmishes involving contested features in the South China Sea, and the 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis, all of which placed increased leverage over Japan's critical SLOCs in the hand of rival states. Non-traditional threats such as the Indo-Chinese "boat people" crisis and the piracy scourge that it attracted, the Aceh rebellion being fought on the western shore of the Strait of Malacca, and a record-setting eighteen reported pirate attacks on Japanese shipping in 1991 also might have attracted Japanese attention during the first phase. Beyond Southeast Asia, the 1987-88 attacks on Japanese ships by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard also failed to trigger military responses (Woolley, 2000, pp. 113-4). This lack of strong Japanese responses suggests that variables other than threat and power must have been in play.

Threat is also a poor explanation for why Strait of Malacca piracy triggered rapid entry into the second phase. Although the piracy problem grew rapidly after the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, it was not an overwhelming threat to Japan. MOFA counted 122 pirate attacks on ships related to Japan from 1998 to 2003. This was certainly an increase over previous years, but most of those attacks either failed or amounted to little more than petty theft. In fact, in this era, the Nippon Foundation valued damages due to piracy against Japanese-related ships at only US\$10-15 million/year (Bradford, 2004, p. 484). While those piracy rates represent a huge issue for the mariners victimized, they are also financially tiny in comparison to the gargantuan value of the trade that passed through the same SLOCs. Furthermore, simple shipboard precautions generally alleviate the risk more effectively than policy actions (Bateman, 2017). In 2002, the same year the JCG dispatched ships for the inaugural exercises with its Southeast Asian partners, only twelve attacks were reported against ships related to Japan (Bradford, 2004, p. 483). That was slight uptick from ten in 2001 (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003, p. 176). In contrast, in 2002, over 76,000 violent offenses, including over one thousand murders, were reported in Japan (Japan National Police Agency, 2003). Even when piracy reached its peak in Southeast Asia, markets readily compensated for the costs. Insurance premiums for transits through the waters remained relatively stable, with the exception of those from July 2005 to August 2006 when Lloyd's Joint War Committee declared the Strait of Malacca a war risk zone. Even when insurance costs rose significantly in this period, commercial operators generally elected to pay the premiums rather than divert traffic to safer, more circuitous routes. Overall, it seems likely that in the second phase the Government of Japan invested more in fighting piracy than the costs the pirates were inflicting on Japan.

Some would suggest that Japanese anti-piracy actions were preventative, in that these Japanese actors expected the situation to get worse absent their action. That is likely at least partially true. However, if threat were the primary policy driver, constabulary-focused CBAs would have tapered off as, especially after 2006, piracy rates declined, American assistance for regional maritime security was on the upswing, and coastal states were more seriously investing in their own capabilities. Instead as regional capacity improved and the threat declined, the constabulary CBAs continued (Bradford, 2008; Raymond, 2009, pp. 31-42).

Just as the Government of Japan appears to have over-invested in maritime security CBAs in response to the Southeast Asian piracy threat, it possibly under-invested in responses to the state-based threats present in the third phase. If Japan entered this third phase simply to assist coastal states' efforts to resist PRC maritime power, Japan would not have limited the scope of SDF assistance to constabulary capabilities. Instead, it would have focused on improving partners' readiness for military and combat operations. Koh (2008), a clear example of a first cluster explanation, suggests the limitation could be due to a lack of Japanese capacity. It notes the distance from Japan to the South China Sea and the high costs of new military equipment as reducing Japanese surplus capacities that might otherwise be available. However, Japan has already invested in the dispatch of high-end assets such as helicopter carriers, advanced destroyers and submarines to Southeast Asia. Once the units are dispatched, the additional costs of conducting military exercises vice constabulary training would be negligible. Other authors point out clear opportunities passed over by Japan, such as the transfer of JMSDF destroyers and Coast Guard vessels decommissioned under the 2004 Midterm Defense Plan (Fouse & Sato, 2006).

