Japan's Evolving Military: East Asia, the United States, and the International System

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Japan’s Evolving Military: 
East Asia, the United States, and the International System

BY:

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B.S., SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
SOUTH ORANGE, NEW JERSEY 2006

A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ASIAN
STUDIES AT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

SOUTH ORANGE, NEW JERSEY

2008
JAPAN'S EVOLVING MILITARY: THE IMPACT OF JAPAN'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH EAST ASIA AND THE UNITED STATES ON FUTURE REMILITARIZATION

THESIS TITLE

BY

KELLY THERESE FINK

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, Japan has dramatically increased its defense spending and politicians have considered revision of Article 9 of Japan's pacifist Constitution. Such an action would be likely to have dramatic side-effects. At the same time, such a decision is liable to be a result of some equally urgent concerns, both internal and external. The purpose of this paper is to examine the advisability of Japan's remilitarization in terms of the external concerns, specifically as they are relevant to China, North and South Korea, and the United States, by considering some critical areas: (1) the historical context for contemporary relations between Japan and its provocateurs; (2) current pressures on Japan from its immediate neighbors (3) current pressures on Japan from its principal ally in defense, the United States in light of specific conditions both in Asia and globally; and (4) possible reactions of these parties that necessitate the Japanese government's attention in making such a drastic conclusion. After looking at all of these external facets it becomes clearer how complex the issue really is, especially since so many of the causes and effects are interconnected. Such factors considered, it seems that while revision of Article 9 would stir up further animosity in East Asia, unless Japan was to make serious changes in the organization and scope of their Self-Defense Forces, revision would not cause irreparable damage to East Asian relations. Thus, while it would be reckless for Japan to take any further steps towards nuclear rearmament, in their current position, revision of Article 9 would not be unadvisable.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Despite Japan’s small geographic area, it invites a large amount of global attention. Still, while most generally consider military power to be of substantial importance when considering global power, the Japanese government is one of the few leading countries to publicly show contempt for aggressive military action and to completely reject nuclear capabilities—the epitome of military might. In recent years, however, Japan has dramatically increased its defense spending and politicians have considered revision of Article 9 of Japan’s pacifist Constitution. It is curious to consider, based on Japan’s democratization and track record in the international arena since 1945, the likelihood of a re-emergent imperialist Japan, in contradistinction to potential benefits to Japan and the democratic free world if Japan were to remilitarize. Such an action would be likely to have dramatic side-effects. At the same time, such a decision is liable to be the result of some equally urgent concerns, both internal and external.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the advisability of Japan’s remilitarization in terms of the external concerns, specifically as they are relevant to China, North and South Korea, and the United States, by considering some critical areas: (1) the historical context for contemporary relations between Japan and its provocateurs; (2) current pressures on Japan from its immediate neighbors (3) current pressures on Japan from its principal ally in defense, the United States in light of specific conditions both in Asia and globally; and (4) possible reactions of these parties that necessitate the Japanese government’s attention in making such a drastic conclusion. After looking at all of these external facets it becomes clearer how complex the issue really is, especially since so many of the causes and effects are interconnected. Such factors considered, it seems that while revision of Article 9 would stir up further animosity in East Asia, but unless Japan was to make serious changes within the organization and strategies of
their Self-Defense Forces, the bad feelings would not cause serious damage to East Asian relations. Thus, while it would be reckless for Japan to take any further steps towards nuclear rearmament, in their current position, revision of Article 9 would not be unadvisable.

Historically, the earliest existence of the Japanese people is traced back as far as ten thousand years or more. The first literary mention is found in ancient Japanese texts such as the “Kojiki” and the “Nihongi” in the first century BCE.\(^1\) However, it is widely recognized that Japanese society existed long before a written language was assumed. While no one can argue that the Japanese people and culture are not unique, in regards to the early history of Japan it would also be difficult to say that the country, as it is today, would exist without the interference of external actors. For example, written language and the religious movements of Confucianism and Buddhism are among key aspects of Japanese culture brought into Japan by neighbors such as China and Korea. Consequently, the country experienced several periods that can be most accurately described as national identity crises resulting in periods of isolationism. Aspects of early Japanese history that are particularly relevant include the introduction of samurai culture and the rise in military rule.

Prior to the arrival of the Americans in Edo Bay in 1853, Japan had already developed a culture of militarism. However, it was, in some sense, militarism completely distinctive to the Japanese islands. Although, every country has some elements of militarism to satisfy the need for self-defense, the warrior spirit came to Japan in the late 7th century with the division of Japan into provinces, each led by a governor and protected by individual provincial military units. These military units were gradually replaced by samurai-warrior officials who rose to

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prominence because of their “locally powerful families.” The “Chronicle of Masakado” describes the Japanese warrior as “a man on horseback who specialized in archery and fought in a highly individualistic manner… [who] sought out opponents of equal or higher status on the other side with whom to engage in one-to-one combat.” Later, with the introduction of Buddhism and Confucianism into Japanese society, the samurai culture took on a new dimension with the cultivation of bushido, “the Way of the Warrior.” Japanese samurai became even more entrenched in Japanese culture with the transfer of neo-Confucian ideals to a civilized warrior lifestyle during the Tokugawa period.

