


# Foreign Influences on Contemporary Japanese Remilitarization: The United States, North Korea, and China

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FOREIGN INFLUENCES ON CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE  
REMILITARIZATION: THE UNITED STATES, NORTH KOREA, AND  
CHINA

by

ALLISON LEE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Honors in the Major Program in International and Global Studies  
in the College of Sciences  
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at the University of Central Florida  
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Thesis Chair: Dr. Houman Sadri

## **ABSTRACT**

After surrendering in World War II, Japan's new American-crafted constitution forced the formerly imperialistic country into pacifism. In accordance with Article 9 of the constitution, Japan was to be completely demilitarized and was therefore barred from keeping a standing military of its own. Over the course of the seven decades that have passed since the implementation of Supreme Commander MacArthur's nonviolent constitution, Japan has slowly regained military strength. Rather than being the direct result of domestic politics and civic wishes, however, the rearmament of Japan has come as a result of foreign influences. Namely, the United States, North Korea, and China have forced the docile country to recoup its former martial power. Without these three countries' actions over the years, Japan would never have had the backing or reasoning to rearm itself. The intent of this thesis is to explore the various actions that these three countries have taken that have led to Japan's remilitarization. By taking a historical and chronological approach, this thesis will examine the actions each country has taken since the end of World War II and how they have gone on to spur Japan's rearmament. Actions, such as domestic policy changes, military activities, and public announcements by the three countries, will be analyzed alongside Japan's reactionary policies and responses.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Background of Japanese Militarism

Japan emerged onto the international stage in the mid-1800s after its harbors were pried open by American gunboat diplomacy. Prior to this, however, the island nation practiced intense isolationism for nearly two centuries. In 1641, Japan had closed its doors to the international world in a policy called *kaikin* enforced by the Tokugawa shogunate, a military-led government. Japan would largely remain closed off to the international world until 1853, although they did enjoy limited diplomatic relations with China, Korea, and the Netherlands.

From 1709-1783, the Japanese enjoyed decades of prosperity and general internal peace. It was a century of intellectual development, and literacy rates soared. Education became widely accessible for boys across the islands (Cullen, 122). However, in this time of peace, the power of the shogunate declined, and the traditional military power that once gripped Japan became weak. Numerous factors, such as an increasing number of intellectual dissidents as the result of expanded education as well as fixed tax rates that became less profitable over time, would play heavily into the shogunate's eventual fall from grace (Cullen, 101). Ultimately, however, the main reason for the shogunate's demise was the opening of Japan to the outside world and the domestic turmoil that came with it.

On July 8, 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry and his four American warships, commonly referred to as the "black ships," arrived in Uruga, Japan. Bringing with them a letter from President Fillmore and several demands, Perry forced the country to reopen following its

two century-long stint of self-imposed isolation (Saeki, 137). The Treaty of Kanagawa was eventually signed. It decided the fate of Japanese foreign relations by forcing the country onto the international stage for the first time in centuries (Saeki, 138). The shogunate began to rapidly attempt to increase its military capabilities when it witnessed how powerful the Western world had become during Japan's centuries of self-imposed isolationism. Regrettably, the more successful and powerful the shogunate became, the more open it was to internal strife. A series of centralized problems occurred throughout the 1860s, the most notable perhaps being the death of the shogun in August of 1866 and the death of the emperor Koumei in February of 1867. Young and inexperienced leadership took hold of the country and the Tokugawa shogunate was soon overthrown (Cullen, 198). Rather than being replaced by a modern and Western government, however, power was instead restored to the emperor. Centuries prior, the emperor had complete power and was worshiped in Japan before being overtaken by the shogunate, after which he was reduced to little more than a figurehead.

The Meiji Restoration occurred in 1868 when Emperor Meiji took hold of political power in Japan, and the Meiji era would last until 1912. During this time, Japan underwent a period of rapid modernization and adopted a new, more Western-styled, constitution. The military, economy, and culture became more Westernized and advanced. One of the first implementations of the new Japanese military was in 1899, when Japan, alongside other western countries, contributed forces to protect foreigners in Peking during the Boxer rebellion (Cullen, 232). Western countries began to regard Japan as a stable military influence in East Asia after this, and they celebrated the Japanese success in the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905. Following that, the Japanese protectorate over Korea was also welcomed by Western powers, although it created



a source of internal discontent in Japan. When Japan invaded China and Manchuria in the 1910s, however, its relationships with western nations began to turn sour (Cullen, 233). Japanese relations with China still have not fully recovered, and many Chinese today maintain animosity towards Japan over the invasion.

At the Versailles conference following World War I, Japan was not regarded as a powerful country, and the Japanese isolated themselves diplomatically. There were several notable international disputes in the following two decades before World War II, such as the 1923 Korean massacre in Tokyo (Cullen, 256). Despite the distancing of Japan from the West, it continued to grow on all fronts at an astonishing rate. Tokyo became one of the world's largest cities, and automobiles became common in the 1930s. At the same time, the Western world continued to ignore Japan, with the United States formally excluding the Japanese from the immigration law of 1924 (Cullen, 255). The Japanese military—especially the navy—grew at an alarming rate. In 1921, the naval expenditure doubled the army's budget, which was already very high. As the military grew, the Western powers became more wary of Japan.

A series of internal factors, in addition to Western disapproval, contributed to the rise of Japanese ultra-nationalism in pre-World War II Japan. The devastation of the 1929 Great Depression, coupled with the fear that came from multiple domestic terrorist incidents, played a large part in leading citizens to turn to intense patriotism. Due to the previous might and success of the Japanese military displayed in the prior several decades, the citizens became trustworthy of the military. After Japan made the turn to militarism both politically and culturally, the country would wage a series of small wars in the 1930s, most notably with China, leading up to the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941 (Cullen, 275). The Japanese entered World

War II in an attempt to secure an Asian empire and establish themselves as the paramount of Eastern military power. Since World War II, Japan has not been able to declare war or have an aggressive military.

### Argument

Following the surrender of Imperial Japan in World War II on September 2, 1945, a rigorous demilitarization effort was spearheaded by Supreme Commander Douglas MacArthur. Japan was forced to become a nation that championed peace and diplomacy, per the country's newly enforced Western-crafted constitution. The complete demilitarization of Japan, however, was short-lived. Steps to rearm the country began as early as the 1950s, most notably with the creation of the Japan Self-Defense Forces in 1954, and have steadily been increasing over the past several decades. With the second election of Shinzo Abe of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, the country's foremost conservative political party, to the office of Prime Minister in late 2012, remilitarization efforts have surged. Abe's justifications for his remilitarization efforts have been received well by the majority of the Japanese population. His approval ratings took a dive in May 2017 after a personal scandal, but, prior to that, they stood at 55.4 percent (Kyodo News). North Korea and China have become more militarily aggressive in the past decade and America's recent change in leadership has left American-Japanese relations in a state of confusion.

Japanese remilitarization following World War II has been a result of the direct influence of the United States, North Korea, and China. Had these countries acted differently in the past or

taken a different stance of foreign relations with Japan, rearmament would not be as prevalent today. The United States has pressured Japan to remilitarize so that Americans will not have to carry the burden of militarily protecting and supporting a foreign country. North Korea has grown increasingly militarily provocative since the 1990s, and threats of nuclear prowess have led Japan to remilitarize in order to defend themselves against possible attacks. China has escalated the dispute around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands over the past several decades, creating a climate of animosity between the two countries with the potential to grow into a military conflict. Without the influences of each of these three countries, Japan would not have passed legislation regarding its remilitarization, and the issue would not have become significant in the eyes of the Japanese populace.

### Why is your topic significant?

The inter-country relations between Japan, China, North Korea, and the United States have changed dramatically in the past several decades. Currently, Japan is in the middle of a precarious situation with nearby aggressor North Korea. Since the early 2000s, North Korea has threatened Japan and its surrounding neighbors with claims of ballistic and nuclear power, both of which recent evidence strongly suggests that they possess. It is believed that Pyongyang has approximately 500 short-range Scud missiles that can reach almost the entirety of the Korean Peninsula in addition to between 150 and 200 medium-range Nodong missiles that can strike the majority of the Japanese islands (Roehrig, 132). China has also become more belligerent towards Japan in the past few years. The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, a conflict regarding which

country has territorial claim over a string of islands in the East China Sea, has been going on for decades but was recently reignited by China in 2010 after a Chinese trawler collided with Japanese patrol boats in the area. Japan currently has international claim to the islands by virtue of both the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Okinawa Reversion Treaty, but, since China was not part of these treaties, it claims that it has historic rights to the islands (Loja, 979). Chinese ships have entered the Japanese sea surrounding the islands multiple times in the early 2010s, and the issue has been made contentious once again. In the face of increased aggression towards Japan by North Korea and China, the United States under the Obama administration supported the majority of Japanese policy decisions. After Donald Trump took the American presidency, however, the fate of American-Japanese relations remains uncertain. Trump's longstanding criticism of America and Japan's alliance has brought about uncertainty regarding the two country's lengthy relationship (Shearer, 85-86).

Since Japan's rise to become an economic powerhouse in the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century, it has remained at the forefront of international politics. Today, the country is generally considered to be one of the world's major countries alongside the current global hegemonic power, the United States, former hegemon Russia, and rising hegemon China. Although Japan may already be an economic giant, it has been unable to obtain a greater political status due to its inability to possess a standing army. Since World War II, Japan has mostly been a devoutly pacifist nation that largely stayed out of international conflicts or military engagements unless it was urged to participate by the United States. Prime Minister Abe seeks to change the mindset of the Japanese people to become more combative. This will change Japan's traditional stance on foreign policy and bring it to the forefront of international politics.

North Korea's acquisition of dangerous military technology in the past decade and the irrationality of its new leader Kim Jong-un have forced Japan into a precarious security position. China's growing aggression towards Japan regarding the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute has left Japan unnerved. Additionally, since the 1989 leadership of Jiang Zemin jumpstarted the country's economy, China has become an incredibly virulent economic powerhouse. As the future of Japan's relationship with America grows unclear in the new Trump era, the country has begun to reexamine its place on the world stage. After years of bargaining with lawmakers and the Japanese public, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe could soon witness a change in heart of the Japanese people. His fervent efforts at remilitarizing Japan may prove fruitful on the new international stage. With such complex international relations and an ever-changing political landscape, this research holds relevant and critical policy importance. Abe's answer to Japan's current political crisis is remilitarization, and it is a situation that will continue to undergo significant developments in the coming months.

### Literature Review

Literature about foreign influences on Japan's foreign policy goes back for centuries. Japan's relations with China go back thousands of years. Due to the incredibly lengthy international history of Japan, the literature examined and the time period of this study will go back as far as the 1850s, when Commodore Matthew C. Perry opened the doors to Japan following centuries of isolationism. Japanese foreign policy between 1854 and 1945 will not be a focus and will be discussed as a historical pretext to the events that follow. As such, the majority

of my literature will look at Japan's foreign policy in the years succeeding the implementation of Japan's post-World War II constitution. Since the research is not linear and is comparative, the literature will go in chronological order by topic. Japan's policy towards the United States, China, and North Korea will be individually grouped and ordered chronologically. They will then be comparatively analyzed. The topic at hand is currently evolving and changing, and it is necessary to set a cut-off date. As such, no events following August 31, 2017 will be discussed or mentioned in this research.

### America

Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived off the coast of Uraga on July 8, 1853. He asked for the humane treatment of shipwrecked American citizens, port entry, and wanted to initiate trade between the two countries. Japanese officials had witnessed the superiority of Western technology in the Opium War in China a decade earlier and were fearful of American military prowess, so the shogun allowed Perry to dock. The Tokugawa government proved steadfast, however, and did not want any further outside influence. Perry was forced to return to America but came back the following spring with more ships and greater diplomatic power. The shogunate began to fold to Perry's demands, and the American government next sought to craft an official treaty with Japan (Saeki, 137).

