Marines, Missiles, and the Iron Lady: The Military Leg in Japan's Ocean Strategy 海兵隊、ミサイル、そして鉄の女　日本の海洋政策における軍事的選択肢

Alex Calvo

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The complex situation in East Asia and the wider Pacific-Indian Ocean Region is prompting governments to deploy a full range of tools, from economic diplomacy to humanitarian relief operations to declarations of exclusive air space, in their search for a balance between what they consider to be their key national interests and their shared wish to avert open conflict. Tokyo is one of these actors who feel compelled to defend their national interests while at the same time recognizing that war would imply harsh costs, to itself and the region, at many levels, from the human to the economic to the political. While many Asian leaders have expressed the wish to see tensions ease and differences settled without recourse to violence, all understand the high risk of conflict and look to higher levels of military preparedness to enhance their position. Japan is no exception. Japan is unique, however, in moving to reinforce military capabilities despite a restrictive legal and constitutional framework. The development of an amphibious capability by the SDF (Self-Defense Forces), their latest drills featuring among others shore-based anti-ship missile deployment, more frequent joint exercises with the US and appeals to Washington for a firmer position in the Pacific, a push for constitutional change involving the reinterpretation or formal amendment to Article 9, and repeated public references to the late Margaret Thatcher, former British prime minister, illuminate the military leg in Tokyo's conflict prevention and management strategy. This paper seems to examine these factors, on the understanding that developments in the military sphere are only part of Tokyo's foreign policy towards East-Asia.

Recent amphibious drills offer a glimpse into Tokyo's strategy to deter and avoid armed conflict with China. The goal is to prevent giving the impression that limited force could succeed in securing a foothold in contested islands, with Japan either unable (for lack of military capabilities) or unwilling (due to insufficient domestic support or international opposition) to counterstrike. The security component in Japanese strategy consists of at least six legs: the development of specialized Marine-like units, the holding of regular drills, the deployment of shore-based anti-ship missiles, the incorporation of the memory of Margaret Thatcher and the 1982 Falklands War into standard political discourse, better and deeper relations with Russia, and a strengthening of the alliance with the US and of wider defense and security agreements with other democracies such as India, Australia, and ASEAN member states including Vietnam. This article will examine the first four factors, while

also referring to the wider Japanese search for a security and defense identity, an image, a brand, which leaves behind both Article 9 idealism and unbalanced defense treaties while avoiding suspicions from the international community in general, and the United States in particular. Japan today is a country looking not only for security but also an international identity.

The large-scale amphibious drills in early November constitute a major step forward in deterrence strategy, putting on display Japan's ability both to reconquer an island and to prevent the passage through key straits of hostile shipping. This follows Prime Minister Abe Shinzo 's repeated references to the Falklands in his speeches, an indirect yet unequivocal way of warning China that an invasion of the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu for Beijing, Diaoyutai for Taipei) would be met with an amphibious counterstrike. This was crowned by his meeting in early October with Falklands veteran the Duke of York. On the political and diplomatic side the drills are designed to show that Tokyo is not standing alone should war occur. Japan has succeeded in getting the United States to state that the bilateral security treaty covers the Senkaku Islands in the event of a Chinese attack. The next step is to show that Japanese and US forces are interoperable and could work together in such a campaign while developing a Japanese amphibious capability. Japan deployed, as part of the drills, anti-ship missiles with which to close the First Island Chain to Chinese shipping in the event of hostilities. The potential of such missiles is another lesson learned from the South Atlantic, where HMS Glamorgan suffered extensive damage at the hands of an improvised shore-launched Exocet missile, in an episode not forgotten by military officers on either side of the East China Sea.