Another common explanation for this apparent under-investment is that a rational Japan is seeking to respond to threats from the PRC while avoiding the risks associated with security dilemmas. Indeed, this seems possible, as Tokyo has generally sought to deny that its policies in Southeast Asia are geared toward checking China (Dalpino, 2017). However, when advocates of threat-based narratives are asked why Japan is not doing more, their explanations more frequently center on the legal and culture norms currently constraining Japan's national policy-making process. They often suggest military CBAs will begin shortly after constitutional revision. When pressed, SDF officers and MOD officials alternately say that constitutional revision is not strictly necessary to enact these CBAs and that the appropriate threat response is coming, but being delayed by the slow nature of policy implementation in Japan. These ideas suggest that much more than threat is at play in determining Japanese policies. Indeed, the persistent dissonance between the threats to Japanese security and the rational national responses is a major theme in Japanese strategic studies.

### **Explanation Cluster 2: Constrained Policy-Making Competition**

Explanations in the second cluster understand the Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia as the outcome of a competition between a range of domestic participants seeking their institutional interests within a policymaking system governed by laws and norms. In some of these narratives, the competing interests primarily concern a diverse range of threat perceptions and security priorities. Others understand the most important interests at play to be unrelated to maritime security threat in Southeast Asia but instead parochial interests such as institutional prestige, budgets and domestic political alliances. Explanations within this cluster understand that Japanese maritime security initiatives in Southeast Asia shifted between phases because of dynamism in the relative power between policymaking actors, the interest of policymaking groups, or the laws and norms governing outcomes.

These narratives generally draw upon constructivist or bureaucratic politics schools of international relations. Some also draw on cultural models. Others reflect thinking that seeks to understand Japanese policymaking through Japan's organization and decision-making behavior (Vogel, 1975). They do not necessarily reject the role of security threats, but focus on how norms and competing interests influence reactions to those threats. Bradford (2004) makes a constructivist argument that a confluence of interests, including both external threats and domestic political interests, overcame weak counterforces within Japan and these parties securitized the piracy threat. Samuels (2008), Yamamoto (2016), Black (2017) and Dalpino (2017) also make arguments about Japanese behavior in maritime Southeast Asia that fit into this cluster.

These explanatory narratives align with the thinking found in many book-length treatments of Japanese security strategy. Constructivist Peter Katzenstein argues that social and legal norms derived from Japan's Peace Constitution exert a systematic influence on Japanese security behavior (Katzenstein, 1996). Similarly, Hook (1996) examines the changing roles of the SDF through the lens of identity and normalization, describing a struggle between those who would like to restore Japan as a normal power and anti-militarist popular opinions. Midford (2011) focuses on anti-militarization public sentiment as constraining the policy options available to elites. Woolley (2000) employs a cultural model based on the concept of *kata*, a Japanese "cultural predilection for form," that serves a normative function regulating the speed at which policies can be revised and causing reform to be gradual and incremental while also using institutional approaches, government politics models and organizational routines to explain Japan's maritime activities (p. 19, 24). Tatsumi and Oros (2007) argue that the very meaning of security has been evolving within Japan and that those conceptualizations influence the negotiations within what they call "Japan's defense establishment," the community of government institutions that are directly involved in shaping and developing Japanese military security policy (pp. 10-11, 69-71). Samuels (2007) and Oros (2017), are both generally considered realist in outlook, but also emphasize the role of consensus in Japanese policy formulation and refer to the unique constraints of Japan's strategic culture. Another realist wrote a part of 2017 articles that acknowledge the importance of consensus, but demonstrates the importance of individual leaders and their political motivations in creating foreign policy outcomes (Pugliese, Japan's Kissinger, 2017; Pugliese, Kantei Diplomacy, 2017).