It took months of diplomacy and negotiation until the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed on March 31, 1854. The treaty focused on ensuring the protection of shipwrecked American men in Japan. Within it, however, there are two articles that stand out because they would go on to impact Japanese foreign policy and the country's relationship with the United States through the

rest of modern history. Article I of the treaty stated that the United States would enjoy a “perfect, permanent, and universal peace” with Japan without exception. Article IX then proclaimed that any “privileges and advantages which are not herein granted to the United States...shall be granted likewise to the United States” (Miller, 439). These two articles of the Treaty of Kanagawa would go on to ensure that the United States would enjoy a one-sidedly beneficial relationship with the country of Japan for decades to come.

Following the defeat of Japan in World War II, General Douglas MacArthur drafted a new Western-influenced constitution for Japan. Among the contents of it, Article 9 has been the most widely discussed and criticized. There is a wide array of literature to analyze regarding this article, its varying interpretations throughout the years, and how it would go on to affect Japanese politics. Analysis exists primarily either as a review of Article 9 as a law or a look at Article 9’s eventual policy reinterpretations. Among analyses of Article 9 is Jeffrey Richter’s research, which both views Article 9 from a legal perspective and addresses its reinterpretation over the years by the Japanese government. Richter asserts a common idea in literature on Article 9 that the constitution was drafted with two goals: to prevent Japan from reemerging as a global security threat and to establish a democracy in the country that reflected the ideals and principles of American democracy (Richter, 1127). The Japanese were not the only ones who would criticize Article 9. Just several years later, the United States would demand that Japan begin rearmament in the face of the Korean War and the rise of communism (Richter, 1128). Americans, too, would grow to be dissatisfied with the severe limitations of Article 9 on the Japanese government. The United States would prove to be annoyed by Japanese noninvolvement in foreign affairs as a result of Article 9 for decades and has only recently gotten

Japan to handle its share of security in East Asia (Richter, 1251). Japan would go on to be occupied by American troops from the end of World War II in 1945 until 1952. The United States enacted sweeping political, economic and social reforms, most of which the Japanese public accepted without protest.

Most current literature on Japan-American relations focuses on the effect the Trump presidency may have on current foreign policy. Literature generally state's that former President Obama's foreign policy was weak, but that he served as a neutralizing force in the East Asian region (Kawashima, 23). The most current literature focuses on President Trump's choice to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a move that was criticized harshly both domestically for Trump and by the Japanese government. Despite this, Trump's increase in military spending is believed to positively impact America's current relationship with Japan (Kawashima, 25).

#### North Korea

Rather than looking at the wide scope of literature regarding Japan and the Korean Peninsula as a whole, Japanese involvement with North Korea as of the Korean War will be focused on after the Soviet-backed North Korean army invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. Although North Korea would eventually prove detrimental to Japanese security, literature generally agrees that, without the Korean War, the Japanese economy may have never witnessed a postwar economic miracle. This sentiment is shared by Saeki, who stated that between 1951 and 1953, procurement orders placed with Japanese industries by the American military would amount to nearly two billion dollars. This was approximately sixty percent of the total value of



Japan's exports at the time and led to enormous economic growth. Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida called it "a gift from the Gods" (Saeki, 140).

Relations with North Korea would remain strained, though not necessarily hostile, for the coming decades. Kim Jong-un's leadership of North Korea since he took over in 2011 has put North Korea's relationship with not only Japan, but every country, in peril. Longfan & Haifan summarized the attitude of most literature on the issue at the time the article was published in June of 2016. Up until that point, the two launches of the Optical Star 3 satellite and three nuclear tests placed North Korea under harsh scrutiny by virtually every world power (Longfan & Haifan, 97). One of the most controversial issues for Japan and North Korea is the "abduction issue." Despite open hostility by North Korea, however, Japan has taken steps to improve the two's relationship. The Abe Cabinet's passing of the "New Security Bill" has dramatically improved the two's relationship, creating common ground on the long-contentious "abduction issue" regarding Japanese prisoners in North Korea. The two countries made significant progress on the issue in late May of 2014, with a meeting in Stockholm between the two countries reaching a firm result—both sides would reinvestigate the abduction case. Once North Korea began the investigation, Japan agreed it would partially lift its economic sanctions on the country. North Korea failed to publish the results of its findings, however, and the issue has yet to be resolved (Longfan & Haifan, 108-109). It is unclear and growing more unlikely that North Korea will ever publish the findings.

## China

Japanese foreign policy and disputes with China go back centuries. To avoid becoming archival, Japanese and Chinese entanglements analyzed will only go back to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century after China began its rapid modernization. A large amount of literature regarding the countries' relationship with each other focuses on the territorial dispute currently going on about the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Przystup's article highlights the attitude of frustration between the two countries that most literature mentions regarding the dispute. China has been growing more openly hostile to Japan about the territorial issue. Chinese research ships operated in Japanese territory in late September 2015, and Chinese ships continued to invade Japanese waters for the rest of the year despite Japan openly expressing their anger about the ships. Rather than retreating, Chinese ships near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands have increased, with a growing number of fishing boats taking up operation in the area. Between September, 2014 and August, 2015, the Japanese government recorded a total of 708 Chinese government ships operating in Japanese territory (Przystup, 115-116). Despite various meetings between officials regarding the situation, most literature agrees that very little has come out of them. If anything, the two countries have grown angrier with each other. On November 6, 2015, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga voiced his displeasure by stating that "the activities of the Self-Defense Forces in the South China Sea are issues to be considered in the future while paying close attention to [the] impact on Japan's security" (Przystup, 117). This is the most contentious military conflict currently happening between Japan and China.

Other current literature looking at China-Japan relations tends to focus on analyzing the actions of each country's leader towards the other. Some argue that Japan has taken up a hedging

strategy, while others, such as Koga, argue that they employ a balancing strategy towards China. Ultimately, literature on the two countries cannot exist without discussing the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, which constitutes a large portion of Sino-Japanese interactions. Koga argues that Japan has been constantly engaging in balancing activities with China since the 2010 boat collision in the disputed territory (Koga, 790). Despite these conflicts, however, most literature agrees that a true military conflict will likely never emerge so long as the American-Japanese alliance stands. China does not want to wage a proxy war with America, and America relies too heavily on Chinese exports to want to jeopardize their relationship. Should America withdraw its traditional support for Japan, the conflict may escalate. So long as China supports North Korea and communism, however, it is very unlikely that the United States will ever switch its alliances.

#### Gap in Literature

The vast majority of comparative studies regarding Japan and the country's foreign relations focus just on one other country (e.g. North Korean and Japanese foreign policy). Additionally, upon looking for research that covered topics from multilateral standpoints, I often came up short. Notably, I was unable to find any research made by Chinese scholars in English on the Senkaku Islands dispute from a multilateral perspective. Many historical articles on Japanese military history, however, fail to use even a single case study and instead aim to look at the overall development of Japan's military power throughout the years. No other literature that was encountered during research encompasses the amount of material that this paper does. By focusing on Japan's three major security influencers, the pacifism and remilitarization of the

country can be understood in a greater context. Japanese foreign policy is very much based on cause and effect. The Korean War, for example, spurred Japan's need for a Japan Self-Defense Force, playing a part in the remilitarization of Japan. Had the Korean War not happened, no force would have been created at that time, and Japan would have remained completely without defense capabilities. Japanese foreign policy has been a reactionary one since the end of World War II.

North Korea would continue to influence Japanese self-defense for decades to come. The understanding that the Korean War led to the creation of the Japan Self-Defense force and the fact that Japan has remilitarized since World War II are separately present in current literature, but they rarely exist in the context of each other. No literature on this topic is looking at Japanese rearmament from a comparative perspective. Therefore, by looking at the influences of three different major influences on Japan, this research will cover a greater breadth of material and provide greater context in which to understand Japanese remilitarization. Japan is currently undergoing a major reorientation in its foreign policy, and this topic is extremely relevant.

### Research Design

In this study, the actions and foreign policy decisions of the United States, China, and North Korea are independent variables. Japan's actions and responses to these three countries' movements is the dependent variable. The United States, North Korea, and China have each strongly contributed to the rearmament of Japan, and Japanese remilitarization must be looked at with a comparative perspective to gain a complete understanding of the political situation. As

such, the relationships between the foreign policy decisions of these countries and Japan are strong. Ultimately, however, it is impossible to generalize all the actions of a country and its effect on another country's actions. There are specific variables that have both positive and negative relationships. However, most interactions constitute a positive relationship. For example, one analyzed trend between Japan and the United States is that when the United States increased its foreign military involvement, the Japanese Self-Defense Forces would typically respond in an analogous manner, creating a positive relationship. Sometimes Japanese responses to aggression created an inverse relationship. An example of this is when Japan increased its patrol boats in the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and China responded by decreasing activity there, albeit only temporarily.

This study will be qualitative in nature and will focus on analyzing the remilitarization of Japan following World War II. To do this, American, Chinese, and North Korean influences will be taken into strong consideration, and each country's impact on Japanese foreign policy and rearmament will be looked at first separately and then comparatively. This paper will have five major headings: an introduction, a chapter on American influences, a chapter on North Korean influences, a chapter on Chinese influences, and a conclusion stating the findings of the research. The introduction chapter will introduce the thesis, hypothesis, and relevant historical pretext for the rest of the research. For example, one cannot discuss American influences on Japanese foreign policy without first understanding the historical context of Commodore Perry forcing Japan out of centuries of self-imposed isolationism. The chapter on American influences will highlight the importance of General MacArthur's constitution and will look at relevant foreign policy decisions as well as joint military efforts between the two countries. For the chapter on

North Korea, foreign relations following the Korean War will be looked at, but a special focus will be on actions from 2000 on and especially those of Kim Jong-un. The chapter on Chinese influences will primarily discuss conflict that has arisen from the Senkaku Islands issue and will look at their increased hostility towards Japan over the years. Finally, the conclusion chapter will analyze the research and state the findings.

One thing that will not be covered in this paper, but should be mentioned, is the influences that other foreign countries have had on Japan over the years. The Soviet Union—and now, Russia—have placed considerable strain on Japan over the years, for example, and has definitely impacted the Japanese remilitarization scene. The breadth of this study, however, will focus only on international relations regarding Japan and the United States, China, and North Korea. Relations between these countries are constantly changing and evolving. Additionally, Japanese domestic politics will continue to change, and significant remilitarization policies may be put into place during the research period. This research is very current and will focus on changing variables. Due to this, a cutoff is necessary to carry out this research effectively. This research's cutoff date will be August 31, 2017, and no current events that occur after August 31, 2017 will be considered or mentioned out of consideration for the quality of this study. The material discussed in the three main chapters of this research will therefore be on events that take place between September 2, 1945 (the date the Japanese surrendered in World War II) and August 31, 2017.

## CHAPTER 2: AMERICAN INFLUENCE

### Japan's Destroyed Alliances and the Origins of Disarmament

The Japanese military had grown increasingly more imperialistic and belligerent in the years leading up to their participation in World War II. During Japan's rapid Westernization during the Meiji Restoration, the country seemed to have taken particularly well to the Western ideals of colonialism and imperialism. By the time that Japan had undertaken these destructive politics, the majority of Western nations were slowing down and not partaking in such openly self-serving practices. Although the true period of decolonization would not start until the end of World War II, Western countries were still disapproving others' attempts at colonization. Japan was seen as a threat to the traditional Western hierarchy of the world that Europe and America had grown accustomed to over centuries of global military superiority. This would lead to the slow degradation of relations between Japan and the United States after several decades of friendly relations in the 1800s.

