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Germany and Japan: Saviors of the International Order?

By Ellis S. Krauss and Hanns W. Maull

Over the last decade, world politics has been confronted with an increasingly acute dilemma: while the demands on global governance have grown, the international order that is supposed to provide this governance has fallen apart.¹ The erosion of Western predominance and the shift of power “from the West to the rest” (Fareed Zakariah) has weakened the authority and effectiveness of the old, liberal international order (LIO), and the international financial crisis of 2008/9 and the domestic troubles in many Western democracies have undermined its legitimacy.² As a result, the old international order has been decisively weakened and superseded by something else – a new, as yet undefined but much weaker international order that seems likely to exacerbate the dilemma of global governance.³

Germany and Japan were enormously important pillars of the postwar and post-Cold War liberal international order. Through their foreign and security policies, they helped to uphold Pax Americana and underwrite Washington’s international leadership. Now, with American dominance fading and the U.S. seemingly no longer willing to underwrite the LIO, some scholars and practitioners call for Germany and Japan to step up to the plate and do more than they have in the past, perhaps even assume the mantle of leadership that America no longer seems willing to wear.⁴ Both governments certainly are both heavily dependent

¹ Maull, Hanns W.: Conclusions: The Rise and Decline of the Post-Cold War International Order, in: idem (ed): *The Rise and Decline of the Post-Cold War International Order*, Oxford et al: Oxford University Press 2018, pp. 272-312 (300-304)

² Mahbubani, Kishore: *Has the West Lost It? A Provocation*. New Delhi: Allen Lane 2018

³ Maull, Hanns W.: *The Once and Future International Order*

⁴ Daalder, Ivo H./Lindsay, James M.: *The Committee to Save World Order. America's Allies Must Step Up as America Steps Down*. In: *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2018), pp. 72-83, available at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-09-30/committee-save-world-order>

on and strongly committed to promoting an open, rules-based liberal international order. Thus, Germany has launched with France the Alliance for Multilateralism⁵; Japan has expressed its support and joined this initiative.

1. Germany and Japan in the Cold War International Order

During the Cold War, the international order prevented great power wars and largely contained interstate violence, at least in the Northern hemisphere. It also enabled the world to experience decades of rapidly advancing prosperity by unleashing what today we call globalization. During this period, Germany and Japan turned from occupied enemy states into pillars of regional stability and America's principal allies in Western Europe and East Asia, as both allowed themselves to be firmly integrated into military and diplomatic alliances. This ensured the success of what Wolfram Hanrieder aptly called America's strategy of "double containment",⁶ in which West German and Japan served as bulwarks to contain the Soviet Union, Communist China and their allies, but also were prevented from pursuing revisionist strategies of their own by America's tight embrace. In this way, America provided "the cork in the bottle" of the ghosts of Germany's and Japan's militarist pasts.⁷ Both also served as "models" of democratic and capitalist development to showcase the

[Feb. 8, 2020]; Patrick, Stewart M.: Can an Alliance of Multilateralism Succeed in a New Era of Nationalism? in: World Politics, Sept. 9, 2019, available at <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/28174/can-an-alliance-for-multilateralism-succeed-in-a-new-era-of-nationalism> (Feb. 8, 2020); Funabashi, Yoichi/Ikenberry, G. John: (eds): The Crisis of Liberal Internationalism. Japan and the World Order. Washington, DC: Brookings 2020

⁵ Patrick, Stewart M.: The Alliance for Multilateralism Makes Sense- Can It Make Good? In: World Politics. Dec. 16, 2019, available at: <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/28414/the-alliance-for-multilateralism-makes-sense-can-it-make-good?> [Feb 8, 2020]

⁶ Hanrieder, Wolfram F.: Germany, America, Europe, Forty Years of German Foreign Policy, Newhaven, Ct: Yale UP 1989, p. 6-11 and passim

⁷ This widely quoted observation by General Henry Stackpole, commander of the U.S. Marines in Okinawa in the early 1990s, referred to Japan, but its logic could be applied to West Germany, as well. Stackpole was removed from his command in Japan as a reaction to his blunt (but in Washington widely shared) assessment. See Hook, Glenn D./Gilson, Julie/Hughes, Christopher W./Dobson, Hugo: Japan's International Relations. Politics, economics, and security. London & New York: Routledge 2001, p. 124 (Sheffield Centre for Japanese Studies),

superiority of the Western way of life, helping to win the “soft power” Cold War. In other words, they were as important for what they *were*, as for anything they *did*.