According to the second cluster thinking the first phase of Japanese maritime security initiatives in Southeast Asia were the outcome of the policy realignment that followed the cementing of the Yoshida Doctrine. Called the "third consensus" by Samuels (2007, p. 6), this reflected a broad agreement between policy and business elites that Japan should focus on its economic strength. State power was appropriately used to advance industrial strength at home and to secure markets overseas. Close alignment of business and government interests led to policy outcomes where Japan would rely on the United States for its military security and minimize expenditure on its defense forces (Curtis, 1975, pp. 33-36; Samuels, 2007, p. 36). Therefore, in Southeast Asia, Japan sought to protect its shipping by using coordinated public-private action to invest in regional capacity to ensure the safety of shipping, while letting other states pay for the addressing of security threats.

These narratives explain that anti-militaristic norms and domestic political opposition also constrained the use of both the JMSDF and JCG throughout the first phase. Even as Japanese strategists worried about an American vacuum in the 1970s and faced calls for greater involvement in regional security under the Reagan administration's push for a Roles, Missions, and Capabilities approach to alliance burden-sharing, legal and normative constraints prevented the employment of forces in SLOCs beyond Suzuki's 1000nm doctrine. Sato (2017) explains that the 1000nm limit was emplaced "avoiding military activities in the South China Sea and domestic political backlash from the leftist-pacifists" (p. 132).

These narratives see a realignment within the Japanese policy competition that took place in the 1990s as key to the start of the second phase. The end of the Cold War and the national dilemmas related to Japan's limited role in the 1991 Gulf War were important drivers of this realignment. Some point toward an intense rivalry between the JCG and JMSDF and see the rise in the piracy threat as offering the JCG an opportunity to engage in high-profile overseas missions that would be beneficial to its institutional prestige and recruitment potential (Fouse & Sato, 2006; Masuuda, 2004). The JCG motivation aligned with the so-called "anti-mainstream" politicians' desires for Japan to take a more direct role in international security affairs for whom the piracy threat presented an opportunity to justify the overseas deployment of forces (Valencia, 2000). The 1996 collapse of the Japan Socialist

Party which had maintained a strong anti-militarist platform, created the space for these interests to securitize Southeast Asia piracy and begin deploying the JCG. Per JCG officials interviewed in 2004, entrenched bureaucrats were the only players in the policy making competition standing against deployment of the JCG and they could only delay, not stop, the deployments (Japan Coast International Criminal Investigation Division, 2004). Representing thinking in this narrative, Bradford (2004) explains, “The convergence of institutional interests has not only encouraged Japan’s securitization of piracy and the launching of significant anti-piracy initiatives, but have all influenced the evolution of their shape.” Others point out that, anti-militaristic interests and norms continued to prevent the involvement of the SDF even though the SDF has sought to expand its mission to include protection of Southeast Asia SLOCs since the 1970s (Woolley, 2000, pp. 65-84). In contrast, the Nippon Foundation was less constrained by rules, norms, and political opposition.

Most narratives in the second cluster point to another realignment as incipient to the third phase. In the early 2000s, revisionist politicians such as Junichiro Koizumi and Shinzo Abe, previously known as the “anti-mainstream” arrived in power (Samuels, 2007, pp. 5-6). By the end of that decade, views that expanded international roles for the SDF were appropriate had become dominant within the broader policy making competition. Similarly, industrial, political and security interests aligned to allow relaxation of arms export controls (Sato H. , 2015, pp. 6-8). Even the opposition party that formed the government from 2009 to 2012 adopted these core tenets into its policy agenda as it expanded SDF roles in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean and elsewhere. Samuels calls this realignment Japan’s “fourth consensus” and Oros describes it as “Japan’s Security Renaissance” (Samuels, Japan’s Emerging Grand Strategy, 2007, pp. 57-8; Oros, 2017). The resultant normative shifts allowed the SDF to step into new roles Southeast Asia, steps the JMSDF were eager to take because it had been actively seeking more missions in distant waters (Patalano, 2017, p. 106). Black (2017) bemoans the involvement of the SDF as counter-productive to more effective work being done by the JCG explaining that the SDF’s role is driven by the domestic political agendas of pro-military forces.