Before entering World War II, Japan waged a series of imperial wars in Eastern Asia, carving out a place as the regional leader. Japan forced China to cede Taiwan in 1895, defeated Russia, a major European power, in Manchuria, annexed Korea, and gained Pacific islands in World War I. As a result of these transgressions, the powerful British Empire cut its 21-year alliance with the country. These events led to an embrace of ultra-nationalism that would reach its peak in the 1930s. Despite adopting Western imperialism, the political leaders of Japan began demanding its citizens to forsake Western influences in favor of the preservation of Japanese values. Japan eventually participated in World War II on the side of the Axis Powers and

bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, forcing America into the war, which effectively sealed the eventual Japanese defeat.

By August of 1945, the Japanese government was desperate, penniless, and downtrodden. The air force was sending any flight-worthy plane in the country into battle, and the Navy was virtually destroyed (Coox, 163). The Japanese were stubborn and refused to acknowledge their defeats and losses. The United States unleashed havoc upon Japan, dropping thousands of bombs in less than a week. The emperor privately lamented that “Tokyo [had] finally become scorched earth” (Coox, 164). Japan continued to wage war even after America dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, decimating urban populations in seconds. The Japanese government did not inform its people of the true nature of the destruction and instead reaffirmed Japan’s military might. The mindsets of the Japanese leaders were completely different than that of the Americans.

While Truman was left wondering why the Japanese had not immediately surrendered in the face of such massive nuclear destruction, the leaders of the Japanese Army and Navy were still rallying for further war. Intense nationalism had taken root in the hearts of the Japanese. This incredible dedication and support for their country did not stem from Western teachings, but instead were derived from traditional Japanese customs. For centuries, it was considered honorable and moral for one to die for one’s leader and state. This was especially so in the era of samurai, and was demonstrably evidenced *kamikaze* pilots. Korechika Anami, a general in the Japanese army, near the end of the war sincerely asked the Cabinet, “Would it not be wondrous for this whole nation to be destroyed like a beautiful flower?” (Coox, 167). A decision to surrender was engineered and announced on August 14, 1945 to much opposition. To this day, a



formal and aggressive military has never been reestablished in Japan. A culture of devout pacifism has replaced rampant nationalism.

### The New Constitution

Following the official surrender of Imperial Japan in World War II on September 2, 1945, Japan was forced to become a nation that championed peace and diplomacy. A rigorous demilitarization effort was spearheaded by Supreme Allied Commander Douglas MacArthur. The United States felt it was necessary to recreate the existing political structure in Japan so as to ensure that Japan would never again be a nation of war. When Japan implemented their original 1889 Meiji Constitution, it was not meant to Westernize the country for the sake of fitting in with the United States and European countries but was rather a way for Japan to eventually overcome the Western power structure that existed in the world at the time (Panton, 168). Thus, the existing constitution and the institutions it created had to be abolished.

A new constitution, crafted by MacArthur and his underlings, was put in place in 1947. The document completely reconstructed the country's government, industry, and society, which had previously been laid out in the Meiji Constitution. Although the Japanese government had submitted a draft of a constitution, MacArthur promptly rejected it for being too conservative. MacArthur had dreams of advanced democracy and yearned to make Japanese politics into what he thought of as perfect. Despite this, MacArthur himself had a small role in its creation and simply vocalized his ideas to his staff. His young staff was ordered to submit a new draft in a week to fit MacArthur's vision for Japan's future international role. Japan's new constitution

heavily reflected American laws and customs, and it included foreign concepts such as universal suffrage and even a bill of rights (Mcelwain & Winkler, 173).

The constitution mirrored Western progressive values at the time, and the ideas were considered radical in Japan at the time. This document did not reflect Japanese values or customs at all and was purely Western. When being created, three main factors were considered aside from MacArthur's hopes: first, the position of emperor in post-war society; second, the possibility of creating a democratic system; and, lastly, an emphasis of the Potsdam Declaration to ensure human rights (Panton, 172). MacArthur's constitution fully reflected the wishes of the American government.

To ensure that a resurgence of imperialist Japan would not occur, the constitution and reorganization of Japanese society focused heavily on the insurance that pacifism was designed to penetrate all corners of Japanese society. The most famously cited portion of the constitution, and the most heavily criticized, is Article 9. The stipulation included in it that Japan would never make war again was unequivocally the most defining aspect of the new constitution and continues to define Japanese politics even today. Richter postulates that the purpose of the Constitution was two-fold—first, to prevent Japan from reemerging as a global security threat, and, second, to erect a democracy in Japan that would reflect the ideals and basic principles of American democracy (Richter, 1127).

Article 9 has produced its fair share of critics over the years, with many saying that Japan has been able to avoid participating in international conflicts because of it. Others, however, have stated that Article 9's purpose succeeded and has made Japan a better country. Yohei Kono,

the former speaker of the Japanese House of Representatives and representative of the Liberal Democratic Party (which is current pro-remilitarization Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's political party) stated that "under the constitution, troops from our country have never stolen the life of a single person...this path of peace is an achievement we can be proud of" (Panton, 131).

Decades later, Japan continues to have an incredibly small amount of international military presence. Once a global war powerhouse, the country has been reduced to the role of a dove for its foreseeable future. MacArthur's new constitution ensured that Japan would be forever be a pacifist nation, or a *heiwakokka*, as the adoption of the document entailed that "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes" (McElwain & Winkler, 176). Japan's warmongering fate was sealed. For several years following the adoption of the new constitution, Japan's population existed in a constant state of poverty, focused solely on rebuilding the country and the economy. The United States would also occupy the country from the end of World War II in 1945 until 1952. During this time, the United States enacted sweeping political, economic, and social reforms, most of which the Japanese public accepted without protest. Still, the United States' efforts to reinvigorate the Japanese economy had little effect. Before the war and during it, the majority of Japan's economy was built on the backs of military manufacturing and related activities. With no military to support, the Japanese economy was pitiful and struggling. During the Korean War a few years later, however, Japan's economic and militaristic fate would undergo a dramatic change (Richter, 1128).

### The Korean War, the Japan Self Defense Force, and the Economy

Japan's economy would grow tremendously in the 1950s and 1960s until finally slowing down in 1973 when the first oil crisis hit the global economy. (Esteban-Pretel & Sawada, 70). In the few years between the end of World War II and the Korean War, the Japanese economy was performing poorly, as many postwar economies did. Part of the reasoning for Japan's explosive economic development and growth can be explained by a series of agricultural and industrial policies implemented by the Japanese government, such as the *zaisei tou tuushi* (Fiscal Investment and Loan Program), which helped provide subsidized interest rates (Esteban-Pretel & Sawada, 71). These government policies never would have been implemented in the first place, however, had the United States not provided military backing to Japan, allowing the country to focus on jumpstarting its struggling economy. Another explanation for this growth can be attributed to the United States' reliance on Japan for supplies and materials during the Korean War, as well as the defense strategy that Japan would take with the United States. This strategy would eventually become known as the Yoshida Doctrine.

Essentially, the Yoshida Doctrine cemented Japan's alignment with the United States on international issues, ensured limited military capabilities, resumed friendly relations with its neighbors once again, and concentrated on economic development (Easley, 69). Had Japan not aligned itself with the United States via the Yoshida Doctrine and had the United States not allowed the alignment to happen in the first place, Japan's "postwar economic miracle" would never had been possible. The United States would treat Japan as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" as a result of these policies in the Korean War. As part of the doctrine, the United States would

construct dozens of American military bases all over Japan in exchange for providing protection to Japan and taking it under its “nuclear umbrella” (Volks, 21).

Until 1950, the United States had been occupying Japan to ensure peace in postwar Japan. When the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950, however, the United States was forced to make a decision regarding the allocation of its defense forces. The United States ultimately decided that it was best to end its occupation of Japan so that it could send its full military forces into Korea. Before doing this, they created a national police reserve force (Easley, 69). This was the very first step that the United States took towards the remilitarization of Japan, and the United States would go on to become one of the leading sources of pressure for Japan to rearm despite forcing them to disarm in the first place (Gibbs, 145). The Korean War will be further discussed in the chapter on North Korea.

The United States’ eventual 40-year-long Cold War with the Soviet Union began concurrently. It was at this time that the United States also began to completely shift its foreign policy strategies towards Japan (Volks, 21). Instead of keeping Japan restrained and the military dismantled, the United States instead began to build Japan as a Cold War ally and a safeguard against the rising Chinese regional power. In 1952, when the United States established the police force and sent its troops to Korea, the United States and Japan would sign the U.S.-Japan Peace Treaty. This would formally end the United States’ military occupation and give Japan independence. At the same time, the United States ratified the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty to provide Japan with backup in the event of an invasion and to deter surrounding countries from doing so in the first place (Gibbs, 146). This agreement would be used for years to argue against Japanese remilitarization.

On July 1, 1954, the United States allowed the creation of two separate defense organizations in Japan—the Ground Self Defense Force and the Maritime Self Defense Force. These are generally referred to as the Japan Self Defense Force (JSDF). The creation of this force went a step above creating a reserve police force, and would allow foreign military intervention by Japan at the United States' behest. At the time, however, the JSDF was created with the on-paper intention that it would exist solely to protect the homeland from external military aggression (Easley, 69).

Had the Korean War not happened, the JSDF likely would never have been created, or at least not for many more years. The United States did not see a true reason to allow Japan to have a standing military until it realized that Japan was defenseless in the case of invasion, as could have happened in the Korean War. Despite the creation of the JSDF, by this point in time—nearly a decade after Japan's surrender—the Japanese public was very distrustful of the military (Easley, 69). People did not wish to suffer at the hands of the militarized Empire of Japan again. Neighboring Asian countries were also uneasy about the JSDF's creation. Even though Japan had been forced into a completely new pacifist political structure, courtesy of the United States, the image of Japan as an aggressor was deeply ingrained in other countries' views of Japan.

### Remilitarization in the 1960s and 70s

On January 19, 1960, Japan and the United States agreed to revise the security treaty between their two countries. The revision would be rammed through the lower house and left a sour impression on the Japanese public, who felt that the country's parliamentary rules had been

ignored. Suspicion fell on the Japanese figure behind the revision. Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke retained a firm, even dictatorial, grip on Japanese politics and had served as a cabinet minister in the brutal prewar imperialist system. He and all that he represented were completely at odds with what people thought Japan should represent. Nobusuke was subject to vicious domestic and international opposition. Thus, shortly after pushing the treaty through the Diet, Nobusuke was forced to give up his position as prime minister (Yamaguchi, 159). His successor, Hayato Ikeda would redefine Nobusuke's revision of the security treaty. Instead of establishing the newly formed U.S.-Japan security alliance as an ideological absolute, he decided that it would be more pragmatic to justify it on the grounds of the alliance's usefulness. Ikeda would spend most of his political career building up Japan's economy even further since Japan could now rely on the United States' protection. The new prime minister justified the recently formed JSDF by arguing that it was constitutional for Japan to have at least some sort of military defense in the event of an invasion (Yamaguchi, 159).

On June 23 of that same year, the revised treaty and the Status-of-Forces Agreement would both come into effect at the same time. The Status-of-Forces Agreement granted American military personnel access to Japanese military facilities and certain areas of the country ("Agreement Under Article VI"). Prime Minister Eisaku Satou would later announce his commitment to "three non-nuclear principles" in December of 1967. Under these principles, Japan would not possess, manufacture, or introduce any nuclear weapons into Japanese territory. Satou's announcement was met with applause across the board (Akaha, 1985, 75). This would precede the global commitment that Japan would make by signing the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968.

In May of 1972, the islands of Okinawa and Iwo Jima, among several others, would be returned to Japanese sovereignty after decades of being American-controlled (Sarantakes, 35). This would come as the United States began to pull all of its forces out of Eastern Asia near the end of America's largely disastrous participation in the Vietnam War. This also came as a consequence of the United States' new world strategy, which would require all of its allies to up their militaristic contribution to global security (Akaha, 1985, 77). Shortly after the return of the islands to Japan, Prime Minister Satou gave a speech to declare a new role for Japan in transnational security. He stated that, "Japan in cooperation with the United States, will make its contribution to the peace and prosperity of the Asian-Pacific region and hence to the entire world" (Sarantakes, 51).