In prehistoric Japan, imperial rule first developed as an offshoot of the early Shinto religion, in which the emperor was said to be of direct divine lineage from the sun goddess, Princess Amaterasu. However, this did not mean it was an uncommon occurrence for a military conflict to transpire as a result of a struggle for political power. As far back as the 6th century the “Nihongi” records the clash of two rival Chieftains and the assassination of an Imperial Prince in a battle for the seat of the recently passed emperor. However, this method of assuming power became most common with the emergence of actual military regimes in Japan in the 12th century. Although Japan maintained imperial leadership through the indirect rule of its emperor, influence gradually passed from the emperor to high-ranking members of his court. This form of leadership officially began with the establishment of the Kamakura shogunate by Minamoto Yoritomo after the Genpei War in 1185. They were later violently overthrown by the Ashikaga Shogunate in 1336, which ruled until the Warring States Period of 1478-1568. The final

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2 De Bary, 266.
3 Ibid, 267.
5 De Bary, Volume 1, 250.
6 Ibid, 42-44.
7 Ibid, xxv-xxvi.
military regime in Japan, the Tokugawa shogunate, reigned from 1568 until 1867. This ended approximately seven centuries of military rule.

As one can see, prior to 1853, there existed an internal culture of military politics successively serving governments of Japan over the course of many centuries. However, as a country isolated from the rest of the world because of natural geographic elements, as well as internal policies, for a long while this attitude did not exceed their immediate boundaries. Contemporary Japan bears a striking contrast to the traditional state ruled by emperors and shoguns, in that they are overtly pacifist and yet globally influential.

Although few raise the question directly, today it seems that amongst those following the issue of Japanese remilitarization there is no clear understanding of what defines a militarized Japan. Legally, Japan and the rest of the world regard the country as a non-militarized state because of one identifying feature of its Constitution. Article 9 – "Renunciation of War," was included in the Constitution drafted by the United States in November of 1946 after the surrender of the Japanese at the end of World War II. It officially reads,

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. 2) In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Since the Constitution’s adoption, succeeding governments of Japan have exempted self-defense from the provisions of Article 9, in the form of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF). This began with the reemployment of a Japanese led police force during the American occupation. Since then, defense expenditures have been limited to approximately 1% of the country’s GDP,

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8 De Bary, Volume 2, xxiii-xxvi.
as set by the Japanese Diet. On one hand, this is one of the smallest budget allotments to defense recognized internationally. The CIA World Factbook ranks Japan at 143 of 173 bodies in military expenditures as a percentage of GDP, which was .8% in 2006.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$13,860,000,000</td>
<td>4.06%</td>
<td>$562,716,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>$7,034,000,000</td>
<td>4.30%</td>
<td>$302,462,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>$2,076,000,000</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
<td>$80,964,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>$2,965,000,000</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
<td>$74,125,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>$2,067,000,000</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>$53,742,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>$2,147,000,000</td>
<td>2.40%</td>
<td>$51,528,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$2,833,000,000</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
<td>$42,495,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>$4,346,000,000</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>$34,768,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>$1,206,000,000</td>
<td>2.70%</td>
<td>$32,562,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Korea</td>
<td>$40,000,000,000</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information Collected from CIA World Fact Book

On the other hand, this says little about the actual budget, which in the last decade has remained within the world’s largest military budgets, purely based on the fact that their economy is so substantial. The Japanese government has explicitly expressed their view of the role of Article 9 and its application to the defense of Japan on the website for the Japan Ministry of Defense, where it states,

Since Japan is an independent state, it is recognized beyond doubt that the provision in the article does not deny the inherent right of self-defense that Japan is entitled to maintain as a sovereign nation. Thus...the Government of Japan interprets the Constitution as being allowed to possess and maintain the minimum level of armed strength for self-defense necessary to ensure that Japan exercises the right.11

The Ministry of Defense identifies three restrictions on this use of self-defense,

(i) There is an imminent and illegitimate act of aggression against Japan;
(ii) There is no appropriate means to repel this aggression other than the use of the right of self-defense; and

(iii) The use of armed strength is confined to the minimum level necessary for repelling.\(^{12}\)

In addition, the Ministry of Defense specifically restricts against the overseas deployment of troops and while they admit to having the right to collective self-defense in terms of international law as both of these exceed the restriction of using the minimal defense necessary, the Japanese Constitution does not allow them.\(^{13}\) The Ministry of Defense derived these views from the 1954 Self-Defense Forces Law which first defined the role of the Self-Defense Forces and the Defense Agency, both which were created for civilian control.\(^{14}\) In conjunction, additional legislation further illustrates these views, such as in the case of the Basic Policy for National Defense, which the government enacted in 1957. In 1976, they drafted the National Defense Program Outline extending the SDF powers to peacetime surveillance and “the capacity to deal with limited acts of aggression.” It was this document that first placed the 1% limit on military expenditures.\(^{15}\) Several of these additional regulations exist in accordance with treaties with allied countries which were put into place since the establishment of the SDF. Generally, they require the SDF to be responsible for their own defense in certain situations, and assist allies in others.