Some of these narratives emphasize that the norms restricting the range of Japanese actions changed in such a way as to allow more appropriate policy responses to a more severe security environment in which China’s assertiveness plays a key role. Others point to parochial interests such as institutional rivalries and access to funding streams as the driving forces (Black L. , 2017; Samuels, 2010). Regardless of which interests are most powerful, it is frequently heard that today only entrenched bureaucrats and a vocal minority of voters stand against this progress. For example, Midford (2015) argues that norms continue to limit the JSMDF activities and are the reason that it has only conduct very limited military activities in Southeast Asia.

Second cluster narratives also neatly explain why SDF cooperation with Southeast Asia partners has been limited to building capacity in constabulary roles and why its involvement with military roles has been relatively limited. They argue that the government is constrained by a lack of popular support for such activities and they suggest that roles will quickly expand if Prime Minister Abe succeeds in his desire for constitutional reform. Those with this view generally acknowledge that there is nothing in the current constitutional interpretations that legally allow for maritime security CBAs by the MOD and SDF while prohibiting sealane defense or military cooperation. Instead, they point to the norms that govern Japanese policymaking. They often argue that a constitutional amendment will be less important as a legal force than as a demonstration of national consensus that removes the current normative constraints and provides the advocates of “normalization” the political space to implement their vision.

Of the four clusters, these second cluster narratives may be the most persuasive. By considering such a wide-range of factors, these narratives can adequately explain past events. However, because they

account for so many variables, many of which are subjective, they provide very little predictive value. Furthermore, that can also be troubling because they sometimes focus so much on domestic political competitions that they fail to recognize external forces. The correlation between inflection points regarding external threats and the transitions between Japan's maritime security CBA phases are too strong to simply disregard or set aside as having little analytical value. There are some similarly strong correlations between the phase shifts and developments in the U.S.-Japan alliance relationship.

### **Explanation Cluster 3: U.S.-Japan Alliance Management**

A third cluster of explanations points to Japanese maritime security CBAs as alliance management tools used to ensure U.S. commitment to Japan's defense and regional stability. Under these narratives, the threats perceived by the United States in Southeast Asia are often more important drivers than those which are thought to threaten Japan. Naturally, these narratives rely most heavily on literature focused on East Asian alliance dynamics such as Cha (2016) and Mochizuki (1997) and the larger body of more conceptual literature on alliances. Stephen Walt is especially popular in Japan's strategy and defense community with Walt (1997) and Walt (2009) exemplifying his relevant work. Third cluster thinking is mostly realist, but some narratives such as those reflected in Mochizuki's approaches are more liberal in nature.

Third cluster narratives point out that the first phase of Japan's maritime security CBAs corresponded to President Lyndon Johnson's 1966-7 requests for Japan to increase its contribution to common defense. Japan responded to that demand with economic assistance projects for Southeast Asia as a part of Japan's expanded contribution to regional stability and the CBAs can be understood as a part of that contribution. The announcement of the Nixon Doctrine in 1969 demonstrated that the American desire to see Japan play a larger role in regional security as U.S. forces withdrew would be something Japan would have to continue coping with in the longer term. The Japanese maritime security CBAs were limited to the financing of safety programs and infrastructure because the United States did not expect or request more. An active Japanese role in the arenas of law enforcement and military security would have been much more than alliance management required.

By the 1990s alliance dynamics had shifted. The U.S. was clearly encouraging Japan to be more active in regional security roles and Japan was having more difficulty declining. The end of the Cold War brought American commitment into greater question and Japan's limited role in the 1991 Gulf War raised issues regarding the sufficiency of its alliance contributions in the post-Cold War environment. This pressure played an important part in the development of the 1997 U.S.-Japan Alliance Revised Guidelines that expanded Japanese roles in response to "Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan" and prompted greater thinking about additional roles Japan could adopt in the region. Increased Japanese involvement in Southeast Asian maritime security became a potential avenue for rebalancing Alliance contributions.

