

ABSTRACT

In the post Cold War era, the global security environment had changed. New security threats had emerged and Japan faced with new threats reacted by enacting security policy changes. These policy changes led Japan from its pacifist post WWII state to a path leading towards a 'normal state'. These new threats were both regional and international in nature, but any change in Japan's security policy must have been consistent with Japan's constitution, or the constitution had to be amended.

This thesis will examine the regional and international threats to Japan, and how these threats influenced changes in Japan's security policy which led Japan towards becoming a normal state. The relationship of Japan's legislative changes and the conceptual frameworks of neo-realism and strategic realism will also be examined.