Japan's growing amphibious capability. The creation of specialized amphibious units and facilities is one aspect of Japan's defense reorientation following the end of the Cold War and the growing might of the Chinese Navy. Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) are significant in size and capabilities. Although they may not sport some weapons systems deemed to be offensive and therefore incompatible with Article 9 as officially interpreted, they are still one of Asia's powerful navies. In an overview of the MSDF's historical origins, rationale, structure and capabilities, King's College's Alessio Patalano notes that it comprises "a surface component more than twice the size of Britain's Royal Navy's and a submarine force twice that of the French Navy". He concludes that "Japan really is becoming the Britain of the Far East" since she "allocates naval means to achieve strategic ends against an austere economic climate, seeking to maintain a range of capabilities to effectively defend its own core interests and wider bilateral and ad hoc partnerships. Like Britain, Japan endorses a maritime strategy in which the safeguard of crucial sea lanes sits at the heart of national security".[1] The Center for Strategic Studies of Catalonia's Pol Molas stresses the MSDF's "training (of both sailors and officers), organization (very much focused on anti-submarine warfare but at the same time balanced, and the quality of its hardware (be it of domestic design or purchased abroad and upgraded".[2] In an overview of the most important navies in the Indo-Pacific, US Naval War College's James R. Holmes ranks the MSDF second in terms of "their capacity to execute the missions national leaders entrust to them" and describes it as "modest in size yet well-equipped, sporting Aegis destroyers, light aircraft carriers, and an elite diesel submarine force".[3]

Japan's goal in beefing up her amphibious forces is to develop a capability to deploy sufficient force in contested islands in the event of a crisis, and to retake them if necessary. Current Japanese policy is not to deploy a permanent land force, or even a permanent civilian presence, in those same islands.[4] With that end in view, Tokyo, mentored by the US Navy and Marine Corps, set

out to develop a specialized force,. The force will comprise contingents from the Ground, Air, and Maritime Self-Defense Forces (SDF), and include different units covering a range of capabilities, from infantry to maritime transportation, and including air support. This specialized force is seen as necessary, among others, because the disputed territories are not only far from existing military facilities, but from civilian infrastructure able to support operations. [5]

Until 2012, Japan considered marines to be offensive in nature and thus precluded by Article 9 of the constitution. The current government interpretation of Article 9 is that it allows defensive, but not offensive, weapons, a distinction not always easy to make in practice. Finally, last year the cabinet came to the conclusion that Japanese law allowed marines units to be created and deployed. The unit selected to serve as the core of this amphibious capability was the Western Army Infantry Regiment (WAIR), based in Nagasaki. This location facilitates quick embarkation on MSDF (Maritime Self-Defence Forces) ships at Nagasaki/Sasebo or on V-22 Ospreys from nearby air bases at Nyutabaru and Tsuiki. From this core, Japanese amphibious capabilities are expected to expand. There have also been reports of discussions on the possible creation of a further specialized amphibious unit.[6]

In any case, an important step was Japan's participation earlier this year in the Dawn Blitz 2013 exercise in California, a US-led multinational military drill which also featured troops from New Zealand and Canada. Described as "historic" by a USMC officer, Tokyo's participation was notable not only because of the scale of forces travelling to the US, some 1,000 military personnel plus three warships (two of them amphibious assault ships), but because Japanese troops practiced island assaults side by side with their American counterparts.[7]

These drills took place in the face of Beijing's protests, not officially confirmed but noted by a number of observers. Tai Ming Cheung, an analyst of Chinese and East Asian security affairs and director of the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation at the University of California, San Diego, said that "It's another dot that the Chinese will connect to show this significant expanding military cooperation". On the other hand, Colonel Grant Newsham, USMC liaison officer to the Japanese military, noted that "If the 20th century taught us anything, it is that when democracies are able and willing to defend themselves, it preserves peace and stability", adding that "Most Asian countries welcome--even if quietly stated--a more capable (Japanese force) that is also closely allied to U.S. forces". Kerry Gershaneck, from the Pacific Forum-Center for Strategic & International Studies, described Japan's progress in amphibious warfare as "hugely significant" and noted that, given the United States' treaty commitment to defend Japanese territory, "We cannot ask young American Marines to fight and die doing a job that Japanese forces cannot, or will not, do", adding that "The U.S. Marines will help, but they must have a capable partner".[8]