West German and Japanese leaders were happy to take up this U.S. grand strategy for their own purposes of reconstruction and international rehabilitation. The resulting policies importantly involved military self-restraint and integration as reassurances: neither the West German and Japanese publics nor their neighbors wanted to see them re-emerge as major military powers in their own right. Their decision-makers, whatever their own preferences, knew that the suffering Germans and Japanese had caused and endured during the war had made them “anti-militarist”.⁸ Moreover, both West Germany’s and Japan’s postwar constitutions explicitly ruled out what the Japanese constitution called “war as a sovereign right of the nation” (Art. 9). Policymakers therefore preferred to keep their countries’ military profile low, refrain, despite occasional temptations, from acquiring WMD, and integrate their defense postures firmly with that of the United States in their respective regions.

In a nutshell, for Germany this posture may be summarized by the maxim: “never again; never alone; politics before force”.⁹ “Never again” stood for the rejection of military expansionism and totalitarianism. “Never alone” committed Germany to alliances and multilateral institutions; “politics before force” signals the Germans’ profound skepticism towards the utility of military power in general and any projection of national military power in particular. Yet West Germany’s exposed geopolitical position forced it to rearm, not least as a *quid pro quo* for American security guarantees.

For Japan, the “Yoshida Doctrine” represented a similar compromise between the public’s anti-militarism and the pacifist ideas the U.S. originally enshrined in its Constitution (Article 9), on the one hand, and

⁸ Berger, Thomas U.: *Cultures of Antimilitarism*, National Security in Germany and Japan, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1998

⁹ Maull, Hanns W.: *From 'civilian power' to 'trading state'?* in: Colvin, Sarah (ed): *Routledge Handbook of German Politics and Culture*, Abingdon: Routledge 2014, pp. 409-424 (409)

Cold War realities, on the other.¹⁰ Under this doctrine, Tokyo catered to U.S. demands that Japan become an ally and re-build its military, but limited this to self-defense only. Its most important contribution was to provide America with extensive bases on the main island of Honshu, Kyushu, and on Okinawa.¹¹ By pointing towards domestic political constraints at home, both Germany and Japan were able to mitigate their alliance dilemmas: they could argue vis-à-vis Washington that their constitutions ruled out the projection of military power and thus deflect demands for military involvement in America's wars in, e.g., Vietnam.

Those policies turned out to be highly successful for all concerned. For the U.S., West Germany's large conventional forces helped to underpin NATO's strategy of extended deterrence in Europe. Japan provided the U.S. with military bases and extensive logistic support that helped secure American strategic objectives in East Asia. Both countries ultimately entrusted their national security to the U.S. and its nuclear weapons and therefore ceased to pose any military threat to their neighbors. Reassuring them in turn further facilitated the rehabilitation and integration of West Germany and Japan in their respective regions, thus creating a virtuous circle of national prosperity and regional cooperation. Equally importantly, their rapid economic recovery and successful consolidation as liberal democracies demonstrated the superiority of the Western liberal model over its Marxist-Leninist alternatives in the global contest between the two systems. As allies and junior partners, they had helped the US to prevail in the global contest with the Communist world by importantly contributing to the advantageous power relationship between East and West.¹²

¹⁰ Samuels, Richard P.: *Securing Japan, Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press 2007, pp. 29-37; Pyle, Kenneth B.: *Japan Rising, The Resurgence of Japanese Power and Purpose*, New York: Public Affairs 2007, p. 241-269

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 210

¹² Katzenstein, Peter J.: *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2005

By 1990, the “civilian powers”¹³ Germany and Japan thus had become the two main pillars of Pax Americana in Europe and East Asia. Yet that liberal international order was, as the very rise of Germany and Japan demonstrated, more than just an arrangement to cement American predominance; it also provided opportunities for other countries to prosper and for new powers to rise. Germany and Japan were but the first of those new powers; they were followed by the “East Asian tigers” Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, then by ASEAN and, ultimately, by China, which started its rise with Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms in 1978. The end of the Cold War, with the implosion of the Soviet empire and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, seemed to turn this order into a new, truly global liberal international order.

