

CHAPTER II

THE JAPAN FOREIGN POLICY

The arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853 marked the first period of Japan starting to be open and interact with the modern world. At the previous time, Japan was an isolated country with landlords' who fought with their samurai to resolve conflicts. The arrival also marked the beginning of Japan's first period of modern foreign policy as well as an effort to integrate itself into the world system.

The next significant period of Japan foreign policy changes were the period of Meiji Era until the stage of World War II, the Cold War, and also the post-Cold War (Cooney, 2006). Each of the periods poses distinctive events and different foreign pressure that determine how the foreign policy would develop by the government of Japan. The policy was made responded in its own unique way to adapt in every period as an effort to position it self, in a fast changing and dynamic world of nations.

In order to understand the trend and find out the reasons why Japan conducted certain foreign policy towards other states, this chapter will discuss the dynamic changes of Japan foreign policies based on the important historical periods that shows distinctive tendency of how Japan conducting its foreign policy. Furthermore, upon discussing the Japan foreign policy in the recent times, writer will narrow down the case studies by discussing more on Japan policy towards the South East Asia Country, and in the last part, writer will explain about

the interests of Japan in the South China Sea region, specifically in economic sector.

A. Historical Era of Japan Foreign Policy developments

Japan foreign policy start as early as the Meijiera.The era witnees the changes of Japan,from a feudal society to a modern industrial nation that has able to compete withthe powers from Europe. The driving force for the change was the realizationof Japan that it needed to industrialize or it would be colonized by more powerful, modern nations.(Cooney, 2006)The main force that led Japan to modernize was the fear that Japanwould be dominated by foreigners. This anxiety can be seen as Japan has become an anti-foreigncountry in the sense that if foreigners had stayed away from Japan.

There were also internal elements thatpushed for reform in Japan, such as the “Iishi”, or a small group of Japanese eliteswho banded together and made it their cause to drag Japan with many suffering from its people into the nineteenth century. However, in the end, the fear of foreigninfluence was the main driving force for change; thus, the pressure for structuralchange had come from outside of Japan. An important development during the Meiji period was the establishment of ademocratic constitution.

In 1889 the Meiji constitution was implementedin response to popular demand of democratic reforms by the people of Japan. At that time, a small group ofbureaucrats ran the government of Japanese, these bureaucrats wanted to keep control centralized rather than diffused tothe people in a democratic system. They

created the Diet and developed a constitution based on the German constitution instituted by the German Chancellor Bismarck, a constitution that kept power centralized in the hands of the selected bureaucrats while giving minimal power to the people (Cooney, 2006). Eventually, the lack of real power in the hands of the people through their democratically elected representatives in the Diet led to military rule and the disaster of World War II where the next changes of Japan foreign policy occurred (Cooney, 2006).

1. World War II

The second major period in modern Japanese foreign policy was the rebuilding of Japan after the destruction during World War II and the Cold War period. The rewriting of Japan's Meiji Era constitution were included during this period. The constitution dictated and greatly limited Japan's foreign policy. During the occupation of Japan by U.S. after World War II, headed by General Douglas MacArthur as the head of the occupation government, met with with Japan's cabinet, rewrote and revised the Japan's constitution. The new constitution was then nicknamed the Japanese Peace Constitution, a reference to the famous renunciation-of-war clause. Article Nine states:

“Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.

The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.” (Japan Const. Art.ix. 1947)

Article Nine was written before the occurrence of the Cold War. Then, as a result of the East and West block tensions, Japan was pressured by the United States to establish the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) with its only purpose was to maintain defensive capabilities. As an example, Air-SDF could have fighter planes but not bombers or mid-air refueling capabilities that would allow it to take any conflict to the attacker's home soil. The most important point of this setting is the existence of the United States-Japan Security Treaty, which gives Japan the promises of support from U.S. If ever Japan is attacked, eliminating the need for Japanese force offensive capabilities. (Cooney, 2006)

2. Cold War

Still in the process of occupying Japan after the World War II, another War seemed to have started by the early of 1948. The government of the United States was convinced by another threat in the Asia region, the United States should deal with the Soviet Union and the rise of communism in Asia.

This condition triggered a new war namely the Cold War between the West Bloc and the East Bloc, an ideological fight led by United States versus Soviet Union. During the Cold War, Japan seemed to be more passive rather than their last participation in the Second World War. It might be caused by the consequence of the loss in the Second World War and damages in many sectors.

Thus Japan needed to maintain its status as a pacifist country and should not try to get involved with it. However, as a country that were under the protection of

United States, need to follow the tendency of US to focus more on the issue of war against communism. Still in the ongoing occupation in Japan, Douglas MacArthur transferred the troops from Japan to Korea to deal with communist there. Moreover, MacArthur issued a de facto order on July 1950 to the Japanese government to create the “National Police Reserve” consisting of approximately 75,000 men, (Inoguchi Takashi and Purnendra Jain, p 138).