Despite its name, the WAIR is, broadly speaking, of battalion size. It is made up of at least three infantry companies. Its table of equipment is that of a light infantry unit, with weapons no heavier than 84mm Carl Gustav recoil-less rifles (employed by the Royal Marines against ARA Guerrico in the defense of South Georgia on 3 April 1982 [9]) and French MO-120-RT 120mm towed mortars. Tokyo announced recently that it would be buying up to six AAV-7A1 amphibious assault vehicles. Previously, the WAIR's only vehicles were light trucks. [10]

Concerning air support, up to now the WAIR has not had at its disposal any dedicated, specialized, collocated (that is, based on the same facilities), air unit. Hitherto, it has relied on helicopters from the 1st Aviation Brigade, with headquarters

near Tokyo. For example, during the June 2013 Dawn Blitz drills, which took place in Southern California, this brigade provided AH-64 Apache and CH-47 Chinook helicopters. Now Tokyo is pondering the possibility of purchasing organic air transport for her marines, in the shape of up to 20 V-22 Ospreys. This could allow the WAIR to quickly move to the Senkaku Islands in the event of a crisis.[11] The Ospreys remain, however, controversial in Japan, with opposition due to past accidents. Pol Molas considers them to be "expensive and mechanically troublesome".[12] It remains to be seen whether their deployment in the Philippines, in the Allied humanitarian operations in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan / Yolanda,[13] improves their image.

Although the decision to develop specialized marine units is rather recent, Japan has long enjoyed a sizable capability in amphibious ships. We could cite here the MSDF's three Oosumi class vessels, more than a dozen landing craft, and the Hyuga class, officially described as "helicopter destroyers" but similar in capabilities to light carriers.[14]

Each Hyuga class helicopter destroyer can carry up to 14 or 16 helicopters, and it probably would not be too difficult to convert them to operate VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) planes like the F-35-B which the UK is buying for her Queen Elizabeth Class carriers, currently under construction. The same could be said about its successor, the Izumo (22DH) class, which is even more capable, but still labelled as "helicopter destroyers". Ships like the Izumo are a reminder of the diverse range of tools in the hands of Tokyo, since in the words of Alessio Patalano "it can be used in the defense of offshore islands, to rescue nationals overseas and as a command ship in expeditionary or relief missions", adding that "In relief operations after the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, for example, the helicopter destroyer Hyuga was deployed precisely in that type of function".[15]

We can thus see how, of the three pillars of Tokyo's amphibious forces, the maritime one is probably the strongest. The land component is currently under development, and there is still a lack of specialized air units and equipment, with Tokyo pondering the purchase of V-22 Ospreys.

Washington appears to be interested not only in helping Tokyo reinforce her military capabilities as a complement to her own "Pivot to the Pacific", which rests in no small measure on a strengthening of the naval capabilities of key allies and partners such as the Philippines and Japan, but also in pressing for a Japanese contribution to US-led amphibious operations. This was stressed by Kyle Mizokami in his recent analysis of "Japan's Amphibious Buildup" for the United States Naval Institute News. Mizokami wrote, "Under the tutelage of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, Japan is slowly but surely building up a credible, flexible amphibious force capable of responding to national emergencies. Highly trained with a high level of mobility, it could eventually become the equal of both. The force will not only be highly useful in Japan's territorial disputes, it will likely be an excellent partner for their American counterparts in joint operations".[16]

Writing in the Asahi Shimbun, Koji Sonoda explained that according to Japanese Defense Ministry sources "The creation of a Japanese version of U.S. Marines will be included in the National Defense Program Guidelines to be compiled in December", adding that "The amphibious force will be set up as early as fiscal 2015". Sonoda said that these sources had revealed the target size of the force to be 3,000. Four of the specialized craft mentioned earlier would be purchased in the current fiscal year, and the remaining two in Fiscal 2014.[17]

The interim report by Japan's Defense Posture Review Commission made it clear that building up amphibious capabilities was one of the priorities for defense planners. The report stated

that one of the "areas to be emphasized for defense buildup" was the capability to "respond to attacks on remote islets". This requires an ability to "rapidly deploy troops as the situation unfolds", requiring a "mobile deployment capability" and an "amphibious capability". The mobile deployment capability is to rest on "joint transport" and "civilian transport capacity", while also requiring "supply bases".[18]