In the last decade, the Japanese government has put into place several new laws that directly affect the role of the Self-Defense Forces, putting into more direct terms their abilities and responsibilities to their country. In response to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Towers in the United States the Japanese government issued the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. The stated purpose of Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law is to specify the

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\(^{12}\) Ibid.

\(^{13}\) Ibid.


\(^{15}\) Duncan McCargo, Contemporary Japan ed. 2 (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 183.
“measures Japan implements in support of the activities of the armed forces of the United States and other countries which aim to eradicate the threat of the terrorist attacks” as defined by the Charter of the UN and “measures Japan implements with the humanitarian spirit based on relevant resolutions of the [United Nations bodies].” It identifies four specific measures: (1) cooperation and support activities, (2) search and rescue activities, (3) assistance to affected people, and (4) other necessary measures. These specifically restrict against engagement, and distribution and transportation of weaponry. The Law also identifies in its section on the use of weapons the specific instances in which the SDF may fire artillery, which it limits to,

\[ W \text{hen an unavoidable and reasonable cause exists for use of weapons to protect lives and bodies of themselves, other members of the Self Defense Forces who are with them on the scene, or those who are with them on the scene and have come under their control while conducting their duties,} \]

This being among other stipulations. Additionally, they passed the 2003 *Armed Attack Situation Response Law* which,

\[ \text{[A]ims to establish a plan for responding to armed attack situations etc. and legislation required for responding to armed attack situations etc. by prescribing basic matters regarding responses to such situations, including fundamental principles, responsibilities of the national government and local governments, etc.} \]

At the same time, the government partially amended both the *Self-Defense Law* and the *Security Council of Japan Establishment Law*. Later approved in 2004, in cooperation with the *Armed Situation Response Law* were seven other “Emergency Related Laws.” In 2007, the Defense

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17 “Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law.”
Agency also officially changed its name to the Ministry of Defense when the government upgraded it to a Cabinet-level ministry.20

In light of the many laws, treaties, and resolutions on the books in Japan, what began as a reserve police force of 75,000 men in 1951, is now much more. Despite having a budget that is only 0.8% of the country’s GDP, the total value of the budget is over $40 million. It is one of the top five largest in the world. Over 240,000 military personnel together comprise the various branches of the SDF,21 and the Ground, Air, and Maritime Self-Defense Forces, utilize a full assortment of military equipment. The Maritime SDF makes use of the usual advanced naval apparatus: destroyers, submarines, combat aircraft, and artillery. An independent global security think tank has stated that their, “navy in particular scores high among experts for its sophistication.” Also, in the last five years, they have launched four surveillance satellites,23 and their anti-missile defense projects with the United States have the potential to succeed in creating the world’s most technologically advanced missile defense system to date. The projects have even led to an ease of military export bans and the further revision of the Self-Defense Forces Law to give the head of the Ministry of Defense more emergency powers.24 The Japanese alone consider many of these programs and equipment solely defensive. It is through details such the instruments’ descriptors and Japanese usage of items that allows them to maintain the defensive title. For example, in the case of the surveillance satellites, Japanese personnel cannot

20 "Ministry of Defense."
21 Ibid.
22 "Ministry of Defense."
24 Misake, “Japan pushes the boundaries of self-defense.”
refer to them as “spy satellites,” tanks are labeled “specialty vehicles,” and they have “support fighters” as opposed to bombers.

Although laws such as the Self-Defense Forces Law, the Basic Policy for National Defense, and the National Defense Program Outline were created in efforts to clarify the role of the SDF and the position of the government towards self-defense, this can no longer be said for current changes in policy. The new laws and numbers are more than just signs of the natural expansion of the Japanese military. In reality, they are evidence of a change in the attitude of both Japanese politicians and the public. Presently in Japan, there has been a rise in factions representing evolving opinions towards the Japanese military and revision of the Constitution. The statements and platforms of the different political parties, as well as surveys of the Japanese society best assert these mind-sets.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) speaks for many of the country’s steadfast advocates for Constitutional revision and military expansion. Although this feeling exists in varying degrees, the official position represented by the president over the years has leaned strongly towards constitutional revision – more specifically in regards to the creation of a standing army, increased independence from the United States militarily, and an expanded role in international efforts requiring collective defense. Over the past several years Junichiro Koizumi, Shinzo Abe, and Yasuo Fakuda have represented the party in the prime minister’s office. During Koizumi’s time in office he pushed for legislation that would allow greater overseas deployment of troops and permission for SDF action in situations requiring collective self-defense. Shinzo Abe also made redefining self-defense one of his political priorities,