Per cluster three narratives, the launch of the second phase was aimed at demonstrating Japanese commitment without spending more resources than necessary while expanding Japan's strategic option in case that it is abandoned or needs to slip the noose of entrapment (Envall, 2017, p. 16). Exemplifying this thinking, the framers of the OPK initiative, wrote, "It seems that if Japan takes the initiative in activities like OPK, it would provide Japan the bargaining power to insure the commitment of the United States Navy in the oceans in the Asia-Pacific region" (Takai & Akimoto, 2000). When the 9/11 attacks triggered the American Global War on Terror in 2001, the anti-piracy initiatives were relabeled, at least to some audiences, as a part of Japan's counter-terrorism contribution and thus become more valuable to both U.S. objectives and Japan's goal of avoiding a free-rider label (Fouse & Sato, 2006).

In the proceeding decade, the U.S. became more concerned about the rise of China and desired greater Japanese maritime security contributions to counterbalance Chinese maritime power. By engaging the SDF, but in only a limited way, third cluster narratives explain that Japan sought to satisfy U.S. expectations while minimizing of resources expenditures and friction with the PRC. References to Japan's roles in Southeast Asian maritime security in alliance documents such 2+2 documents and the fact that Prime Minister Abe has made significant policy announcements about Japan's security role in Southeast Asia during visits to Washington reinforce these narratives. A researcher at NIDS observes that the May 2012 2+2 statement reflected the growing expectation that Japan will help security across the Asia-Pacific and argues that, "the alliance could wither and collapse unless the JMSDF adapts to these changing times by revising its outmoded defense strategy and adopting new roles and missions" (Shimodaira, 2014, p. 53). Other narratives within this cluster stress the value Japan finds in developing relations with Southeast Asia as a hedge against entrapment as it grows increasingly close to the United States (Envall, 2017, p. 16).

The most significant weakness with cluster three narratives is that the shifts between the phases of Japan's maritime security initiatives only selectively correlate with changes in alliance management requirements. When the U.S. was relatively weak in the 1970s, Prime Minister Yoshida resisted American pressure for greater Japanese participation in regional defense (Katzenstein & Okawara, 2001, p. 169). The Roles, Missions, and Capabilities burden-sharing demands of the Reagan Administration corresponded with the 1,000nm SLOC defense doctrine, but no change to Japan's security role in Southeast Asia. The shift from Phase One to Phase Two initiatives does correspond with the post-Cold War realignment in the alliance, but there is scant evidence that the United States specifically desired a Japanese role in Southeast Asia. Investment in civil-military capabilities useful in situations around the Korean Peninsula and Strait of Taiwan would have paid higher rewards for Japan's immediate strategic needs and for U.S. alliance manager's focus under the Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan alliance construct. Therefore, this would seem a low return-on-investment contribution for Japanese policymakers seeking to minimize resource expenditures. In contrast, from a strictly alliance management point of view one would expect the increasing U.S.-China maritime rivalry to be driving Japan in its Phase Three activities beyond their focus on constabulary functions to be more active in military operations in the South China Sea. While the U.S. had not, at least not publicly, requested Japanese military involvement, they have been open to the possibility. For example, speaking in Malaysia in 2015, U.S. Seventh Fleet Commander Robert Thomas said "I think that JSDF operations in the South China Sea makes sense in the future" (Kelly & Kubo, 2015).

#### **Explanation Cluster 4: National Responsibility and Reputation**

The fourth cluster of explanations stress Japan's desire to improve its reputation or fulfill its sense of national responsibility. Within this cluster, some narratives focus on Japan's maritime security CBAs as a means to build diplomatic goodwill that can be used to achieve other objectives, while others place more weight on the ideological ambitions of its elites. The narratives include explanations that describe a Japan that feels guilty about its history is seeking to restore its image and those that see Japanese leaders seeking to establish a remilitarized Japan, less for the utility of a military and more as sign that it has resolved its history issues and can restore its rightful status as a "normal nation" unencumbered by the baggage of defeat. Cluster four proponents often draw on politicians' rhetoric as evidence for their explanations. Among the four clusters, these explanations are the least common and many political scientists and international relations specialists quickly dismiss their core notions. Still, they do come up from time to time not just in popular conversations, but also within the arguments of serious thinkers. Thus, these explanations demand examination; such

analysis reveals that they have more theoretical and empirical backing than the critics would suggest.