In the 1970s, the United States' approach to its global military strategy would change and it began to increasingly pressure Japan to participate more in its own protection and to increase the size of its military. Prime Minister Oohira developed a new diplomatic strategy to deal with the United States' pressures for Japan to remilitarize. He had the Maritime Self-Defense Force participate in the Pacific Rim Exercise (RIMPAC) for the first time ever alongside the United States (Yamaguchi, 161). The participation in this joint military exercise was meant to demonstrate Japan's military capabilities and to prove to the United States that it had viable defense options. Japan's participation in this exercise would go on to open new pathways for joint military cooperation between the two countries.

Rearmament would come even closer as the guidelines for a Japan-U.S. joint defense cooperation were decided upon in November of 1978. In 1981, this defense cooperation would be declared to the world and would refer to bilateral ties between the two countries as an



alliance, cementing the friendship between the United States and Japan. A special agreement on Japan's coast-sharing with American marine forces in Japan would be signed in 1987. The radical military expansion that Japan underwent in the 1980s would increase its military expenditures to be the third largest in the world. With this type of spending, it would be difficult for Japan and its politicians to justify the JSDF as a minimal security necessity (Yamaguchi, 163). Japan would have to prove the worth of the JSDF through other channels.

### Military Support in the Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq War

The Gulf War began in 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait in the Middle East. This war would go on to define modern Japanese remilitarization, as on April 26<sup>th</sup> of that year, marine sweepers would leave from Japan for the Persian Gulf as the first ever overseas dispatch of the JSDF. The Persian Gulf War would also confirm Japan and the United States' shared identity as a security collective. After Iraq invaded Kuwait, Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu demanded that Iraq immediately withdraw from Kuwait. When they did not, Kaifu placed intense economic sanctions on Iraq and froze Kuwait's assets in Japan so that Iraq would not be able to access them (Sakai, 138). American President George Bush commended Kaifu's actions, but soon requested more from Japan than simple economic sanctions. Still, Japan would support America in the war to the best of its ability.

President Bush called Kaifu on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1990 and asked Japan to send its "minesweepers" into the conflict. Initially, Kaifu resisted, citing Article 9 as the reason why Japan could not militarily intervene (Yamaguchi, 157). Kaifu was not a part of the pro-

remilitarization camp. Had a more conservative politician been in charge, Japan may be much more militarized today. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, at a U.S.-Japan summit meeting, Bush told Kaifu that if the JSDF committed non-aggressive resources, such as transportation and medicine, the United States would be grateful. Kaifu saw this as an opportunity to participate militarily without using force. That October, he urged the passage of the United Nations Peace Cooperation (U.N.P.C.) bill that would inaugurate the organization and its 1,000 members as providing non-combat aid in support of U.S.-led coalition forces (Sakai, 138).

Americans did not see this as being enough, and the U. S. government grew angry with Japan's lack of direct military contribution in the Gulf War. Japan would offer \$3 billion to the cause in September of 1990, but the action was mocked by American politicians. Senator Lloyd Bentsen, a democrat from Texas, stated that, "Japan has done little to uphold its interest and even that has been done quite grudgingly." In January 1991, Japan said it would provide an additional \$9 billion contribution, but this proved to be a frustrating loose end as Japan did not explicitly state whether this money would go specifically to the American forces or if it would be shared with the multinational coalition as a whole (Sakai, 139). The United States would ultimately be dissatisfied with Japan's participation in the Gulf, even if the Japanese thought that they did the best that they could have given the circumstances. Japan did not want to be mocked by foreign politicians again and would change its tactics in terms of military support from this point forward to take on a more aggressive role.

Japan went on to support America in the 2001 Afghanistan War. After being embarrassed by its poor participation in the Gulf War, Japan took a much more direct approach in this war by passing the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law (*tero taisaku tokubetsu sochi ho*). This law

provided the Maritime Self-Defense Force the ability to provide noncombat support to American forces overseas in the interest of the war on terror (Southgate, 1601). The government also dispatched the Maritime Self-Defense Force to the Indian Ocean to provide more direct logistical support. Japan's decision to dispatch three warships to the Indian Ocean to support Operation Enduring Freedom was a landmark in its remilitarization efforts. This dispatch was the first time the Japanese navy participated directly in combat theater operations abroad since the end of World War II in 1945 (Southgate, 1599).

Sending the Maritime Self-Defense Force into the Afghani military theater represented a departure from the typical self-defense rhetoric that Japan had used for decades, even as recently as the Gulf War. Additionally, when combined with the passing of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, Japanese remilitarization thrust itself into international politics as a legitimate concern. While many domestic politicians called the actions a breach of the constitution, Japan's neighbors also critiqued the moves, calling the steps towards remilitarization a serious threat to international security (Southgate, 1603). The United States was not among the critics, however, as Japan would never have felt forced into sending troops in the first place had America not pressured and then shamed Japan for its previous actions in the Gulf War.

The Japanese government immediately declared support for the United States after the Iraq War first began in 2003. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi held a press conference to state that Japan supported the United States' military actions in the region. While the two countries had enjoyed friendly relations for decades prior to this, the Japanese government's declaration of support in this case was different. Koizumi announced Japan's support for American actions prior to the issuance of a new United Nations (U.N.) resolution to support Resolution 1441,

which specifically approved military action. In the Gulf War just a decade prior, however, Japan waited until Resolution 678 to declare its “firm support” for the United States (Yasuaki, 844). Additionally, when Japan had supported the United States in previous conflicts, it was always through logistic, financial, and similar means. The only other time the JSDF had been sent to a foreign country to fight was in the Afghanistan War.

While American pressure was certainly a reason for Koizumi’s actions, the prime minister also saw an opportunity for Japan to remilitarize and gain something from this war. The Iraqi Special Law was passed in July 2003 to allow the dispatch of the JSDF to Iraq. Koizumi believed that this would not only enhance Japan’s military security, but would enhance the country’s power altogether. Koizumi felt that Japan was ready to become a great power alongside the United States, and to do that it needed a military (Miyagi, 160). Although this dispatch would not eventually pan out to remilitarize Japan, it would serve as a crucial step for future remilitarization, especially in the face of strong American pressure.

### Current Relations

With the second election of Shinzo Abe of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, the country’s foremost conservative political party, to the office of Prime Minister in late 2012, remilitarization efforts have surged. His approval for these efforts, however, have been all over the board. In late 2015 and early 2016, Abe forced a bill reinterpreting Article 9 through the house. Under his reinterpretation, the article states that Japan has a right to “collective self-defense” that grants Japan the right to defend its allies, such as the United States, should they be

attacked by an aggressor (Volks, 21). Generally, however, Abe's justifications for his remilitarization efforts have been received well by the majority of the Japanese population. His approval ratings took a dive in May 2017 after an unrelated scandal, but prior to that they stood at 55.4 percent (Kyodo News, June 17, 2017).

The United States has always proudly stated that Japan's postwar prosperity is a direct result of the U.S.-Japan alliance. Japan has traditionally not rejected this notion, as it had always benefitted and even taken advantage of the United States' eagerness to provide military support. Despite Japan's general graciousness towards the American military, polls show that the public is not so pleased by the American military presence in Japan. In a Kyodo News Survey, all Japanese prefectures except for Okinawa, where the United States' main military base is, were reluctant to accept U.S. military facilities or host joint training exercises (Gibbs, 167). It is due to these feelings amongst many Japanese that Japan has increasingly become more supportive of Abe's policies. America's recent change in leadership, however, has left American-Japanese relations in a state of confusion.

Japan has enjoyed a much smoother transition from President Obama to President Trump than most other countries. Prime Minister Abe visited the Trump Tower a week after the election and then visited once again in February at Trump's golf estate in Florida. Additionally, both Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson visited both Tokyo and Seoul to reaffirm each respective government of their support (Smith & McClean, 12). Coming into his presidency, President Trump severely lacked foreign policy or diplomacy experience. As one of the first foreign leaders to visit Trump for a prolonged period, Abe seemed to have tutored Trump in international diplomacy, presumably so that it favored Japan. At the same time, the

JSDF has been making an impression on the United States military by participating in joint naval exercises and conducting its own demonstration of deterrence (Smith & McClean, 13).

Abe's reinterpretation of Article 9 to allow for collective self-defense was first put into practical effect in late April, 2017 when the United States called on Japan to provide asset protection for its carrier battle group. In response, Abe sent their largest destroyer, the *Izumo*, to make a positive impression on the Americans and to show off the hidden potential of Japanese military capabilities (Smith & McClean, 14). In this regard, the Trump administration has been encouraging of further Japanese remilitarization and welcomed the arrival of the *Izumo*. Trump's push for Japan to remilitarize is likely the result of both Abe's personal negotiations with Trump, which likely heavily influenced his foreign policy decisions, and of Trump's general tendency towards favoring isolationist policies (Japan-US Alliance Study Group Report, 2).

Trump's ideal vision for America is for it to function singularly. Providing Japan with heavy military support is contradictory to this image, and as such, it would make sense for him to begin letting Japan steadily remilitarize. Of course, one must always consider that Trump's lack of foreign policy experience is likely playing heavily into his decision to call upon the Japanese military. He may not understand the consequences or meanings behind his actions and how Abe may interpret them, especially since the Trump administration does not have someone with extensive Japan policy experience in its midst. The alliance between the United States and Japan is still wrapped in a state of confusion, however, as the Trump administration still does not have a clear strategy regarding its actions in Asia. While Trump may act friendly towards Abe and Japan now, it is unclear if he will change his mind and his strategy in the future. Trump's decision to withdraw from the Japan-supported Trans-Pacific Partnership, for example, shows

that he is not fully compliant towards Abe's wishes, even if the two leaders may act friendly towards one another.

## CHAPTER 3: NORTH KOREAN INFLUENCE

### The Korean War's Impact on Japanese Growth

Japan occupied regions of China and Korea for several decades until 1945. Following the surrender of Japan in World War II, the Soviet Union took hold of North Korea while the United States controlled the South. Kim Il-Sung would be installed as the first supreme leader of North Korea in 1948 by the USSR, and Kim's family would eventually go on to reign over North Korea with an iron fist for generations. North Korea attempted to invade the South in 1950 in an effort to gain more territory while both countries were still recovering from the war. The invasion and ensuing conflicts would come to be known as the Korean War. When the war came to an end in 1953, the Korean Peninsula would officially be divided and a demilitarized zone would be put in place. This border would go on to define North Korea and South Korea's territory for decades (BBC, 8/14/2017).

The Korean War affected Japan both militarily and economically. Militarily, the Korean War forced the Americans and the Japanese to realize that it would be impossible for Japan to exist in the modern war-ridden world without at least a defense system in place. How would Japan protect itself against an invader? This issue became important in the post-Korean War world for several reasons. China backed the communist regime in the North while the United States supported the South. Since the United States also supported Japan heavily, Japan's foreign policy was forced to align itself with the American position (Dingman, 32). Therefore, relations between China and Japan degraded further. Historically, China and Japan have been at odds for centuries, but the sentiment was even more amplified after Japan took over Manchuria and



Taiwan for several decades. Additionally, Mao Zedong's rise to power in communist China made the country's actions unpredictable and dangerous. These events made China a potentially hostile enemy, and the United States and Japanese governments could not overlook this.