II. From the 1990s to Today

As originally conceived at the end of World War II, the Liberal International Order, envisaged a far-reaching transformation of world politics by ending war, defeating poverty, and protecting individual human rights. It would also make the world, in the famous phrase of Woodrow Wilson, “safe for democracy”, not least in America itself, by reconciling the United States’ position as the world’s dominant military power with its domestic democratic institutions.¹⁴ To avoid becoming an imperial power that relied extensively on coercive means, and thus a garrison state, the United States needed a world in which prospering democracies peacefully resolved their differences through co-operation within a rules-based, institutionalized order built on respect for national sovereignty and individual human rights, on rule of law, democratic governance and the peaceful settlement of conflicts.¹⁵ The defeat of the Soviet Union in the Cold War was due not only to the West’s superior power, but also to the

¹³ Maull, Hanns W.: Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers, in: Foreign Affairs, 69:5 (1990/91), pp.91-106

¹⁴ Deudney, Daniel H.: Bounding Power, Republican Security Theory From the Polis to the Global Village, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2006, pp. 161-189

¹⁵ *ibid.*

attraction of this transformative project, not least for the Soviet leadership around Mikhail Gorbachev in the second half of the 1980s.

The policies of this Soviet leadership eventually produced far-reaching domestic and international transformations that changed the geopolitical context for Germany in Europe and for Japan in East Asia turned the LIO into the new universal international order.¹⁶ The dismantling of the Soviet empire led to the unification of Germany and the enlargements of NATO and the European Union. In East Asia, its repercussions seriously jolted the communist system in China, but eventually confirmed its course of economic reform and opening without political liberalization that enabled its rise to continue. It also undermined the economic foundations of North Korea, accelerating its push for nuclear weapons. For the first time since the immediate post-WW II period, the Western liberal international order truly became global; with a few minor exceptions such as Cuba or North Korea, democracy and market economics appeared to be triumphant.

By the mid-1990s the new international order had successfully weathered crises of the Iraqi invasion and annexation of Iraq and the wars of disintegration of communist Yugoslavia and thus become consolidated; during the second half of the 1990s, it widened and deepened its reach, most notably through the establishment of the World Trade Organization and reforms in the non-proliferation regime. The response of the first administration of US President George W. Bush to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 in Afghanistan and Iraq from 2003 onward, however, seriously compromised the LIO by eroding the influence of its dominant power, America. The international financial crisis triggered by the demise of the US investment bank Lehman Brothers in 2008 pushed this development further, while at the same time China continued its relentless rise to world power status. All this undermined U.S. dominance in the LIO and indeed that order itself. It also severely challenged the foreign policies of America's closest allies, Germany and Japan, which

¹⁶ Maull, Hanns W.: The Once and Future International Order, in: *Survival* 61:2 (April/May 2019), pp. 7-32

depended more than any other major state on the continued viability and vitality of this order.¹⁷

Despite all those dramatic changes in world politics and their respective regional environments over those three decades, Germany's and Japan's foreign policies remained relatively unchanged. As "civilian powers," they continued to work for peace, regional stability and a rules-based international order not only, and certainly not primarily, through military means – and even in the realm of military power, they relied as much on military self-restraint as a means to reassure as on their military capabilities. Yet they would rather use the tools of economic statecraft (such as trade, development aid, and sanctions) and diplomatic instruments. Both countries also worked effectively to widen and deepen the development of regional and global multilateral institutions – Germany, in Europe, with NATO and the European Union, and Japan, in Asia-Pacific, with APEC and ASEAN-based institutions (ARF, ASEAN+3, EAS etc.), as well as more recently the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, USA), and the TPP (now the CPTPP without the U.S.). Overall, the foreign and security policy roles and postures of Germany and Japan over the past three decades have been remarkably consistent with their previous, Cold War orientations. In particular, they have remained firmly wedded to their respective alliances and have refrained from developing alternative, more autonomous policies.¹⁸