Both the government and the citizens of Japan consider this situation as a great distraction. As the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers which firstly ordered Japan to deal with the Constitution on article 9, now easily being turned in ordering Japan government to rearm. Despite not getting deep involvement in the Cold War, Japan became one of crucial point for the United States during the period of Cold War. Japan which was formerly the enemy of the United States in the Second World War II, has become the close ally of United States to face same enemies in the cold war.

3. Post-Cold war

Many beliefs of economic multilateralism combined with security bilateralism were the character of Japan’s approach in regional relations in Asia. But, in 1991 the leaders of Japan started to support multilateral approaches to the security problems in the region. Thus blurring the early dichotomy entitled to its character. The example of this change is the Nakayama Initiative, a diplomatic initiative started by the Foreign Minister of Japan, Nakayama Taro (Sansoucy, Japan's Regional Security Policy In Post-Cold War Asia, 2002).

Japan, under the Foreign Minister Nakayama, proposed the creation of new regional multilateral security dialogue on the existing Post-Ministrial Conference (PMC) of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) (Midford, 2000).

Following the Initiative, Japanese leaders firmly opposed the development of the multilateral security institutions in Asia because of the fear that it may destabilize the alliance with the United States. After the wake of Gulf War in the early 1990s, Japan was heavily criticized by many countries over its failure of contribute by sending personnels to the multinational coalition assembled in the Gulf, Japan policy was famous among the countries with the name of “checkbook diplomacy” since it only provided materials and financial support. Responding towards the criticism of being “self-indulgent” during the crisis and engaged in “contemptible tokenism,” policy makers of Japan were dedicated to show the United States that they could take the initiative diplomatically in contributing to the maintenance of global security (Purrington, 1992). Furthermore, the fear that the United States would withdraw militarily from the region in the early 1990s with the end of the cold war and the disappearance of the Soviet threat, were not so far from becoming reality.

The United States announced in 1990 that it would make a ten percent reduction of its forces in the region (Martin, 1990). The withdrawal of American forces from the Subic Bay naval base in the Philippines in 1992 increase the blur of America’s intentions regarding its long-term military commitment to the Asian region, until in 1995 with the release of Nye Report, “U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia Pacific Region,” (United States Department of Defense, 1995). In the

perspective of Tokyo, multilateralism was a useful tool to keep the United States engaged in the region and as an effort to respond to American demands for increased burden sharing on the Alliances.

Even though Foreign Minister Nakayama's efforts to create a regional security dialogue resulted in an unexcited support from ASEAN, his diplomatic initiatives did have three important effects on the security policies of the major powers in the region according to the notes of as Peter Katzenstein (Okawara, 2001). First, the Initiative propelled ASEAN into developing plans to set up its own multilateral security dialogue as part of the ASEAN-PMC. Eventually, These plans materialized into the creation of ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994 (Midford, 2000). Second, Japan's support in the early 1990s for multilateralism nudged the United States into changing its own position toward multilateral security arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region (James A. Baker, 1991/1992).

Finally, the Nakayama Initiative gave Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi some political movement in pushing forward for multilateral security initiatives in the early 1990s. Such as the passage of the United Nations Peacekeeping Cooperation Bill in 1992, and Japan's contribution to the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) by sending unarmed Self-Defense Force (SDF) personnel and civilian police (Peter J. Katzenstein, 2008). Thus even though Nakayama's proposal failed to materialize, as Paul Midford has noted, but it did set the stage for the later establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (Midford, 2000), and furthermore contribute toward creating the pathway for Japan's foreign policy in Asia.

B. Japan Foreign Policy in South East Asia

Japan-Southeast Asia security relations already began since the colonial period, by the implementation of Japan's Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, which actually was a cover for Japanese expansionism aimed at exploiting natural resources in Southeast Asia. Then during the Cold War, as a part of the U.S. strategy to contain Communism, Japan became an industrial hub and driving force for East Asia's economic growth. This resulted in turning the region into a shield against Chinese Communism as well as restoring Japan's economic relations with Southeast Asia. Japan focused on a policy of economic diplomacy with limited involvement in Southeast Asia's security affairs under Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida (1946-47, 1948-54), and Japan continued its minimal involvement in the political and security affairs of Southeast Asia through 1974, except in 1968, when Japan participate in international peace observation in Indochina, and also in 1970 when Japan send mediation team to end the Vietnam War. (Nguyen, 2016)

The fundamental change in Japan's policy to Southeast Asia occurred during the 1975-1989 period, when Japan began considering relations with ASEAN countries as a vital significance to its foreign policy in Southeast Asia. ASEAN, according to Japan's perspective was an important institution for political stability in the region and as a important source of economic security, resources, investment, markets, and maritime communication (Sansoucy, 2002). Furthermore, ASEAN also played an important role in keeping the balance of

power in the region because of its members at the time (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) were anti-Communist and have very good relations with non-Communist states. Japan initiated the Fukuda doctrine in 1977, confirmed Tokyo's willingness to take up larger role in Southeast Asian security, by act as a mediator between ASEAN and Indochina, and assist in constructing a stable order for Southeast Asia.