Prior to the outbreak of the Korean War, Japanese politicians were negotiating terms for future military power in Japan—whether that be the American military keeping formal bases in Japan or not. In early May of 1950, Finance Minister Ikeda Hayato told Joseph Dodge, the American banker in charge of Japan's postwar economic recovery, that the prime minister was willing to formally request the prolonged stay of American troops in Japan (Dingman, 34). When the Korean War did start, there were immediate concerns. American garrison troops were rushed off of Japan and into Korea to fight the red wave, and Japan was left defenseless. The physical proximity of the fight had some talking of recruiting Japanese “volunteers” to fight with the Americans in Korea, but Prime Minister Yoshida immediately rejected this idea. Rather, he allowed General MacArthur to create a “police” and coast guard force in Japan on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1950 (Dingman, 37). This is the historic and symbolic first true gesture of remilitarization in post-World War II Japan.

During the war, the Americans realized that protecting Japan was too taxing on its military resources and began to complain about how they had to shoulder all of the burden for Japan. At the same time in Japanese domestic politics, the socialist left and nationalist right were arguing over two extreme options for their country. The dramatic differences in domestic politics actually made it easier for Prime Minister Yoshida to push a centrist remilitarization agenda, and he was able to ratify the peace and security treaties of 1951. (Dingman, 38). Without the tensions put on Japan by the Korean War, these initial remilitarization steps would have been impossible

to justify to the sensitive and traumatized Japanese public. The American public also would not have supported Japanese remilitarization had they not found a newer and more frightening enemy, North Korea (Dingman, 39). Japan and America would be forced to cooperate and work together if they wanted to defeat the rising communist threat in Asia.

Economically, it was theorized that the Korean War would significantly help the Japanese economy recover as early as a week into the fighting. Finance Minister Ikeda Hayato stated very early into the war that the conflict “might exert favorable influence on Japan’s economy” (Dingman, 41). A major bank soon thereafter predicted that a colossal amount of American military expenditures would be spent in Japan, prompting a huge boom in the Tokyo stock market. Japan’s GNP would grow, on average, a little bit more than 10 percent per year during the Korean War. Ultimately, the GNP would rise approximately 30 percent over the course of the conflict. For the first two years of the war the total value of foreign trade rose by 84 percent (Dingman, 42). Incredible economic growth like this in the years immediately following a country’s defeat in war was unheard of up until this point. Even in Europe, Germany did not witness a similar degree of economic redevelopment after their demise for many more years to come. Japan’s unprecedented economic growth came to be known by scholars as a “postwar economic miracle.” Many scholars believe that had North Korea not invaded the South and the Korean War not happened, this postwar growth would never have happened, and Japan may not enjoy the great power status that it has today (Dingman, 42).

### Relations after the Korean War

Since the end of the Korean War, North Korea has been an aggressor towards Japan. Being closed off from the world and often unpredictable; North Korea's actions scared Japan. As such, Japan responded to the North Korean threat by establishing five goals in its foreign policy interactions. The first was to maintain a stable and peaceful international environment favorable to Japan. The second was to sustain its alliance with the United States. Next Japan wanted to become friendlier with its regional neighbors. Finally, the fourth and fifth goals were to expand its security role in the region and to resolve its bilateral issues with aggressive North Korea. This last goal was seen as the least important (Akaha, 2002, 109).

North Korea did little to involve itself with the actions of its neighbors after the Korean War. Instead, the country focused on rebuilding itself at least to a sustainable level. In 1985, North Korea joined the international Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. North Korea joined the United Nations in 1991, a move that Japan welcomed. In December of that year, North and South Korea even signed a joint declaration on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula (Akaha, 2007, 299). Relations between Japan and North Korea seemed to go smoothly in the early 1990s, and Japan saw no need for rearmament. A future with normalized relations between North Korea and the international community was in sight.

In 1992, ad hoc inspections began on North Korean nuclear capabilities. During the second inspection in July, inconsistencies were noted. In January of 1993, an IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) team was dispatched to North Korea to discuss the inconsistencies. That February, North Korea began rejecting special inspections and, by March,

North Korea announced its intention to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The North Korean nuclear crisis in 1993-1994 started by the firing of four medium range Nodong ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan in May of 1993. It was the first of many frowned-upon military tests by North Korea. Following the missile launch, discussions and negotiations ensued for a year, during which time North Korea at one point threatened to turn Seoul into a “sea of fire” (Wit et al., 410-416). The missile launches set North Korea up on a prolonged path of failed international relations and created a tense international scene. Japan grew frightened by the missile firings, and politicians began discussing possible rearmament solutions to the growing aggressor.

After launching the Taepodong-1 artificial satellite in the summer of 1998, North Korea asserted that its recent launching of the Kwangmyongsong-1 had also been successful to prove the might of the regime. The proclaimed success of these two satellites worried Tokyo, which responded by announcing unilateral sanctions against Pyongyang. It ended flights to Pyongyang, halted humanitarian assistance, froze North Korean finances, and suspended negotiations between the two countries for diplomatic normalization (Akaha, 2007, 302). Shortly thereafter, Japan announced its decision to develop Japanese spy satellites and to work alongside the United States in creating a missile defense system for Japanese defense by participating in the American anti-ballistic missile defense program. In August of 1999, Japan signed a Memorandum of Understanding of joint research and development on the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System alongside Germany and the United States. Japan’s involvement in the agreement stemmed from the fear that North Korea induced after claiming missile competency. Throughout the 1990s, Japanese politicians had been discussing the idea of putting military-use satellites into space but

could never gain the momentum to act upon it (DiFilippo, 57). The launch of the North Korean satellites gave conservative politicians the boost and public support that they needed to militarize Japanese satellites, contributing largely to the ongoing remilitarization effort in Japan.

The often-criticized reactionary nature of Japan's foreign and defense policies has been put on display many times as a result of North Korea's actions. As North Korea grew more aggressive in the mid to late 1990s, Japan became worried about the possibility of conflict. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, then Deputy Cabinet Secretary, mentioned in a May, 2002 seminar at Waseda University that Japan could wield small nuclear weapons if they wanted to. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda agreed with Abe that nuclear weapons could be constitutionally held by Japan (Nakato, 48-49). Although such discussions have yet to yield any results, the fact that two high-ranking politicians believed that Japan was in such a precarious position that they may need to one day possess nuclear weaponry speaks to the seriousness with which the Japanese viewed North Korean aggression.

In September of 2002, Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi visited Pyongyang. This would represent a turning point in Japan's foreign policy towards North Korea, one in which it became more active and engaged (Nakato, 51). Koizumi's visit and ensuing discussions were an attempt to normalize relations between the two countries after decades of sustained tension. Would it really be possible for Japan to normalize relations with aggressive North Korea, a country that had abducted Japanese citizens and fired missiles into the sea dividing the two? Although the discussions were significant at the time, and still are for the fact that they attempted to normalize relations, they would ultimately prove fruitless in the grand scheme of relations between the two countries.

## The Abduction Issue

In the 1970s and 1980s, North Korean agents abducted seventeen Japanese citizens. In the past decade, the abduction of Japanese citizens has been spotlighted once again and has become perhaps the most contentious political issue between North Korea and Japan (Hagstrom & Hanssen, 72). Japan wants the bodies returned to Japanese soil to be reunited with their families so that they can at least bury them with dignity. North Korea has denied the abduction of these citizens and has not historically spoken about the issue very often. Japanese politicians often refer to this as a human rights issue. Many scholars have pointed out that this is hypocritical, as Japan seldom acknowledges its dark past of forcing Korean men to work in the Japanese military and in dangerous mines and had Korean women work in brothels and factories until the Japanese lost in World War II (Hagstrom & Hanssen, 72). The reason for Japan's accusations of human rights violations was likely to make the international audience see Japan as the victim. This issue has come to be referred to as the "abduction issue" in modern mass media.

Between 1992 and 2000, Pyongyang and Tokyo refused to have normalization talks with each other. North Korea and Japan shut each other out and ceased international communication. It was not until September 17, 2002 that Kim Jong-Il officially confessed to the abductions during the Pyongyang talks between himself and Prime Minister Koizumi (Hagstrom & Hanssen, 72). Kim Jong-Il admitted that, of the thirteen Japanese nationals it admitted to kidnapping, eight of them had died in North Korea. This confession during the premiership of Koizumi Junichiro brought the issue back into the public eye. Following the summit in Pyongyang, the five surviving nationals were allowed to temporarily return to Japan on October 15, 2002. The Japanese government, however, announced that the abductees would be allowed to permanently

resettle in Japan. North Korea grew angry at this announcement as it was not part of the agreement. Still, Japan did not return the five to North Korea. Talks between the two countries did not resume until 2004, when Koizumi was able to secure the return of the children of the five abductees to Japan as well (Akaha, 2007, 303). Still, there were several missing citizens unaccounted for by North Korea. At the end of the 2004 negotiations, however, the two sides simply agreed that there should be a full-scale reinvestigation.

No further progress was made on the abduction issue until 2012. In June of that year, North Korean officials showed the relevant cemeteries to the Japanese media. This would lead to a rekindling of official communications that August (Longfan & Haifan, 107). In late May of 2014, North Korean and Japanese officials met in Stockholm and decided that both sides would reinvestigate the case. Additionally, Japan would partially lift its sanctions on North Korea. In 2015, North Korea betrayed the agreement and did not publish its findings on the investigation, and Japan was forced to raise its sanctions once again (Longfan & Haifan, 109). Until the abduction issue is formally solved and until an agreement is reached between North Korea and Japan, it is unlikely that progress will ever be made towards normalization. North Korea underestimates how much the abduction issue means to Japan while the Japanese do not grasp how scarred the North Koreans are by Japan's colonial rule over them decades prior (Nakato, 52). In the meantime, the two countries will continue increasing their military strength. The abduction issue has become perhaps the most significant roadblock in the past decade to an improvement in relations between the two countries.

### Aggression in the Era of Kim Jong-Un and its Effect on Japan

Since rising to the status of Supreme Leader after the death of his father, Kim Jong-Il, Kim Jong-Un is the third generation of the Kim to reign over North Korea. In less than a decade, Kim Jong-Un has acted rashly, aggressively, and seems to care little for consequences. His actions have created a diplomatic dilemma between North Korea and Japan. Kim Jong-Un rules North Korea by upholding a policy of *byungjin*, the parallel pursuit of economic development and nuclear weapons. While his advances in the economic section of *byungjin* are likely limited given the many sanctions in place over North Korea, the nuclear side has undergone tremendous growth (Armstrong, 119). In October of 2006 and May of 2009, North Korea conducted nuclear tests. On February 12, 2012, North Korea relaunched its Optical Star 3 satellite despite warnings from the international community.

North Korea conducted its third nuclear test on February 12, 2013. Prime Minister Abe and President Obama spoke over the phone to discuss the possibility of adopting a new Security Council Resolution to impose even tougher sanctions on North Korea. During this call, Obama also assured Abe that the United States still considered Japan to be under its nuclear umbrella and would therefore be protected in the face of North Korean aggression (Nakato, 62). This assurance was also meant to abate Abe's calls for rearmament. Japan is aware, however, that a nuclear Japan would likely cause the withstanding U.S.-Japan alliance to collapse. Abe made a public statement, saying that the test was "totally unacceptable" and that he would begin "a serious protest against North Korea" (Tatsumi, January 7, 2016). In response to this test, Abe also passed unilateral sanctions on North Korea, some of the toughest yet. Although these did



little to directly affect the North Korean economy, they were likely enacted as a signal to allies to show that Japan was willing to get tougher on North Korea (Pollmann, February 12, 2016).

However, the Japanese public is still wary about nuclear weaponry and would not presently allow it in Japan (Nakato, 63). Still, a degree of rearmament in Japan is a possibility. A 2012 survey on Self Defense Forces and Defense issues conducted by the Cabinet Office showed that 64.9 percent of respondents viewed the North Korean security crisis as a matter of high national importance. Despite the concern over North Korea, only 23.4 percent felt that Japan's security was threatened due to their lack of military power. 81.2 percent of respondents were also in favor of Japan's existing security alliance with the United States (Nakato, 63-64). Although there was significant blowback from the international community, North Korea maintained its hardline approach. On March 5, 2013, North Korea announced the abolition of the Korean Armistice Agreement. Within two days of the announcement, the North Korean media published articles about how North Korea would "use precise nuclear attacks to Seoul and Washington" (Longfan & Haifan, 100). Tokyo was not directly mentioned, but the geographical proximity (and the fact that to get to the United States, North Korea would have to go over Japan) made Japanese citizens worried.