There were, however, also important differences between the trajectories of Germany and Japan since 1990. Those concerned the degree to which they were willing to engage in military power projection: while Germany went all the way in joining NATO combat operations, inflicting and suffering casualties, Japan continues to recoil from such missions, engaging only in *non-combat* support and humanitarian missions. Their foreign policy ambitions also diverged: Germany's foreign

¹⁷ Maull, Hanns W.: Conclusions: The Rise and Decline of the Post-Cold War International Order, in: idem (ed): The Rise and Decline of the Post-Cold War International Order, Oxford et al: Oxford University Press 2018, pp. 272-312

¹⁸ Sakaki, Alexandra/Maull, Hanns W./Lukner, Kerstin/Krauss, Ellis S./Berger, Thomas U.: Reluctant Warriors, Germany, Japan, and Their U.S. Alliance Dilemma, Washington, DC: Brookings (forthcoming), Chapters 3 and 4

policy appeared to aim at transforming – “civilizing” – international politics by, e.g., promoting further European integration, while Japan mostly tries to uphold the regional and global status quo against the forces of change. In modifying their Cold War military postures since 1990, Japan has come farther from its old stance of defense only of the home islands, but Germany has done more in combat. Both in their respective ways contributed importantly, however, to sustain the power balance underlying the liberal international order against an increasingly recalcitrant Russia and against the rise of an assertive China and erratic North Korea.¹⁹

¹⁹ Ibid., Chapter 6

III. Germany and Japan into the future

Since the mid-2000s, the Liberal International Order (LIO) has begun to unravel. The new international environment will pose challenges that will be different from those of the past, and America will no longer be available, at least not in the old ways, as the “benign hegemon” and guardian angel. If President Trump is re-elected in November 2020, an unpredictable U.S. could well become illiberal, further lose its international standing and influence, and possibly become dangerously reckless. This would increase the risks for Germany and Japan to become embroiled in conflicts with Russia or China against their own interests and inclinations. Yet even if Trump loses to a Democratic candidate who wishes to return to the past LIO, the challenges to Germany and Japan will persist. The damage Trump has reaped will have to be corrected, a difficult process that will absorb much time, money and energy. The U.S. thus may become distracted, self-absorbed, and unable quickly to reassert itself in efforts to revive and transform the LIO. Or, failing to respond adequately to a regional crisis or challenge, it may then over-react and indulge in military ventures that are not in Germany’s or Japan’s national interests, risking entanglement in those American-induced wars if they participate or abandonment by the U.S. if they do not.

Germany and Japan will therefore have to step up their efforts and develop new foreign and security policy strategies if they want to preserve the functioning, rules-based international order they desperately need. Those strategies will turn around five core objectives: (1) upholding what still exists and works in the present international order and developing new frameworks wherever appropriate and feasible to extend a rules-based international order; (2) fostering traditional alliances and developing new regional security arrangements while maintaining cooperation with other powers, including China and Russia, in the service of national security; (3) monitoring interdependence and reducing specific

vulnerabilities to enhance national resilience; (4) contributing to rule enforcement in the international order; and (5) building domestic support for such a foreign and security posture.

First, upholding and developing the present international order. The persistent erosion of that order over the last one and a half decades does not mean that there is nothing left. The present international order is a multi-dimensional, multi-level arrangement. Many of its parts still function adequately; others remain relevant despite significant deterioration. It therefore makes sense to try to uphold and, wherever possible, strengthen those parts of the international order that still function and to underpin them with new initiatives, as Japan did through its efforts to rescue the Transpacific Partnership TPP, and Germany did when it joined with France to launch an “alliance of multilateralists” in September 2019 in the UN General Assembly (an initiative that Japan has expressed an interest in supporting).²⁰

Second, Germany and Japan will want to hang on to their existing alliances but also engage and remain open towards new cooperative arrangements with others, including Russia and China. This objective, in other words, concerns security policies in almost all their forms, as well as policies of engagement. The security policy dimensions include national defense; collective defense; regional security architecture; and cooperative security (the only major security policy dimension with lesser relevance is collective security). This raises the vexed issue of military force; we will return to this below in some detail. Yet Germany and Japan will also want to engage with others, including Russia and China. Thus, while Germany has led the sanctions against Russia in the context of Moscow’s annexation of Crimea in 2014, Berlin has also been keen to continue the cooperation **with Russia, including the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union**. Similarly, while Japan originally refused to join China’s AIIB and its Belt and Road Initiative, it recently has moderated this opposition and started working with China on specific projects. As long as