Concerning the emerging Japanese amphibious force, retired Vice Admiral Koda Yoji, commander in chief of the Maritime Self-Defense Force's Self-Defense Fleet from 2007 to 2008, has termed it "one of the biggest challenges the SDF has faced since it was established". Concerning its shape, Koda explained this summer that Japan needed some 10 units, with 200 to 300 personnel each, in order to enjoy the necessary flexibility to defend the different islands in the Okinawa chain. The admiral believes that these units should all combine land, air, and sea capabilities, while being self-sufficient, since in the event of hostilities they could not expect any reinforcements.[19]

Although the SDF set up a Joint Staff Office in 2006, tasked with coordinating joint operations, significant obstacles to complete coordination of its three branches remain, for example in the form of different radio systems, frequencies, and even lingoes. However, the issues go beyond standardization of communications system among the three branches to coordination with its US counterparts. Commenting on this, Justin Goldman, a nonresident fellow at Pacific Forum CSIS, said that "An amphibious capability for rapid island defense is inherently joint", adding that "The three services within the SDF do not have a long history of training and operating together, a situation that critically needs to be addressed" [20]

The latest drills: ships, jets, and 34,000 troops. On 24 October, Japan's Defense Ministry announced a large-scale military exercise designed to bolster the country's ability to protect remote islands claimed by other nations. A Ministry official explained that the war games would feature "destroyers, fighter jets and 34,000 troops", adding that they would involve "live-firing". The "air-sea-land drill" would be held from 1 to 18 November, comprising "amphibious landings on the uninhabited atoll of Okidaitojima, 400 kilometres southeast of the main Okinawan island". In a statement, the SDF joint staff said that the drill was aimed at "maintaining and improving the joint operational abilities of the Self-Defense Forces in armed-attack situations", adding that it would feature "a series of actions in defending islands" including combined operations in landings.[21]

The number of troops involved is indicative of the significance of the drills, which looms larger when one recalls that one year earlier similar amphibious exercises were cancelled following protests from China, and that this time they included for the first time the deployment of anti-ship missiles. If we add to this the entry into Japan's narrative of the 1982 Falklands War, the message could not be clearer: Tokyo has the military means and the political will to retake islands in the event of an invasion[22]. We will later assess these two factors.

Closing the First Island Chain: the Long Shadow of HMS Glamorgan

The deployment of shore-based anti-ship missiles in the islands of Ishigaki and Miyako-jima was quickly noted by the media, despite the drills not including any live firing of such weapons. A report by Stratfor explained that although the "Type 88 surface-to-ship missiles" would not be tested, "their deployment is important because stationing batteries of Type 88 missiles in such a way would effectively put the entire passage between Okinawa-jima and Miyako-jima under the coverage of Japanese land-based surface-to-ship missiles". Although Tokyo denied that the deployment was aimed at anyone in particular, it

noted that "the Chinese navy is increasingly using the same passage through the first island chain and into the Pacific" and as a result "the deployment is sure to send a strong message to Beijing". The conclusion was that Japan's drills and anti-ship missile deployments "show that, despite some Chinese military claims of having 'dismembered' the first island chain as an obstacle", transiting it "in peacetime is entirely different from attempting the same feat during a conflict with Japan".[23]

Map showing Ishigaki and Miyako Islands, part of Okinawa Prefecture.[24]

The significance of shore-based anti-ship missiles was clear in the closing stages of the 1982 Falklands War, when Argentinian forces launched an improvised Exocet missile (taken from the above mentioned ARA Guerrico and known as "ITB") against the Royal Navy's HMS Glamorgan, damaging her extensively and taking her out of action.[26] While not as well known as the other two successful instances of Buenos Aires' use of this weapons system during that war, the air attack? on HMS Sheffield and SS Atlantic Conveyor was duly noted by both Chinese and Japanese naval planners. Recent Filipino commentary on how to protect waters claimed by China has also featured discussions of mobile shore-based missiles, possibly camouflaged in some of that country's extensive jungle areas. The Republic of China is also considering the potential of this kind of weapons system, one of the "asymmetrical" technologies that many are urging Taipei to adapt, given the growing gap in conventional naval capabilities across the Taiwan Strait.