In 2016, for the first time ever, North Korea conducted two nuclear tests in a single year. Despite the United Nations' pushes for an easing of North Korean nuclear advancements (demonstrated in Security Council Resolutions 2270 and 2321), North Korea continued its aggressive testing throughout all of 2016. On January 6, 2016, an earthquake was recorded near a nuclear test site in North Korea, which claimed that they had exploded a hydrogen bomb. A month later, the Kwangmyongsong-4 satellite was launched, sparking an immediate

condemnation by the UN in the passing of Security Council Resolution 2270. North Korea disregarded the UN's warnings, however, and on April 15<sup>th</sup> failed in an attempt to launch a Musudan intermediate-range ballistic missile. A subsequent attempt on the 28<sup>th</sup> failed as well. By late June, however, North Korea began to succeed at increasing intervals. Test missiles were repeatedly fired throughout that summer. Also, in March of 2016, North Korea released photographs in its state-run "Rodong Sunmin" newspaper that claimed to show perfected miniature nuclear warheads that could be placed on ballistic missiles.

North Korea launched a missile from a submarine in August of 2016 that went about 500 kilometers towards the Japanese coast (Armstrong, 120-121). This was the first time one of their missiles had entered Japan's air defense identification zone, and security experts across the globe immediately expressed their concern. North Korea was finally edging closer to becoming a legitimate threat to modern and technologically advanced armies. Although experts agreed that North Korea was not yet a credible threat to the United States, the fact that they could attack a close U.S. ally was concerning enough. This spurred the passing of Security Council Resolution 2321 in November, placing severe sanctions on North Korea (Armstrong, 125). Japan, of course, did not take these provocations from North Korea lightly either.

Following these events, Japan took more steps towards remilitarizing. In late November 2016, it was revealed that Tokyo was seriously considering purchasing a Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system from the United States. The THAAD can shoot incoming missiles out of the sky before they hit their target. Considerations for missile defense were a direct result of North Korean aggressions, as Defense Minister Inada stated that "in light of the current situation surrounding Japan...it is important to ensure missile defense" (Panda,

November 26, 2016). In June of 2017, however, Japan officially decided to not purchase a THAAD system in favor of an Aegis Ashore, a relatively cheaper missile defense system with a larger range. The government officially stated that it was deploying these missile defense systems in order to “enhance its ability to respond to the launch of North Korean ballistic missiles” (Shim, June 23, 2017). At the end of 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe signed off on a record-high defense budget for Japan. This was the fifth consecutive year that there was a rise in the defense budget, all of which have been under Abe’s tutelage. He cited North Korea’s nuclear and missile threats as a main reason for the budget hike, with the majority of the increase being spent on fighter jets and submarines. The increase raised the budget by 5.13tn yen to 97.5tn yen (BBC, December 22, 2016).

### The 2017 Missile Crisis

In 2017, the North Korean missile crisis has only continued to escalate, and talks of Japanese rearmament as a result of that have grown more serious. Abe’s jargon has grown more impassioned and nationalistic with each North Korean missile launch. In January, the North Korean regime announced that they were in the final stages of developing long-range guided missiles that were capable of carrying nuclear warheads. This was followed by several months of open missile testing. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, North Korea launched four ballistic missiles in the direction of Japan, three of which landed in Japanese territorial waters, falling within 220 miles of Japan’s shoreline. Prime Minister Abe called these attacks a “new stage of threat” to Japan (BBC, March 6, 2017).

In July, North Korea tested a long-range missile that was aimed directly into the Sea of Japan. This test was perhaps the scariest yet for Japan, as it landed near Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island. The United States was also forced to acknowledge that North Korea was becoming a legitimate existential threat for the first time, as experts announced that the missile could hit the West coast of America (Sanger, July 25, 2017). Directly following the launch, American bombers linked up with Japanese and South Korean fighter jets to show North Korea the allies' "overwhelming force." U.S. Pacific Air Forces specifically stated that the sequenced bilateral missions were a direct response to North Korea's July ICBM launches. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida—who is acting as defense chief—stated that the joint drill was carried out to show Japan's current advanced capabilities and to deter North Korea from launching further missiles (Johnson, July 30, 2017).

An anonymous source told the Japan Times that current Japanese missile defense systems may not be able to intercept a North Korean missile headed towards Japan. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has characterized these increasingly successful missile tests as a "new level of threat" and vowed to take action. Despite Abe's strong words, the threat came at a precarious time for the Abe administration, as just a day prior to the launch Defense Chief Tomomi Inada resigned after a scandal involving the Ground Self-Defense Force in South Sudan. Abe has also gone through several scandals this year, making his approval ratings sink (Johnson & Yoshida, July 29, 2017). Had the tests happened at a peaceful time in the Abe administration, it is likely that Abe would have been able to garner support to rearm to some degree. Instead, Abe's agenda for remilitarization was heavily affected, as made evident by his announcement that he would be pursuing the reinterpretation of Article 9 less aggressively.

Previously, he intended to add wording that would legitimize the existence of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces after decades of scrutiny (Asahi Shimbun, August 4, 2017). He also stated that he is currently not considering granting the Japanese Self-Defense Forces the autonomy to strike overseas targets. Instead, Abe stated that Japan will currently rely on American direction (Soble, August 6, 2017). In early August of 2017, Abe spoke with newly appointed Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera and instructed him to review important documents related to the national security policy Japan currently employs. Abe's reason for asking Onodera to do this is "due to the increasing severity that our national security environment faces." These considerations come immediately after North Korea fired a missile at Hokkaido and are expected to weigh issues such as North Korea's ballistic missile development program heavily (Asahi Shimbun, August 4, 2017).

Still, North Korea wishes to rekindle its relations with Japan after it froze China out by acting too rashly and over-militaristically while not responding to Chinese wishes. Initially, North Korea chose to acknowledge and address the abduction issue to appease Japan. This worked at first, and Japan lifted sanctions and allowed communication to resume between North Koreans and North Koreans living in Japan. When North Korea failed to come through on their end of the agreement regarding the abduction issue, however, these privileges were taken away (Longfan & Waifan, 103). Communications between the two have gotten progressively worse since. Japan's policy decisions towards North Korea are made with the knowledge that the United States will support it. Its attempts towards diplomatic normalization are done taking both the abduction issue and the nuclear issue into equal consideration right now. Although Japan may have America's backing on most issues, Japan alone has very little bilateral leverage over

North Korea with minimal economic ties and no official communication channel with  
Pyongyang (Tatsumi, January 7, 2016).

## CHAPTER 4: CHINESE INFLUENCE

### Introduction

China and Japan have been at odds with each other for centuries, despite a substantial portion of Japanese culture being derived from Chinese influence. During Japan's several decades of East Asian imperialism in the late 1800s and early 1900s, Japan committed a series of human rights atrocities in China, ranging from the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894 to the Nanking Massacre in the 1930s. Japan's incredibly hostile and malicious attacks during World War II also left a sour taste in the mouths of Chinese citizens. Many Chinese people are still hesitant to once again trust their former invader.

Even though Japan has adopted a completely new form of government since its dark imperial past, a large portion of the Chinese population still feels indignation towards the Japanese for acts committed over a hundred years ago. Chinese resentment towards the Japanese has been felt for decades, stemming directly from both these invasions of Chinese soil and the fact that Japan has prospered economically since the end of World War II while China was stuck in an economic rut for the majority of the 1900s (New York Times, January 6, 2013). These feelings of animosity are a two-way street. Japan also harbors bad feelings towards China. According to a PEW Research Center poll conducted in 2006, 71 percent of Japanese felt unfavorably about China. Nearly identically, 70 percent of Chinese thought of Japan unfavorably (Stokes, September 13, 2016). The same poll was distributed ten years later in 2016, during which time the Senkaku Islands dispute escalated massively and tensions between the countries were at an all-time high. In this poll, it was reported that 86 percent of Japanese people viewed

China unfavorably. Similarly, 81 percent of Chinese had unfavorable views towards Japan. This was more than a 10 percent spike in a 10-year period for both sides of the survey (Stokes, September 13, 2016).

The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (henceforth referred to as the Senaku Islands) Dispute has been a point of contention in of Sino-Japanese foreign policy for the past several decades and has strained relations between Japan and China for years. This chapter, however, will not argue whether Japan or China should have rights to the islands. Instead, only the current state of the islands—that they are owned by Japan—will be considered. Whether the islands historically should belong to China or not will not be argued but may be mentioned for the purpose of showing legal or military actions taken against the other as a consequence of this belief. Additionally, every confrontation will not be mentioned as there have been hundreds of incidents between China and Japan regarding the Senkaku Islands.

### Origins of the Senkaku Islands Dispute

The relatively recent conversion of the Senkaku Islands into Japanese territory in 1972 under the Okinawa Reversion Agreement between the United States and Japan formed the basis for modern contention between Japan and China (Nakauchi, 3). Before that, from 1952 to 1972, the United States administered over these islands (Lee & Ming, 2012). Under Article 2 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, Japan asserted that the territory of Japan following World War II was defined. Under Article 3 of the same treaty, the islands were placed under the administration of the United States as part of the Nansei Shoto Islands. The islands themselves,



however, were never explicitly mentioned in the treaty (Nakauchi, 3). The incorporation of the islands into Japanese territory sparked protests in China. In response, Japan had the United States declare that a Chinese attack on the Senkaku Islands would fall under Article 5 of the 1960 US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan). This meant that the United States would be obliged to militarily defend the islands (Lee & Ming, 2012).

At the time, Japan hardly had a Self-Defense Force, and therefore could not have been expected to defend the islands through their own power alone. China, however, was not a signatory to the San Francisco Peace Treaty, and therefore does not consider itself bound to those terms and continues to regard the islands as its own territory. In defense, China cites the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations as well as the surrender terms that Japan signed at the end of World War II in 1945 (Lee & Ming, 2012). Although the islands have been disputed over for years, they serve little tactical or practical purpose beyond spreading maritime territory. Neither China nor Japan truly desires acquiring the territory of the islands, but want them in order to expand their Air Defense Identification Zone, secure marine territory for their ships, and to have access to the potential oil reserves in the ocean surrounding the islands.

The islands themselves are small, uninhabited, and uncultivable. Since the islands themselves serve little practical purpose, the Japanese government decided to lease them to private owners in April 2002. The government reversed this decision, however, and decided to purchase three of the five islands. They became state-owned lands on September 11, 2012. The fourth island, Kuba Island, is still technically private land, although the Japanese government has been renting the island since 1972 when Okinawa was returned to Japan. The rented Kuba Island is currently being provided to U.S. forces and is being used as a firing/bombing range. Under the

Okinawa Reversion Agreement of 1972, Japan gained the right to patrol and use law enforcement on the islands, giving Japan more leniency in administering military force in the region (Nakauchi, 4).

China began to desire the islands following a 1968 United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) research project that revealed that oil and gas may exist in the seabed near the Senkaku Islands. Suddenly, there was value in obtaining the island chain. As a direct result, China and Taiwan began to claim the Senkaku Islands as being historically theirs since “ancient times.” In June of 1971, the Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an official claim of sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands; the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a similar declaration in December of that same year. The Chinese government’s statement gave reasoning for its claim and ended it with a harsh statement: that the Chinese people would liberate Taiwan, and the islands affiliated with Taiwan—as in the Senkaku Islands—would be recovered (Nakauchi, 5). Although this was not a direct threat of military actions against Japan, it was a promise of eventual escalation.