²⁰ Germany, France to launch multilateralism alliance, Deutsche Welle, April 3, 2019 [<https://www.dw.com/en/germany-france-to-launch-multilateralism-alliance/a-48172961>]

cooperation does not undermine existing security alliances, engaging with Russia and China would, from the perspective of both Berlin and Tokyo, contribute to international security. Moreover, it could also enhance the compatibility of new multilateral arrangements with the principles and norms of the present international order. In short, Germany and Japan in their security strategies are likely to follow the triple logic of defense, deterrence and détente, where each of the three components contributes to the overall objective of (national, regional and global) security and stability.

Third, Germany and Japan are likely to continue to accept and promote economic interdependence. As Farrell and Newman point out, globalization has been too big and persistent a trend to be reversed;²¹ while de-coupling may well be tried, and even could be achieved to some degree and within specific contexts, overall globalization will continue and interdependence persist, for the simple reason that it has become a key input to national prosperity. Moreover, while policies of self-sufficiency and autarky might seem - at least at first glance - plausible for large, resource-rich territorial states such as the United States, Russia or China, they are simply unimaginable for Germany and Japan, which therefore will continue to embrace globalization and keep open their economies. In the past, globalization has fostered prosperity, lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and even helped to mitigate global inequalities between states, by exploiting the efficiency gains from division of labor across borders. While interdependence rarely benefits those involved equally, it usually does benefit all sides. In this way, it creates disincentives against policies that threaten to disrupt economic cooperation and perhaps even endanger peace and stability and thus impose costs on all participants. The negative impact of decoupling would not, however, necessarily be comparable in its weight, scope and time frame for all parties, and these asymmetries of interdependence provide leverage that can be exploited politically to influence and coerce others

²¹ Farrell, Henry/Newman, Abraham L.: Chained to Globalization. Why It's Too Late to Decouple. In: *Foreign Affairs* 99:1 (January/February 2020), pp.

(“weaponized interdependence”).²² Yet it should be noted that the source of leverage is not dependence but vulnerability: it is only when an actor cannot find alternatives or absorb the consequences of disruptions without too much pain that she may feel forced to concede to demands.²³

Fourth, if Germany and Japan want to preserve and enhance a rules-based international order, they will have to be prepared to help enforce international principles, norms and rules against challenges, if necessary through coercive measures such as sanctions. In this case, it would be Germany and Japan that would have to consider “weaponizing interdependence” – or rather, to support or themselves organize coalitions that would be willing and able to impose costs on actors that were judged to have violated important rules.

Fifth and finally, Germany and Japan will need to find domestic political support for their new foreign and security policies. This may well be more difficult than in the past. True, both countries have experienced major domestic political contestation of foreign and security policy decisions (often those involving use of force) during the Cold War period, but also since then, but overall neither the material burden of their respective foreign and security policy postures nor their normative and cultural implications have been severe. By and large, Germany and Japan since the mid-1950s have been able to realize their national priorities by drawing on external resources and adapting their external environments; in the future, they will probably will have to become exporters of security and stability to a much larger degree than in the past. This will at times be uncomfortable – and expensive.

The Uses and Limits of Military Force

This is most obvious with issues relating to military security and the use of force. As we have seen, both Germany and Japan already made significant adjustments in their military security and defense policies since

²² Farrell, Henry; Newman, Abraham L.: Weaponized Interdependence. How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion. In: *International Security* 44 (1) (Summer 2019), pp. 42–79

²³ See Keohane, Robert O./Nye, Joseph S., jr.: *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Boston: Little/Brown 1977 (Fourth Ed.: Longman 2012)

the end of the Cold War. Yet pressure on both to do more will likely continue. Japan, in particular, confronts a vastly superior, potentially hostile great power of huge economic, political and military weight: China. In the future, the military balance in East Asia will likely shift further to the disadvantage of Japan. The credibility of U.S. security guarantees will thus diminish, and although Japan has been promoting security and defense cooperation with other powers, such as Australia, India and some ASEAN member states, those efforts, while useful and desirable, will not resolve the underlying geopolitical dilemma.²⁴ Engaging China more closely should and will, as indicated already, figure prominently in Japan's foreign and security policy posture – yet again, such policies in and of themselves will not be enough to resolve the problem. Japan (and also Germany, which ultimately may confront a similar dilemma if both the U.S. and the European Union fail to provide adequate reassurance against Russia) will therefore need to strengthen their capacities to defend themselves and to sustain regional security with military as well as non-military means.