Map showing the distance between Ishigaki Island and other nearby land features.[25]

Camouflaged shore-launched missiles give ships under attack a much shorter reaction time. As a result, the scope for countermeasures is considerably smaller. It is easier to detect hostile ships and planes from a distance, in comparison with a hidden mobile missile launcher, which may only reveal itself after having opened fire. While modern ships tend to be equipped with close-range air defence systems which HMS Glamorgan did not have[27], and these may well be capable of destroying a missile in flight, the scope for doing this is small compared with missiles launched from warships and military aircraft. Furthermore, mobile launchers can provide a way out of the conundrum of how to defend a shore after losing air superiority, overcoming the disadvantage of fixed static defences, which by definition are liable to be either bypassed or destroyed by concentrated fire. We can expect Taipei to be paying close attention to Japanese moves in this area.

The British factor: A renewed Anglo-Japanese Alliance? Lessons from the South Atlantic go beyond the potential of shore-launched anti-ship

missiles and also extend into the realm of politics and diplomacy, and to be more precise deterrence. While Japan is mainly relying on the United States for building up her amphibious capabilities, Tokyo's narrative is increasingly inspired by the British experience. References to Margaret Thatcher and the Falklands have taken a discrete, yet significant, place in Prime Minister Abe Shinzo speeches. Tellingly, a two-day security conference at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security (RUSI)'s Tokyo Branch in early October, featured the Duke of York, a veteran of the 1982 War, with Abe as the keynote speaker. It is interesting to note how, within the division of duties in the British Royal Family, the Duke of York is charged with export and investment promotion. So, again we find what is fast becoming Abe's trademark combination of economic and security issues. The message was dual: working to increase trade and investment links with another advanced economy, and sending the signal that, like the UK in 1982, force would be met with force. All in the most deniable way of course, but the message was there. Something similar can be said about Lady Thatcher, references to her figure and record can be seen as a coded message to Beijing, or as a mere appeal to the need to transform and quick start the Japanese economy, as the Iron Lady once did for her country.

Abe's coded message to Beijing: shaking hands with Falklands veteran, His Royal Highness the Duke of York.[30]

The 400th anniversary of UK-Japan relations seems to be providing cover for Japan's deterrence diplomacy. Next year, the 100 anniversary of the First World War, where Japan and the UK fought together, may provide further opportunities for the Japanese prime minister to send subtle messages to China and to Tokyo's allies. In his keynote address at the RUSI conference, Abe noted how the Japanese Imperial Navy came to be known as "the guardian of the Mediterranean". Can Japan combine a no-nonsense approach to national security without incurring excessive military spending and/or prompting accusations of militarism at home and abroad? That is a key question, and one on which the Japanese Government seems to be looking to the UK as a possible role model, or at least recalling the heydays of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance at the dawn of the twentieth century, when Japan was widely respected as a regional power without being seen as an outcast and a bully as in the 1930s. One of the main challenges is selling this to South Korea, a country clearly reluctant to see Tokyo play a stronger role in international, and particularly security, affairs.

Truck carrying Type 88 missiles. Also known as SSM-1 or Shibasuta, this missile was developed by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries from the Air SDF Type 80 (ASM-1) air-to-surface anti-ship missile.[28]

Conclusions. Increasing tensions in Asia make it necessary to examine the different strategies of the actors involved, Japan among them. Most

observers hope that some sort of diplomatic settlement will ultimately be reached. In support of such a view they cite factors such as the economic interdependence between the different countries involved, the high costs in material and human terms of an open conflict, and the fact that public opinion indicates ambivalence concerning resort to arms against neighbors. Diplomacy and military might, however, are not two completely unrelated spheres, and a country's weight in the former usually depends to some extent on the capabilities and credibility of the latter. This is why, although rearmament and the development of new military capabilities by Japan's SDF are only one of the legs in Tokyo's strategy to deal with tensions in Asia, defending her national interest while seeking to avoid open conflict, it is necessary to examine moves in this area. This may facilitate a clearer view of Japan's diplomatic options, as well as the perceptions by her neighbors, including allies and partners on the one hand and potential belligerents on the other, which in turn may help shape their diplomatic positions.