In the post-Cold War period, Japan continued to enhance its security relations with Southeast Asia countries by seeking deeper involvement in regional affairs. Japan's relations with Southeast Asia changed from economic cooperation to became more engaged in political and security issues in the region. (Nguyen, 2016). In general Japan, has become an active participant in multilateral security affairs in Southeast Asia and maintained a positive security influence on the region since 1975. One of the most significant contributions Japan made to regional security was its support for ASEAN in the establishment of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994. It was the first multilateral security dialogue discussing security issues and regional stability in Southeast Asia..

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is the only multilateral security institution in the Asian region. Founded by the six ASEAN member states at the time: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand and ASEAN's seven dialogue partners: the United States, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Korea, and the European Community. The ARF was designed as a means for consultations among member states on regional political

and security issues (Sansoucy, 2002). It established based on an extension of the Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) within ASEAN. Originally the ARF was composed of the six ASEAN states, the seven dialogue partners, plus the states that ASEAN wanted to engage: Russia, China, Vietnam, and Laos. Its goals are to increase confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, non-proliferation, and arms control in the Asian region (Acharya, 2000). the ARF operates in both inter-sessional support groups (ISG) and inter-sessional meetings (ISM), a governmental working groups that focus on defense white papers, military observers, military exercises, the South China Sea, the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone, and peacekeeping operations (Johnston, 1999).

Japan has played the role of a mediator in the territorial disputes over the South China Sea as far back as 1995, when China constructed permanent structure on Mischief Reef. Japan had urged China to handle the dispute with the Philippines peacefully. Japan has also become an active contributor to other Southeast Asian security affairs, especially in terms of human security. Japan today seeks to avoid a direct military engagement approach toward regional security issues of the region due to its military occupation of Southeast Asia during World War II. Thus, Tokyo relies on human security cooperation as a way to further its security role beyond economic influence in Southeast Asia (Nguyen, 2016).

Beside providing long-term official development assistance (ODA) to help Southeast Asian economies to generate growth and jobs, Japan has actively

contributed to and participated in disaster relief and peacekeeping activities in the region (ER, 2006). Including the financial assistance in the aftermath of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis to stabilize the regional economies and restore social and political stability, peacemaking operations in Cambodia and Aceh, and peace building in Timor-Leste, Aceh, and Mindanao (ER, 2006). Another good example is Japan's proactive role in joint training, information-sharing, fact-finding, and joint patrolling with Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore to combat piracy in the Strait of Malacca.

Through its continuous active contributions and participation in regional security issues, Japan has been successful in building trust and confidence in its security relations with Southeast Asian nations. The perception of ASEAN nations gradually changes from the image of a militaristic Japan in World War II to a more reliable and trustworthy Japan.

C. Japan Interest in South China Sea

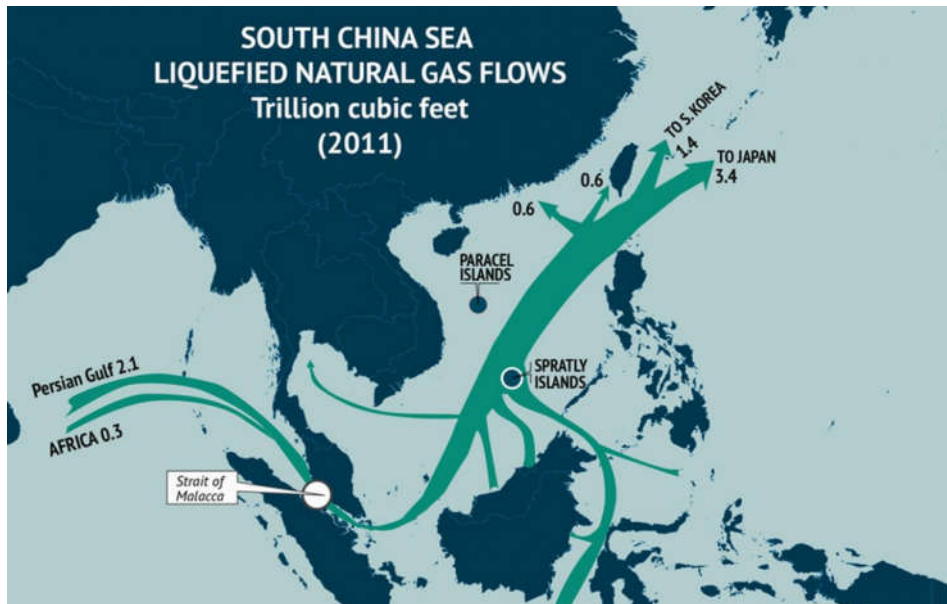
Japan's policy towards the South China Sea likely will have a considerable effect on the shape of future regional order in the South China Sea region even though, the competition of US-China and the reaction of the other countries around the sea area will have more decisive effects.