In this, they will be hampered by some of the consequences of the very success of the LIO in the past. That success has turned Germany and Japan into prosperous, satisfied societies with ageing populations that have much to lose and therefore are risk averse. Their persistent cultures of anti-militarism have blended with tendencies towards self-absorption to produce a declining interest in foreign relations. We therefore assume that in their quest to preserve and renew a rules-based international order, Germany and Japan will remain “constrained powers” as far as their military security posture is concerned.

In one sense, Germany's and Japan's reluctance to engage in the use of force arguably is part of a larger phenomenon, at least in the Western industrialized world: the arrival of the “post-heroic age” of

²⁴ Distressingly, Japan and the Republic of Korea – natural allies in the present geopolitical situation in East Asia – have allowed their relationship to deteriorate badly. See Sakaki, Alexandra: Japan's South Korean Predicament, in: *International Affairs* 94:4 (2018), pp. 735-54; Maslow, Sebastian/O'Shea, Paul: There Will be No Winner in the Japan-South Korea Dispute, in: *The Diplomat*, Aug. 20, 2019 [<https://thediplomat.com/2019/08/there-will-be-no-winner-in-the-japan-south-korea-dispute/>]

ageing but affluent populations with small families that have few children, and therefore have little inclination to see them fighting and dying in war.²⁵ They also are acutely aware of the destructiveness of modern warfare, which makes the use of force highly problematic.²⁶ This seems to have resulted in what has been termed “the declining utility of military force”.²⁷

That military force may further lose its utility does not mean it will be irrelevant, of course. It will still be built up, prepared, threatened, and possibly used in a number of ways: first, to provide, through military defence and deterrence, protection of national territory, people, and their ability to decide freely about the form of government they want (i.e., self-determination and sovereignty); second, military force may serve purposes of coercion or intervention, including in collective security operations in precarious or failed states; third and most fundamentally, the worldwide configuration of military power (of individual great powers and their alliances) will continue to provide the foundation of international order.

Germany and Japan therefore will continue to need military forces - to defend themselves, if need be, against some forms of aggression, to provide deterrence against aggression or coercion, and to participate in collective defence or collective security operations. Yet both countries will

²⁵ Luttwak, Edward N.: Toward Post-Heroic Warfare, in: *Foreign Affairs*, 74:3 (May/June 1995), pp. 109-122

²⁶ Ironically, this reasoning was developed – persuasively – as early as 1909 by Norman Angell (Angell, Norman: *Europe's Optical Illusion*, London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co 1909, republished in 1911 as: *The Great Illusion: A Study of the Relation of Military Power in Nations to their Economic and Social Advantage*, New York & London: G.P. Putnam's & Sons). This did not prevent, of course, the outbreak of World War I, whose destruction clearly vindicated Angell. There is a counter-argument, as well: technological innovation may shift warfighting and destruction away from conscripts towards professional soldiers, and even away from the latter towards machines. Yet it is hard to imagine that such developments would really reduce the destructive consequences of war. For a recent argument along similar lines that emphasized fierce competition in world affairs but also the constraints of interdependence, see Wright, Thomas J.: *All Measures Short of War: The Contest for the Twenty-First Century and the Future of American Power*, New Haven: Yale University Press 2017

²⁷ Knorr, Klaus: Is International Coercion Waning or Rising? in: *International Security*, 1:4 (1977), pp. 92-110; Bacevich, Andrew J.: *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005.