Among others, Tokyo is trying to reinforce economic and political relations with a wide range of actors. These include ASEAN member states, India, and Mongolia, just to mention a few. Prime Minister Abe Shinzo also seems to attach great importance to improved relations with Russia, and this is matched by a corresponding interest by Russian leader Putin. It is reinforced by both countries' needs for energy trade diversification, Russia as exporter and Japan as developer and importer. Moscow and Tokyo show how territorial disputes and historical mistrust are not necessarily an obstacle to better relations, when the political will and economic incentives are there on both sides. Japan has also been quick to assist the Philippines recover from Typhoon Haiyan / Yolanda, in a move made the more important since it is one of the countries that Imperial Japan occupied during the Second World War. On the trade front, while facing a number of obstacles, Tokyo is one of the actors clearly interested in a successful outcome to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations.

Artistic rendering of the launch of an Exocet by the ITB.[29]

At the same time, however, Tokyo is reinforcing the SDF, as one of the pillars in its strategy to strengthen Japan's position in the western Pacific while striving to avoid an open conflict with East Asia. Within this pillar, the development of an amphibious capability is most significant, in particular when taken together with the entry into Japanese political discourse of references to the Falklands. Better amphibious capabilities, while necessary for military deterrence, are also connected to other aspects of Japanese foreign policy, such as humanitarian assistance. As shown recently in the Philippines, platforms such as amphibious assault ships and light carriers are very useful for rapid distribution of humanitarian aid and providing medical attention to survivors in areas with little or destroyed infrastructure and transportation networks.

In this context, the SDF drills in early November were significant, and not only due to the large number of personnel involved, but above all because they signaled a clear determination to show the world, both allies and potential foes, that Japan was back as a major naval power and was developing a serious amphibious capability,

together with the ability to close off key maritime passages at a time of conflict. The skills and professionalism of the Japanese military are not in doubt. Neither is Tokyo's determination to expand their capabilities. Tokyo now seeks to integrate the securing of such objectives as the defense of the Senkaku Islands with wider interests including maintaining freedom of navigation and the peaceful solution to territorial disputes. This is essential in order to secure the support, or at least the acquiescence, of other powers. Since becoming prime minister for a second time Abe Shinzo has devoted much time and effort to this goal, and references to concepts such as "maritime democracies", "freedom of navigation", and "the rule of law at sea" have become a constant in his speeches. Growing links to the UK are part of this strategy, since that country displays many of the characteristics that Japan is seeking, being an ally of the US with significant military capabilities and substantial soft power. The sight of MSDF and Royal Navy warships rushing to the Philippines to provide humanitarian aid is reinforcing this message of the two countries as benign naval powers.

Three challenges remain, though, for the reinforcement of the SDF to successfully take place and hopefully contribute to Japanese diplomacy and facilitating a peaceful settlement to the different territorial disputes in the Indian-Pacific Ocean Region. First of all, accompanying this gradual "normalization" with a long-needed economic recovery. Unless Japan's economy advances, Abe could lose the political goodwill that is enabling him to push forward his foreign and defense policies. Second, securing a broad range of support abroad. While the United States and the United Kingdom seem to be on board, together with Asian countries like India, the Philippines, and Vietnam, South Korea remains reluctant. Despite being a fellow maritime democracy and US ally, history remains a major obstacle to fully normal bilateral relations and suspicions abound. Last, but not least, Japan's SDF is preparing to train, and equip itself, not only with a view to conventional amphibious operations but also to face the possibility of unarmed invasions and mixed enemy operations involving military and unarmed forces, while simultaneously expanding its already impressive humanitarian support capabilities, essential for promoting Japanese soft power abroad and Tokyo's image as a benign first-rate naval power.

Alex Calvois an international law and international relations professor at European University, and guest professor at Nagoya University.