The Chinese government eventually chose to ignore the issue in the September, 1972 Joint Communique of the Government of Japan and China, which established diplomatic relations between the two countries (Nakauchi, 6). The topic of the Senkaku Islands dispute was never brought up by either country in the communique, and friendship was established separately from the issue. In October 1978, Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping proposed to shelve the issue, saying it had already been taken care of in the normalization meetings of 1972, although the two nations had never actually discussed it. As such, the Japanese government denies that its

government ever agreed to shelve the issue, since it was never formally discussed between the two countries (Nakauchi, 6).

### The Beginning to Modern Disputes

In the 1990s, China began to heavily promote maritime security as part of its national strategy. In February of 1992, China passed the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone (Nakauchi, 9). The passing of this law dramatically escalated the Senkaku Islands dispute, as it was the first time that China expressly claimed the Senkaku Islands as being within Chinese territory. Additionally, in support of this, China passed the Law on the Exclusive Economic Zone in June of 1998, which confirmed the principle of the natural prolongation of the continental shelf (Nakauchi, 9). This law was aimed at strengthening Chinese claim to the seas adjacent to the Chinese mainland, and therefore included the Senkaku Islands, especially because the majority of the islands are geographically closer to Taiwan than Japan.

At the same time, China began to strengthen its border guards through the passing of two laws. The first being the Law of the People's Republic of China on National Defense in March of 1997, which stipulated that China would recognize border, maritime, and air defenses as a single unit (Nakauchi, 9). This would make the military protection of the seas more easily enforceable. The second was the Law of the People's Republic of China on Island Protection, which was enacted in March of 2010. This law was passed in the direct interest of being applicable to the Senkaku Islands dispute. It called for the special protection of uninhabited islands that serve as points to delimit Chinese territorial waters and are used for defense purposes (Nakauchi, 9).

There have been several notable issues regarding Chinese activists in the Senkaku Islands territorial waters in the past two decades. In July of 1996, Japan ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and established an exclusive economic zone for 200 nautical miles. Taiwan protested this as the zone intruded on seas Taiwanese fishing boats used (Nakauchi, 9). In September of 1996, Hong Kong activists jumped into the water surrounding the islands—one died. A month later, 49 small boats filled with activists approached the islands; 41 of these boats invaded Japanese territorial waters and four people disembarked onto Uotsuri Island (Nakauchi, 9).

#### Responses with Policy

In March 2004, two small row boats landed on Uotsuri Island and the seven passengers were charged with illegal entrance; they were forcibly repatriated without being criminally prosecuted. In November of 2004, a Chinese submarine was spotted in the territorial waters surrounding the Sakishima Islands, which are near the Senkaku Islands. The Japanese government's response was slow under the 1996 guidelines, and an updated, more aggressive response plan was initiated (Bush, 9).

These incidents perturbed Japan and made the Japanese cautious of a potential Chinese threat. In 2004, the Japan Defense Agency decided that it would reallocate funds from procuring destroyers and tanks into missile defense (Bush, 9). Further consideration towards a possible invasion was made evident in the 2005 update of the Japanese National Defense Program Guidelines. The update noted that the continued Chinese modernization of its nuclear forces and

missile capabilities, in addition to its strong naval and air units, was concerning. The guidelines also clearly stated that China's expanding military efforts in the sea was worrisome (National Defense Program Guidelines, FY 2005-, 2). In direct reference to the Senkaku Islands, the guidelines clause on "Response to the Invasion of Japan's Offshore Islands" states the following:

"We will maintain necessary defense force structure to respond effectively to the invasion of Japan's offshore islands, improve and strengthen capabilities to transport and deploy forces, and deal with the invasion in a flexible manner."

Directly following that is a clause that states the Japanese response to a violation of Japanese airspace and the intrusion of foreign vessels in its marine territory. Summarily, it lays out a relatively robust Japanese response plan:

"We will maintain necessary defense force structure, including ships, aircraft and other assets, to carry out around-the-clock patrol and surveillance in the sea and airspace surrounding Japan. We will also maintain fighter aircraft units to respond instantly to the violation of our territorial airspace, as well as combatant ships and other assets in order to respond to armed special-purpose ships operating in waters surrounding Japan, submerged foreign submarines operating in Japan's territorial waters, and other similar vessels."

Considering the Japanese response, Sino-Japanese relations remained a diplomatic issue throughout 2005. In November of that year, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Japan—the

more conservative of the two main parties—proposed legislation to protect Japan’s Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ). The legislation was approved by the Diet in March of 2006, and unauthorized ships were officially forbidden to enter safety zones (Bush, 20). The Japanese also became more militarily active in this same timeframe.

In June of 2008, a private Taiwanese fishing vessel collided with a Japanese Coast Guard boat. The Taiwanese vessel ended up sinking, angering the Taiwanese people. Mass protests arose in Taiwan. Anger spread to even the highest political offices, with the government deciding to recall their representative to Japan. Rather than holding firm, however, Japan admitted a certain fault and apologized. In December of the same year, two Chinese marine surveillance vessels intruded into the same area. The Japanese Coast Guard demanded that they leave, and the Chinese vessels obeyed. This was the first occurrence of official Chinese vessels entering the territorial waters of Japan.

In 2010, the issue became the crux of Sino-Japanese relations. Rallies and demonstrations regarding the islands had been going on for years, especially so on the Chinese side. In September, Japan detained the captain of a Chinese vessel that had collided with a Japanese Coast Guard boat. This was the first time that Japan had arrested a Chinese citizen for trespassing in Japanese territorial waters in an exercise of military force, however slight. China demanded his release, claiming that the proceedings against him in Japan were unlawful. China retaliated by arresting a Japanese national in Hebei Province, although the government claimed it was not in response to the Senkaku incident. Eventually, Japan released the captain. Despite this, demonstrations and protests persisted in China.

### Escalation of the Crisis

On August 15, 2012, a group of activists from Hong Kong intruded into Japanese territorial waters. After being issued a warning by the Japanese Coast Guard, seven activists illegally disembarked onto Uotsuri Island, part of the Senkaku Islands chain (Nakauchi, 1). The Coast Guard detained the demonstrators and deported them without criminal prosecution. Anti-Japan demonstrations arose in China once again, even more intensely than in the past. Japanese corporate property was vandalized, and Japanese nationals in China encountered violence. Events scheduled to celebrate diplomatic normalization between the countries 40 years prior were canceled. Chinese surveillance vessels once again entered the territorial seas surrounding the islands. In late 2012, the Japanese Ministry of Defense made the decision to re-deploy 13 E2-C early warning and surveillance aircraft to Okinawa, presumably in anticipation of possible Chinese aggression in the southern islands (Rinehart & Elias, 19).

In November of 2013, China announced that it was establishing an “East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). The zone would have been of little consequence, except it purposely included airspace over the Senkaku Islands. China did not consult or inform any countries, including Japan, before making the announcement, and understandably drew their ire. On that same day, China flew a Tu-154 intelligence-gathering aircraft and a Shaanxi Y-8 early warning aircraft into Japanese airspace that China had deemed theirs (Japan Ministry of Defense, Chinese Activities). Rather than trying to take the Senkaku Islands outright, China likely enacted the ADIZ to bolster a future claim for possession over the islands. The United States also opposed the ADIZ, and announced that it does not recognize the zone; it continues to fly aircraft through the zone without notifying China (Rinehart & Elias, 2).

Although Japan has remained largely critical and does not acknowledge the zone, it recognizes the threat as serious enough to take official action against it. In mid-December 2013, the Abe Cabinet approved new defense guidelines that were designed to stress the territorial defense of the Senkaku Islands from China specifically. Tokyo did not rest the issue there. In January of the following year, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida announced Japan's intention to gather foreign support for the "freedom of flight above open seas" in a major speech to the Diet (Rinehart & Elias, 18). Since 2013, however, patrols by the Chinese Coast Guard in the waters of the Senkaku Islands have greatly decreased.

In April of 2014, Japan once again turned to America for support. President Obama announced that the United States' commitment to Japan is "absolute" and reassured Prime Minister Abe that "article five covers all territories under Japan's administration, including the Senkaku Islands." Chinese state-controlled news agency Global Times flipped Obama's words to show that the United States had recognized the might and power of China (McCurry & Branigan, April 24, 2014).

In late March of 2016, Japan installed a radar station in the Senkaku Islands region on the island of Yonaguni. The Japanese Ground Self Defense Force lieutenant colonel who commands the new base stated that Japan had a strategic vacuum that needed to be filled (Kubo & Kelly, March 27, 2016). This was also Japan's first permanent intelligence-gathering post near Taiwan and drew an angry Chinese response. In a statement, China's defense ministry stated that the international community should be concerned with Japan's military expansion. Japanese policy-makers stated that the post was not intended to be a military boon for the region but that it was simply aimed at keeping Chinese ships and aircrafts at bay (Kubo & Kelly, March 27, 2016).



In 2017, China ramped up its aggression towards Japan by way of conducting more military drills. After Japan's Ministry of Defense published their yearly white paper, Chinese officials expressed their disgruntlement of Japan's attitude towards them, calling the Japanese statements an "exaggeration" (Johnson, July 16, 2017). In the summer of 2017, the Chinese Defense Ministry issued a declaration that Japan should "get used to" Chinese military exercises in Japanese airspace. Following a series of Chinese intrusions in Japanese airspace, the Chinese air force released a statement in July of 2017, just a week after the previous announcement. It claimed that Chinese forces had conducted long-range drills over the Bashi Channel and the Miyako Strait multiple times in a single week (Johnson, July 16, 2017).

#### Japanese Air Scrambles in Response to Chinese Trespassing

The Japanese Air Self-Defense Forces scrambled to address possible violations of territorial airspace 141 times in 2004. This number multiplied the following year when the forces scrambled 229 times. They would scramble 239 times in 2007 (Bush, 20). The increase was officially attributed to a rise in Chinese jet fighters entering Japan's airspace. The Japanese Self-Defense Force's actions have been traditionally caused by Russian interference. Nearly the entirety of the 88 additional scrambles in 2005 were in response to Chinese aircrafts (Defense of Japan, 2006, 174).

Between 2006 and 2009, there was relatively few scrambles made against Chinese aircraft (less than 60 per year). Starting in 2010 and every year since then, however, the number of scrambles has dramatically risen. In 2010, slightly fewer than 100 scrambles were made

against Chinese aircraft. In 2012, a year of significant tension between China and Japan over territorial rights, about 300 scrambles were made. By 2015, the number spiked to over 550 scrambles (Japan Ministry of Defense, China's Activities). The Japanese Air Self-Defense Force continued to scramble in record numbers the following year, and it reportedly hit a new record in 2016. In January of 2017, a large number of Chinese aircrafts allegedly participating in a drill in Japanese airspace prompted a large scrambling of Japanese forces (Johnson, 8/11/2017). These numbers show a dramatic rise in both Chinese infractions of Japanese law—although China usually claims them to be standard military drills—as well as a more active and robust Japanese response. In 2001, there were less than a dozen scrambles made against Chinese aircraft (Japan Ministry of Defense, China's Activities). In less than 20 years, the military response of Japan in terms of air scrambles has extraordinarily risen.

### China's Increasing Military Budget

Current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was elected for the second time in the December of 2012. During the campaign period, he promised that his government would take a hardline stance on the Senkaku Islands dispute. Abe may never have risen to the office of Prime Minister in 2012, however, had China not escalated its military expansionism and turned towards nationalism—or even, some say, militarism (China Power Team, August 4, 2017). China has stated that with new military capabilities, it will be able to deal with “hostile air, surface, and subsurface operational environments in the ‘far seas’” (China Power Team, August 4, 2017).