face daunting domestic problems to strengthen their capabilities, let alone to turn themselves into strong military powers. Leaving aside the difficulties of financing the required increase in defense expenditure (remember: Japan has the largest debt to GDP ratio in the world at 225%), both Germany and Japan have rapidly aging societies, increasing their social welfare burdens. Indeed, Germany's total population is expected to decline from about 81 million today to 75 million in 2050, while for Japan, population size will fall from about 125 million to 87 million by 2050. Given these fiscal, demographic and political constraints, neither country would be able to sustain a rapid increase in their military spending and armed forces personnel. Perhaps the greatest security policy difficulties for the two countries arise in the context of national defence

For all those (and other) reasons, neither Germany nor Japan could defend themselves effectively in military terms against the great power in their neighbourhood; they therefore may have to continue to rely on allies and their nuclear guarantees for their security. This exposes both Berlin and Tokyo to the alliance dilemma of entanglement vs. abandonment.²⁸ Might Japan and Germany therefore move towards their own national nuclear deterrents? Japan's extensive space exploration and civilian nuclear programs, including its vast supplies of weapons-grade plutonium, certainly give the country the option to move towards a complete nuclear deterrent within weeks, rather than months, should the government take such a decision. Germany might seek protection under a French nuclear umbrella that increasingly will assume a European function, as well.²⁹ Yet so far, neither Japan nor Germany have undertaken any serious effort to join the ranks of nuclear weapon states, mostly because of anti-nuclear sentiments in both countries. Moreover, Japan's and Germany's geography, with their highly concentrated industrial production and population centers, seriously hampers the credibility of any national nuclear deterrents against continental powers like China or Russia. Nor would acquisition of nuclear weapons by Germany or Japan necessarily

²⁸ Snyder, Glenn H.: The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics, in: World Politics 36:4 (1984), pp. 461-468

²⁹ Macron speech;

lead to more regional stability; on the contrary, efforts to go nuclear could well raise regional tensions, undermine the chances for cooperative regional security arrangements and exacerbate the risks of preventive war.

Comprehensive Security and Its Non-military Dimensions

In principle, deterrence could also be provided by other means. New technological options might arise that would be able to impose unacceptable levels of material destruction on potential aggressors, for example through cyber warfare or in space. Yet thus far, Germany and Japan have been slow to recognize the threats posed by hybrid warfare and cyber-attacks, and while they are now trying to build up their capacities and improve their cyber defenses, in doing so they are already getting entangled with legal and constitutional constraints.³⁰ Both are also far behind China and Russia in cybersecurity. In space technology, Japan is making rapid national advances, but any signs that these programs were being militarized would arouse domestic opposition. For Germany, space activities are largely focused on European programs that reflect their civilian orientation; any effort to develop a military dimension to these programs would confront not only Germany's own anti-militarist culture and its commitment to international law, but also the reluctance of almost all other EU member states to develop a truly effective common EU security and defense policy.

In the last analysis, both countries face major dissatisfied powers in their respective regions (Russia/China), which their militaries alone cannot contain or deter, let alone defeat. Nor will they have to: both Germany and Japan have become pillars of stability and security in their respective regions, which are challenged by their revisionist great power neighbors,

³⁰ Wechsler, Omree: Germany's Cyber Strategy, Government and Military Preparations for Facing Cyber Threats., in: *Cyber, Intelligence, and Security* 2:1 (2018), pp. 55-72; for Japan: Mihoko Matsubara, "How Japan's Pacifist Constitution Shapes Its Approach to Cyberspace," Council on Foreign Relations, [<https://www.cfr.org/blog/how-japans-pacifist-constitution-shapes-its-approach-cyberspace>]; Nitta, Yoko: National Cyber Security Strategy: Are We Making Progress? Japan's Efforts and Challenges, in: *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, vol No???, pp. 89-98, especially p. 94.

Russia and China. Their national defense strategies and their military security policies will therefore be inextricably linked to stability and security in their regions. Germany and Japan therefore can hope for and expect some support from their neighbors, but they must also multilateralize their own security and defense policies to accommodate the regional context of their security challenges.³¹ At the same time, military force will be insufficient to deal with Germany's and Japan's security and defense challenges; it will need to be complemented with a judicious mixture of engagement and non-military disincentives. By fostering economic interdependence with their potential adversaries, they will also raise the costs of aggression.