China has been reinforcing its claims to most of the South China Sea through political, economic, military and legal means, Japan has as one of the top world trading nations with considerable political, economic and strategic interests

in Southeast Asia, as a security alliance partner of the US, and as a country which has territorial as well as Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) border disputes with China in the East China Sea, need to become more involved in the matter (Drifte, 2016).

The involvement of Japan could be seen clearly because of the deteriorating and lack of mutual trust relationship, between Japanese-Chinese. Not only because of the disputes in East China Sea, but also the mutual suspicion that generated because of the diverging perceptions of either countries military developments. China's policy in the South China Sea has become a threat to Japan, while China also sees Japan as a "Troublemaker" at the side of United States, that already conflicting with China (Drifte, 2016).

Picture 2.1: South China Sea Liquefied Natural Gas Flows, in Trillion Cubic Feet (2011).



Source: <https://amti.csis.org/atlas/>

Through trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Japan has established in Southeast Asia a so-called network economy (Drifte, 2016). 85%– 90% of Japan's oil imports and 33% of Japan's Light Natural Gas (LNG) imports pass through the sea lanes of communication of the South China Sea, according to the report of U.S. Department of Energy. Natural resources such as fishery and energy in South China Sea also become the interest of Japan.

Other Important economic interests related to Japan's involvement in the off-shore and onshore prospection and extraction of oil and gas resources in the region, pursuing the goal to diversify the supply of hydrocarbon as well as an effort of marketing of Japan's high technology services in the energy sector. However, some of the off-shore oil and gas blocks currently tendered by Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Indonesia were inside the China's 9-dash line claim which overlaps with the EEZs and continental shelves of these countries(Drifte, 2016).

The central importance of Japan in the region was not only the economic interests but also the geostrategic concerns that have made the stability of the ASEAN member states. Japan were dependent on the policy of freedom of navigation through the South China Sea, it is the connection of Japan with its security alliance with the US and the interdependence of the security in the East China Sea and South China Sea. Standing up to Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and supporting the other littoral states of the region is necessary to maintain United State's support against Chinese policies in the East China Sea,

such as the territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the unresolved EEZ border separation which have given rise to considerable tensions (Drifte, 2016).

Japan mostly contributed to stability of the region through economic policies, such as; trade, investment and Official Development Assistance (ODA), and through supporting ASEAN's economic and political resilience and cohesion (Drifte, 2016). Until recently, With China's more assertive policies, the parallel perception of the tensions in the South China Sea and East China Sea, doubts of some Asian leaders about the US commitment to balance the Chinese policies, and ASEAN's fragmented position relating to the disputes in South China Sea. Japan's economy-centered policies seem no longer sufficient and Japan need to switch it policies to focus more on certain countries and on policies which are more security-related (Drifte, 2016).

Japanese government has started helping the vocal South China Sea claimants' states with their coast guard and military capacity. Japan enhanced its security cooperation to produce stronger defense diplomacy, use of ODA for coast guards, and naval support. Promoted by the US various new bilateral defense policy agreements, the increase of Japanese involvement in the security of the South China Sea so far Japan has resisted proposals to join multilateral air or naval patrols in the region(Drifte, 2016).

One difficulty for Japan's involvement in the South China Sea disputes is the difference of opinion among the surrounding countries regarding their security

priorities and the mix of policy tools on the territorial issues to confront China (Drifte, 2016). Another problem is the differences between Japan and the US in emphasizing of which region is more important and where/how to deploy resources. Finally, there is China's strong opposition to any country outside the South China Sea region to involve with its advances in the region, and the political and military means in China's disposal, prevent Japan from trying to slow it down (Drifte, 2016).

The next chapter will discuss more deeply about the relation between Japan and Philippines to understand further about how Japan utilize its support and cooperation towards Southeast Asian country, and explain the strategic cooperation between both of the country, until the establishment of action plans to strengthen the strategic cooperation.