When narratives in the fourth cluster focus on the maritime security initiatives as tools rebuild Japan's image or to promote relationships, they are directly or indirectly describing efforts to build Japan's national soft power. Soft power, a concept defined as the aspect of power "which occurs when one country gets other countries to *want* what it wants" and contrasts it with hard power, or the "command power of *ordering* others to do what it wants" (Nye, 1990, p. 166). Although Nye only coined the term in 1990, the concepts involved with soft power have existed since the start of human history and are certainly relevant to understanding international relations (Gray C. , 2011, pp. 28-9). For Japan, the path to develop soft power in Southeast Asia would run parallel to those seeking to assuage war guilt, another force that has been documented as an important motivator of Japanese foreign policy (Buruma, 1994; Berger, 2012).

Fourth cluster narratives often also speak to notions of national prestige and honor as drivers of strategic decisions in ways that would be familiar to Thucydides, who ranks honor with fear and interest as the strongest motives for state behavior, and to Sun Tze, who notes a leader's honor as strategic weakness to be exploited (Thucydides, 1996, p. 43; Sun, 1963, p. 115). Similarly, Clausewitz similarly tells readers that wars have been waged, "to celebrate the birthday of a monarch (Hochkirch), to satisfy military honor (Kunersdorf), or to assuage a commander's vanity (Freiberg)" (Clausewitz, 1976, p. 222). Discussing the contemporary era, Samuels similarly describes policymaking battles between "two values at the heart of Japan's national objectives: autonomy and prestige (Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, 2007, p. 6). Within contemporary salon conversations, such narratives are attractive to those who are sympathetic to the cause of restoring Japan as a "normal" nation that can be trusted to make positive international security contributions. Cluster four explanations also resonate with those who see honor and the pride of Japanese elites as the reflections of *bushido* outlooks entrenched in unrepentant leaders who desire a resurgent Japan unshackled by what they see as unfair versions of history foisted by the victors and exploited by contemporary enemies.

Narratives in the fourth cluster understand the 1960s as a period when a revitalized Japan sought to restore its image, rebuild relationships in Southeast Asia and demonstrate itself as a reliable, non-aggressive partner. Thus, the Phase One maritime security CBAs can be understood as elements a wider strategy involving the rapid expansion of ODA and other lines of effort. These explanations draw strength from historical accounts that refer to ODA as voluntary quasi-reparations (*jun baisho*) and those that understand Japanese assistance as a deliberate counterbalance to negative war memories held by many Southeast Asians. These accounts argue that the ODA efforts enabled access to Southeast Asian resources and markets (Yamamoto, 2016, p. 73). The mass demonstrations that Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka encountered when visiting Bangkok and Jakarta in 1974 were the clearest expressions of the lingering nature of these negative emotions and are understood to have directly encouraged development of the Fukuda Doctrine. The first phase CBAs are understood as nesting well within the norms of the Fukuda Doctrine and are aimed less at specific threats, but at the broader goals of restoring Japanese soft power, addressing the emotional needs of the Japanese elites made to feel uncomfortable by the negative feelings, or fulfilling a sense of national responsibility to assist the development of nations in the region (Er, 2013, p. 11).

When looking at the transition to the second phase, explanations within this cluster generally see a period when Southeast Asia had moved past the historical mistrust of Japan and where Japan had emerged as one of Southeast Asia's favorite and most trusted partners (Koga K. , 2017). However, feelings of guilt or insecurity among Japanese leaders still motivated the offering of greater

contributions. More frequently, the rebuilding of the Japanese reputation is regarded as having created opportunity for the restoration of Japanese national pride and the assumption of a more normal security posture. During the second phase, concerns that Japan's image would be tarnished with accusation of military resurgence restrained the use of the SDF and CBAs which support partners' military capacity.