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Notes

[1] Alessio Patalano "Japan: Britain of the Far East?", The Diplomat, 18 January 2011.

[2] Private communication to the author, 5 December 2013.

[3] James R. Holmes "The Top 5 Navies of the Indo-Pacific", The Diplomat, 21 January 2013.

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[5] Kyle Mizokami "Japan's Amphibious Buildup", United States Naval Institute News, 9 October 2013.

[6] Kyle Mizokami "Japan's Amphibious Buildup", United States Naval Institute News, 9 October 2013.

[7] Zachary Keck "Japan Might Create Island

Assault Unit", The Diplomat, 15 June 2013.

[8] "Japan holds unprecedented military exercise in U.S.", Asahi Shimbun, 10 June 2013.

[9] Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, The Battle for the Falklands, (London: Pan Books, 2010), p. 94 and Lawrence Freedman and Virginia Gamba-Stonehouse, Signals of War: The Falklands Conflict of 1982 (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), p. 120.

[10] Kyle Mizokami "Japan's Amphibious Buildup", United States Naval Institute News, 9 October 2013.

[11] Kyle Mizokami "Japan's Amphibious Buildup", United States Naval Institute News, 9 October 2013.

[12] Private communication to the author, dated 15 November 2013.

[13] "More Ospreys Deploy to Philippines for Typhoon Relief Missions", American Forces Press Service, 13 November 2013.

[14] The MSDF's three Oosumi class vessels are considered to be Landing Ship, Tanks (LSTs) and feature full-length flight decks and a well deck. Each can transport almost a battalion of infantry, plus tanks and other vehicles. Each of these ships can carry two American-built Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC), Japan having six of them. Tokyo also has a dozen medium-sized landing crafts, each able to transport around 30 tons of equipment or up to 80 marines from the ship to shore. Kyle Mizokami "Japan's Amphibious Buildup", United States Naval Institute News, 9 October 2013.

[15] Alessio Patalano "Japan's new helicopter destroyer, the imperial navy legacy and the power of a name", Asahi Shimbun, 22 August 2013.

[16] Kyle Mizokami "Japan's Amphibious Buildup", United States Naval Institute News, 9 October 2013.

[17] Koji Sonoda "Japan's new defense guidelines to stipulate amphibious force", Asahi Shimbun, 12 October 2013.

[18] The text also notes that "properly equipping the new unit for the amphibious mission" will be necessary. Interim report by the Defense Posture Review Commission, webiste of the Japanese Ministry of Defense, provisional translation into English.

[19] Ayako Mie and Mizuho Aoki "Nation's troops long way from hitting the beaches: experts", The Japan Times, 1 August 2013.

[20] Ayako Mie and Mizuho Aoki "Nation's troops long way from hitting the beaches: experts", The Japan Times, 1 August 2013.

[21] Shigemi Sato "Japan readies island war games amid YouTube PR push", AFP, 24 October 2013.

[22] For a discussion on whether Japan should develop, as part of her Marine force, a police capability to deal with landings by civilians or mixed landings by military and civilian forces, please see Alex Calvo, "From 'Three Blocks' to 'Three Islands'", Small Wars Journal, 18 November 2013.

[23] "Japan's Latest Military Exercise Sends a Message to China", Stratfor, 25 October 2013.

[24] Map taken from Eric Sayers "A day trip to Miyako-jima", Information Dissemination, 18 January 2011.

[25] Map taken from "China's Air Defense Zone Announcement Angers and Alarms Japan", Foreign Confidential, 25 November 2013.

[26] I. Inskip, Ordeal by Exocet: HMS Glamorgan and the Falklands War 1982, (London: Frontline Books, 2012).

[27] Following the attack against HMS Glamorgan, the Royal Navy quickly installed the Phalanx system in its ships. H. Bicheno, Razor's Edge. The Unofficial History of the Falklands War, (London: Phoenix, 2007), p. 131.

[28] Source of the picture: here.

[29] Source of the picture: here.

[30] Picture taken from "Duke of York in Japan to speak at RUSI conference", website of the UK Government, 3 October 2013.