IV. Whither Germany and Japan?

A successful transformation of the international order into a system of effective global governance for the rest of the 21st century would require America, China, and Russia to re-think and reconstruct their respective foreign and security policy postures. Perhaps the most important contribution that Germany and Japan could make to a sustainable international order therefore would be to catalyze such new thinking in Washington and Beijing.

This would require a lot of determination, as well as skillful coalition building with other middle powers. Both Germany and Japan in the past have repeatedly (if perhaps not always persistently enough) demonstrated their prowess in this form of soft power. For example, Germany effectively led on NATO and EU enlargement during the 1990s,

³¹ In fact, they already have begun to do so. Thus, Germany has been at the forefront of providing military support to the Baltic States through NATO, e.g., with its leading role in NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence in Lithuania, and Sigmar Gabriel, a former Foreign Minister, has suggested that Germany could meet the two per cent target for its defence expenditure by allocating 0.5 per cent of GDP to the defence budgets of the Baltic states (Gabriel, Sigmar: Einsatz an der Ostflanke, in: ZEIT Online, Sept 12, 2018, available at: <https://www.zeit.de/2018/38/zeitenwende-in-der-weltpolitik-sigmar-gabriel-vorabdruck> [Feb. 10, 2020]. Japan has made available military equipment and maritime surveillance capacities to several South East Asian Coast Guards, and has significantly expanded its bilateral security cooperation with these and other countries in the region.

on the establishment of the International Criminal Court, and on sanctions against Russia after its annexation of the Crimea, while Japan since the mid-1970s has established a strong relationship with ASEAN under the so-called Fukuda doctrine, and skillfully orchestrated regional institution-building in the Asia Pacific, from APEC (established 1989) to the CPTPP (2017).

In the past, Germany's and Japan's military power was successfully integrated, through their alliances with the U.S., into the international balance of power upholding and, eventually, transforming the peaceful coexistence of the Cold War international order. Similarly, in the future they will need to marry their military power to their economic strengths and diplomatic skills in strategies to civilize international politics, engaging their military forces, where necessary, in deterrence, individual and collective self-defense, but also in peace-keeping and missions of collective security (peace-making). Beyond that, they will have to conceive new possibilities for cooperative security policies and launch diplomatic initiatives to retain and strengthen what remains of the old LIO and to build on this to transform it into a new, rules-based international order that provides the kind of international cooperation required to meet the international challenges the world is facing.

This is a tall order, given the prevailing introspective domestic mood and persistence of anti-interventionist sentiments in both countries.³² To meet it, two (inter-related) ingredients will be essential: political leadership and responsive societies. It will be up to capable political leaders in Berlin and Tokyo to overcome the siren songs (and the arms-twisting) of Manichean ideologues that want to drive the world into a new confrontation, and to embrace the wider regional and global perspectives needed to understand and properly manage their foreign policy and

³² Suzuki, Shogo; Wallace, Corey: Explaining Japan's response to geopolitical vulnerability. In: *International Affairs* 94:4 (2018), pp. 711-734; Bulmer, Simon/Paterson, William E.: *Germany and the European Union: Europe's Reluctant Hegemon?* London: Red Globe Press 2019, pp. 256f; Lever, Paul: *Berlin Rules, Europe and the German Way*, London: I.B. Tauris 2017, pp. 267-269; Bittner, Jochen: Is Angela Merkel Still in Charge? In: *New York Times*, Oct. 31, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/31/opinion/angela-merkel-germany.html> [Dec. 4, 2019]

security challenges. Equally importantly, leaders will have to persuade their societies to respond to their calls and mobilize the support they require. This may well imply more sacrifices in the future, both material and morally, than the two countries have become used to.

In the LIO of the past, Germany and Japan initiated and supported multilateral institutions to enhance regional security and stability. They could and should do so again, not only at the regional level but also globally, to respond to challenges such as climate change, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the loss of biodiversity, food and water shortages, ending civil wars, and so forth. Such a stance would conform to the realities of planetary interdependence, in which not only prosperity and wealth, but also national security can no longer be achieved by national military means alone. Neither Germany nor Japan will become the LIO's saviors. They might, however, help to bridge the hiatus in the international order that Donald Trump's America under its illusionary promise of "America First", and eventually once again become major pillars in a resurrected and transformed liberal international order.

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