References to national responsibility can be frequently found in the policy documents and, even more so in the ideological language of foreign policy pronouncements from senior Japanese political leaders that explain the third phase maritime security CBAs to public audiences. For example, in March 2006, Foreign Minister Aso Taro defined the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity as an area where Japan held a "duty" to support maritime security (Patalano, 2017, p. 104). After the Democratic Party of Japan came out of opposition, Prime Minister Hatoyama, in a speech delivered during a May 2009 visit to Singapore, laid out the justifications for SDF's involvement in the Phase Three initiatives being launched in terms of his personal outlook and Japanese national responsibility:

*I personally cherish this "yu-ai" philosophy. "Yu-ai" is typically translated as "fraternity." Within "yu-ai," people respect the freedom and human dignity of others just as they respect their own freedom and human dignity...next year Japan will dispatch a Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel as a "yu-ai boat." This ship will carry not only SDF officials but also people from NGOs and other private sector and civil society entities. Their mission will be to conduct medical services and extend cultural activities in the Pacific and the Southeast Asian region...we need to cooperate in building a "sea of fraternity." The Asian region is linked together by many seas. And, most regional commerce depends on sea routes. The realization of a "sea of fraternity" in this region will bring about peace and prosperity in the region as a whole. As for multilateral joint efforts in this area, Japan, as a maritime country, has the know-how and assets to maintain the peace at sea. For instance, we can cooperate further to counter piracy. (Hatoyama, 2009)*

Six years later, Prime Minister Abe, generally regarded as a particularly hawkish political leader by Japanese standards, framed the SDF's third phase role in terms of Japan's reputation and national responsibility to similarly lofty, abstract goals,

*The international cooperation provided thus far by the SDF has made, unmistakably, a significant contribution to the peace and stability of the world. It is deeply appreciated. The world is depending on your abilities...Japan, hand in hand with your home countries and the international community, is fully committed to protecting the "free and peaceful seas." Japan is determined to make an even greater contribution to global peace and prosperity, hoisting high the banner of "Proactive Contribution to Peace." (Abe, 2015)*

A significant limitation of fourth cluster narratives is that they do not explain while the CBAs have transitioned through three phases. The phases do not correlate with changes in the ideological stance of Japan's leaders. Nor do they correlate with milestone shifts in Southeast Asian perceptions of Japan. Assuming that activities of the first phase were accumulating soft power for Japan, then Japan should have either stuck with that strategy or its expansion into new security activities should have taken a more gradual trajectory parallel to that of its reputation with the Southeast Asian partners.

### **Comparing the Four Explanation Clusters**

Explanations for Japan's maritime security CBAs can be grouped into four narrative clusters. Among these, the second cluster, those that see Japanese policies as the outcomes of a competition

between stakeholders taking place within a system governed by law and norms, appear the most persuasive. One reason they emerge as the most apt is because the explanations found in the other three clusters can be incorporated into the second cluster narrative. That is, if many of the players in Japan's policymaking competition share common threat perceptions, then threat-based motivations described in the first cluster of narratives would have a powerful influence on the outcomes. Similarly, motivation driven by alliance management concerns (third cluster) and Japan's national reputation and responsibility (fourth cluster) can also be considered as factors accounted for as institutional interests at play within the policy competition described by the second cluster narratives.

The serious problem with the second cluster narratives is that by accounting for so many variables, they truly rely on none. Therefore, they are much more useful for understanding the past, than analyzing the present or predicting the future. Furthermore, by emphasizing rich description over modeling, their followers are especially vulnerable to bias and repeating the misunderstanding of previous analysis. To minimize these problems, compelling analysis is best when, as Katzenstein and Okawara argue, broadly sourced data is subjected to an eclectic approach drawing on realist, liberal and constructive models (Katzenstein & Okawara, 2001, p. 171). The comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to understanding Japanese security policy used in Hughes (2004) is exemplary of this sort of eclectic analysis (Hughes, 2004, pp. 7-34). While such analysis cannot test an hypothesis and can only suggest, not predict, future behavior, it is most useful for accurately understanding situations. Given the flaws of other approaches, this eclectic analysis is the best for policy makers who need to consider the range of variables in play in order to make solid decisions.