Between 1998 and 2007, China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased at an average rate of 12.5 percent per year. Concurrently, Chinese defense spending grew 15.9 percent per year on average. China's defense budget increased at a rate 3.4 percent faster than its GDP could keep up with. Aside from the United States, China is currently the only other country in the world spending in the 100s of billions on defense (Bitzinger, 3/19/2015). Other than building up its military to potentially compete with the United States as a hegemonic power one day, one of the reasons behind China's defense buildup is likely the increasing tensions with Japan. Although territorial invasions into Japanese territory by China have been carried out largely by private Chinese citizens, a growing percentage of trespassing incidents have been carried out by official Chinese military vessels.

The portion of China's defense budget for military equipment alone is greater than Japan's total defense budget (Bitzinger, March 19, 2015). China's rapid accumulation of military technology and its overall spike in defense spending has given Japan obvious cause for worry. The Chinese state-run news agency *Xinhua* attributed this worry to Western and traditional powers wanting to see China remain a "military dwarf" and that Westerners only saw a potential threat when seeing China's expanding military budget. In the same breath, however, *Xinhua* incited further justification for Japan's concern over Chinese power. *Xinhua* proclaimed that Chinese security had been increasingly threatened by Japanese actions, labelling Japan as a country with "surging military ambition" (Dongdong, March 5, 2015). Chinese commentary regarding its expanding military budget has incited further heated debate on the Japanese side.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

After being pried open in 1853, Japan was thrust onto a dynamic global scene. The global power structures had transformed since Japan began its two centuries of isolationism in 1641. The Industrial Revolution was in full swing in the West, and there was a new and powerful country coming up in the world—the United States of America. Japan was forced to rapidly adapt if they wanted to be taken seriously by the outside world; they adopted a Western constitution, had a complete governmental overhaul, and began to try to implement new Western technologies in society. At the turn of the century, Japan entered a series of military conflicts in an effort to prove its might and status to the outside world. Over the next four decades, the Japanese's desire to prove themselves would turn into rampant and unchecked ultra-nationalism as Japan attempted to secure itself as an Imperialist power. Japan would enter World War II in search of securing their goal of dominating Asia through colonialization. By 1945, however, the Imperial Japanese Army was in shambles and civilians were struggling to find food. The army was forced to surrender and adopt a completely pacifist constitution.

In the time since demilitarization was forced onto Japan, the island nation has steadily been regaining its military power. Conservative politicians', most recently Shinzo Abe's, efforts to push towards rearmament have succeeded in times of foreign military disputes or the presage of one. As examined in this research, North Korean and Chinese incidents have been the primary cause for reactionary policies by the Japanese. Also examined was the American push for Japan to rearm themselves. Despite being the primary actor who stripped the country of their military in the first place, the United States found themselves unwilling to commit their military to protecting the Japanese forever and even requested their assistance in international disputes. The

actions of these three countries were the primary reason that the Japanese have found themselves being forced out of their now-devout pacifism.

### The United States

Following World War II, the international community sought to disarm Japan to the point that they would not even have a standing military. This was done so through the passing of a devoutly pacifistic constitution that ensured total demilitarization through Article 9. Less than a decade after the implementation of the new constitution, however, this position was reversed as foreign countries—namely the United States—no longer wished to carry the burden of protecting and supporting another country for little in return. Unwilling to shoulder the financial and military burden of being the global protector, the United States has since been shying away from its withstanding protectorate status over Japan for decades. To ensure this, the United States has been supporting limited rearmament in Japan since as early as 1954, when it allowed the creation of the JSDF. The JSDF was essentially a purely defensive military that was granted in the face the increasingly dangerous Korean War.

Perhaps the most important early marker of returning military power to Japan by the United States other than the inception of the JSDF was the return of Okinawa and Iwo Jima to Japan in 1972. These islands had been controlled by American forces since the end of World War II and were viewed as important American bases and symbols of American power abroad. In 1978, the guidelines for a joint defense cooperation between Japan and America were decided upon, which would cement the military alliance and friendship between the two countries.

Japan's involvement in the Gulf War would set the stage for modern remilitarization efforts. The criticism that followed Japan's failure to provide significant military assistance spurred them to growing their martial capabilities and taking more direct approaches in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Since becoming president, Donald Trump has continued to show support for Japanese remilitarization through acts such as welcoming the *Izumo*, Japan's largest destroyer, into a carrier battle group with the United States.

### North Korea

The Korean War would ultimately save the Japanese economy and allow it to recover for the first time since World War II. This came alongside limited military expansion at the time, but the economic growth would go on to support Japan's continued prosperity for decades and allow for future military spending. Still, the breaking away of North Korea would haunt Japan to the point that the fifth of the five goals Japan established for their foreign policy interactions was to resolve bilateral issues with North Korea. Despite this, North Korea would remain a non-threat for several decades following the war. Its intensely isolationist society resulted in significantly divergent technological progress from the rest of the developed world. This meant that for a large portion of North Korea's history, their martial capabilities were severely limited.

North Korea and Japan enjoyed relatively neutral relations with each other until the 1990s, when the international community became privy to the suspected attempted development of nuclear weapons in North Korea. The ensuing North Korean nuclear crisis of 1993-1994 would give a tangible reason for Japanese politicians to champion rearmament, as the country

had a legitimate threat for the first time in decades. No permanent legislation, however, would pass until 1998, when Japan announced that it would develop spy satellites and create a missile defense system in fear of a potential North Korean missile attack. One of the most consequential rearmament considerations that resulted from the tensions were the 2016 announcement that Tokyo was considering purchasing a THAAD system from the United States, something that would elevate the level of defense of Japan dramatically. Ultimately, Japan decided not to purchase the technology, instead purchasing a lower cost missile defense system. The Japanese defense budget was also significantly raised in 2016 with direct citation to the escalating North Korean missile crisis.

### China

The Senkaku Islands dispute has dominated Sino-Japanese relations for years, and tension between the countries has increased each year of late. There were no arguments surrounding the islands until 1968, when it was revealed that large oil and gas reserves may exist in the seabed surrounding the islands. In 1971, Taiwan and China issued official claims of sovereignty over the islands, bringing the issue to the international stage for the first time. Little conflict would happen, however, until the 1990s. In 1996, activists jumped into the water surrounding the islands. Later that year, 41 boats invaded Japanese territorial waters around the islands, and four people disembarked onto one of the islands, prompting a Japanese response. This was the beginning of a long string of trespassing boats that would plague the islands for years. Each incident would aggravate Japan further.

The passing of the Law of the People's Republic of China of National Defense in March, 1997 and the Law of the People's Republic of China on Island Protection in March, 2010 were the two most important pieces of legislation passed by China that would impact its relations with Japan. Both laws placed special military consideration on the Senkaku Islands which raised tensions with Japan. In 2012, the Japanese Ministry of Defense re-deployed 13 E2-C aircraft to Okinawa in response to heightened aggression in the South China Sea. This is reflective of the heavy Japanese focus on air scrambles in response to China, which have risen dramatically in recent years. In 2010, less than 100 scrambles were made against Chinese aircraft. By 2015, however, over 550 scrambles were carried out against them. As China has become more aggressive over the Senkaku Islands Dispute, Japan has responded by increasing its military forces and the severity with which it looks at Chinese military actions.

### Future Questions and Research

Since this research was carried out in the middle of 2017, an update to this research when Donald Trump's presidency ends would be critical to understanding American-Japanese relations in this period. Trump has been in office for less than a year as of this writing, and, as such, his foreign policy decisions may change dramatically during his remaining term. These changes could come about as a result of economic, social, or military influence. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe likely shaped many of Trump's views regarding American-Japanese relations in his early months in office. A visit to Japan, for example, may further alter Trump's views.



As the situation in East Asia changes, Trump may take a more hardline approach to Japanese remilitarization. This would happen if North Korea continues to escalate its nuclear and missile crisis. As of this writing, Trump has stated that he is willing to use military force to deal with North Korea should diplomacy fail. In this case, it is likely that Trump would push for immediate and American-backed Japanese remilitarization so that they can contribute to the security of their own geographical region. In this situation, the will of the Japanese public would likely be forced to change or ignored altogether as the conservative prime minister would undoubtedly favor remilitarization, something he has pushed for his whole political career. Even if the United States defers military action against North Korea, the state of North Korean affairs will undoubtedly continue to alter Japanese politics and rearmament. Should North Korea continue to fire missiles over the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, for example, it is likely that the current Japanese administration would favor, at minimum, an increase in missile protection units in Hokkaido.

Currently, China is being forced to choose between its international image with the Western world and its traditional support of North Korea. As Kim Jong-un continues to become more erratic and extreme in his actions, however, China has shown signs of withdrawing support for their communist neighbor. Foreign threats of sanctions have also influenced China's decision, as the consumerist West is what has allowed for China's expeditious economic growth. A commitment by China towards either scenario would likely impact Japanese politics. Additionally, should China decide to intensify the current Senkaku Islands dispute with Japan, the Japanese military would be forced to expand its role. Steps to defend the islands in the event of an attack are already in place, and it is likely that a decision to retaliate against China would

be imminent. Since the United States would be held to stand by their security agreement with Japan, however, it is extremely doubtful that the conflict would amount to anything greater than a conflict over the islands.

The nature of this research was policy-oriented while including strong historical perspectives to truly grasp the nature of these modern-day foreign policy issues. As mentioned in the Introduction, I was unable to look at other foreign countries, such as Russia, in the breadth of this study. In the future, researching and covering the effects of other foreign countries on Japanese remilitarization would be something that I would like to explore. Additionally, the nature of proxy wars and the potential that they have with Japan were not discussed fully. Including a section on how the United States may use Japan as a vessel for a proxy war with North Korea, for example, would be an interesting research contribution.

### The Importance of this Research

As first mentioned in the Introduction, Japanese remilitarization is a direct result of the actions of the United States, North Korea, and China. Had each country not taken their respective actions to spur the rearmament of Japan, the country would be a pacifist nation today. Whether or not the tide of domestic Japanese politics may have supported rearmament, the populace has been decidedly against it. Without a legitimate reason for Japan to remilitarize, the Japanese would never have supported or allowed for rearmament on the scale that has happened. The United States pressured Japan into rearmament out of self-interest, not wanting to shoulder the burden of financially and militarily supporting a foreign country. North Korea's irrationality and

rashness has had Japan on edge, and various incidents—namely the abduction issue and the missile launches—have pushed Japan into supporting defense technologies and weaponry. China’s increasing aggression in regard to the Senkaku Islands dispute over the past two decades has had the Japanese on edge, made evident through the mounting number of radars and similar technologies in the Southern Japanese islands.

Recent politics and global situations have called for a demand in research examining East Asia. While many are quick to credit North Korea and domestic politics alone with the rise in Japanese remilitarization, this work has shown that this is not the case. It is true that the recent spike in North Korean nuclear and missile activity in the past year has forced the Japanese to accept war as a possible reality in the near future. Japanese remilitarization has not, however, come all at once as the result of a single force. Since the 1950s, Japanese rearmament has been a topic of discussion and debate and has made steady progress following the Korean War. While global politics at large may have influenced the decision to remilitarize, this thesis has shown that the combined actions of the United States, North Korea, and China have been the main contributors.

From the 1950s until the early 2000s, the United States was the main influencer of Japanese remilitarization as Americans began to see the burden that militarily supporting Japan was causing them. Throughout the 2000s to the early 2010s, China took the role as main contributor as the government steadily escalated the Senkaku Islands conflict. The North Korean threat has become a serious threat just in the past several years and has taken up a large amount of news-space. Although the levels of influence have changed over the years, each country has played a role in the remilitarization of Japan.

Japan has been forced to take steps to remilitarize due to both international criticism, namely by the United States, and the necessity to protect itself from potential foreign attacks carried out by North Korea and China. In the coming years, Japan will continue to remilitarize if the current foreign policy trends amongst these three countries continue. If North Korea or China should attack Japan, it is very likely that Japan will be forced to take dramatic and sudden steps towards remilitarization with the help of the United States. Should this happen, it is likely that Japan would remain a military power for the foreseeable future.

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