#### **CONCLUSION. NEW SDF MILITARY MISSIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA ON THE HORIZON?**

We now have fifty years of data regarding the role of maritime security CBAs in Japan's security policy and relationship with Southeast Asian states. During this time, the initiatives have passed through three distinct phase with the threshold of each being marked by the involvement of new Japanese organizations in the initiatives. To date, progress has always been in the direction of expansion. New organizations have joined the CBAs, but none have ceased their involvement. Organizations have commenced new activities without giving up old ones. The JCG and JMSDF performed diplomatic and then constabulary roles. Since 2011, Southeast Asian waters have also been hosting JMSDF forces intermittently operating military roles such as patrolling and exercising. Looking at trajectories alone, this history would suggest that the JMSDF is likely to continue expanding its military role in Southeast Asia. However, with only three phases to date and without a proven model, such trajectories lack sufficient data to be of meaningful predictive value. Analysis of the historical record is more helpful when coupled with understandings of why Japan has been engaging in these activities.

Barring a black swan event that radically realigns the norms governing Japanese policymaking or regional geopolitics, the understandings central to all four explanative clusters suggest that past trajectories will indeed continue (Taleb, 2007). After fifty years of one-way expansion, all arms of Japan's state power are now engaged in maritime security initiatives in Southeast Asia. While laws and norms prevent the JCG from performing military roles remain in play, those that have thus far constrained JMSDF military activities in Southeast Asia appear to be eroding. Meanwhile, we can expect regional state and non-state threats to grow or at least remain a concern and continued U.S. pressure for Japanese security contributions in Southeast Asia. Advocacy by Japanese national leaders for Japan to make contributions to international security that are more commensurate with Japan's economic strength also seem highly probable. This confluence of interests would seem ready to overmatch the contrary pull of anti-militaristic domestic sentiments and concerns about triggering

security dilemmas with regional revivals. Hence the current and prospective alignment of policymaking interests that Oros describes as “Japan’s Security Renaissance” seems geared to yield greater SDF military activity in maritime Southeast Asia.

Asia may very well soon see Japanese maritime security CBAs cross into a fourth phase that could be called the “Navigation Safety & Maritime Constabulary + Naval Defense Phase.” In this phase, the MOD and SDF could regular conduct their own military operations in Southeast Asia and their assistance to regional partners would no longer be constrained to constabulary capacity. Efforts would grow to include Southeast Asian militaries’ defense capacity. The most meaningful legal barriers to such a shift have already been removed and it is probably just a matter of policy execution. There is already talk of transferring used JMSDF P-3C aircraft to Malaysia and Vietnam (Japan to Donate Patrol Aircraft to Malaysia: Report, 2017; Panda, 2016). Unlike the C-90s sent to the Philippines, these are full-fledged military patrol aircraft capable of employing a wide range of weapons and electronically relaying maritime surveillance and high-quality target data to other units. Transfers of military hardware would seem well aligned with the early steps the JMSDF has already taken toward conducting its own military operations in Southeast Asian waters.

The first phase of Japanese maritime security CBAs in Southeast Asia lasted nearly thirty years. The second phases lasted only ten. Now eight years into the third phase, a forthcoming transition would seem likely. In fact, Japan may already be at that threshold. International military exercises involving Japan and JMSDF military operations in Southeast Asia international waters, already taking place intermittently, appear most likely to become more regular and robust. Further, the simple presence of JMSDF units in Southeast Asia, has a military utility as they gain operational experience in those waters and deter activities that would interfere with the free and safe use of those sealanes.

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