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25 Ibid.
26 "To Arms." The Economist 368, no. 8334 (July 26, 2003): 11-12, 11.
27 "Neither in Nor Out: Junichiro Koizumi tweaks the pacifist rules again." Economist 371, no. 8380 (June 19, 2004): 43, 43.
however due to scandal his time in office was very short-lived. In addition, during his political experiences prior to his current role as prime minister, Yasuo Fukuda was quoted voicing some very controversial opinions about nuclear development.

The largest opposition party to the LDP, the Democratic Party of Japan, is also in favor of revision of the Japanese Constitution, although not necessarily in the same manner. In 2004, the DPJ’s interim proposal for a revised Constitution included provisions to reduce the actions of the SDF within Japan by giving a greater defense role to the United Nations, while at the same time committing a SDF Reserve force to assistance with United Nations in projects involving collective security. So, interestingly, this suggests that while they support an expanded military role abroad, they are for reduced activity at home. The 2005 party Manifesto still describes reducing dependence upon the United States’ military as a key priority of the year’s agenda.

This is a point of agreement between the two parties.

In 2007, the Japanese Communist Party Manifesto stated that a revision of the Constitution to allow for a standing military “will mean a revival of militarism under which Japan will become a country terrified by people worldwide as well as the Japanese themselves.” The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) characterizes the most intensely pacifist portion of Japanese society. It is their opinion that the government should not alter the Constitution and that the government has been in violation of Article 9 in the majority of its proactive decisions towards SDF involvement in overseas projects.

31 Ibid.
Although most citizens would not identify with the JCP, the contemporary Japanese public tends to embrace an ideology of passivism in culture and politics. The pacifist Constitution has been a cornerstone of their identity since World War II. One might debate that their attachment to the document and Article 9 is in effect, a nationwide self-imposed penance for their actions during their imperialist period. Regardless, over the years it has generally been popular dissent that prevented the government from making decisions involving the SDF activities. This is apparent in the response to Prime Minister Kaifu’s efforts to send members of the SDF to assist in non-combat roles during the Gulf War in 1991.\textsuperscript{32} Still, in recent years popular opinion has tended to reflect the divisions represented by the political powers. Polls done by Yomiuri Shimbun reflect these changes in attitude.

\textbf{Public Opinion Concerning Constitutional Revision}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Public Opinion Concerning Constitutional Revision}
\end{figure}

As one can see, the number of respondents in favor of a constitutional revision has grown drastically in comparison to the number who opposes such a decision. Still it is important to note

\textsuperscript{32} Richard, “Japan stares down the barrel of a gun.” \textit{The Economist} 318, no. 7692 (February 02, 1991): 31.
\textsuperscript{33} Rosenbluth, “America’s Policy Toward East Asia,” 594.
that the underlying fear of becoming a military power continues to exist. “I strongly believe that nuclear weapons and humans cannot coexist. I’m very concerned about the direction Japan is heading in now,” quotes U.S. News and World Report of one Hiroshima survivor.34

It is obvious that over the years Japan made moves towards military expansion, and currently there is no doubt that the Japanese military exists in the conventional sense. While there are certainly internal factors that play a part in these moves, there are more significant external influences as well. The purpose of this paper is to determine the advisability of further remilitarization giving specific regard to the external pressures on Japan and specific conditions in Asia and elsewhere that are influencing a changing Japanese military strategy. This will be accomplished by taking into consideration the significant historical events that have influenced Japan’s relationships with its neighbors in East Asia.

Chapter 2: Historical Context for Post-WWII Japanese Relations

As previously noted, Japan was not always the pacifist country that it is today. However, examples of aggression towards the rest of the world do not litter Japan’s past. Regardless of this fact, Japan tends to be identified with the comparatively short fifty years during which it exercised its muscle as an imperialist power in Asia. For such a limited period of time, its significance to modern events is considerable. Contact between countries has been going on for millennium, and the history of diplomacy traces back nearly as far. However, every year technology advances, communications between countries become simpler, the exchange of people and information increases, and peoples of different races, cultures, nationalities, religions, and economic backgrounds are forced to interact. Accordingly, the popularity and importance of the study of global politics continues to increase. However, within foreign policy and international relations students regularly make the mistake of focusing on theory, to the neglect of cultural and historical understanding. Unfortunately, that is truly a big mistake. It is not possible to predict how states will act in terms of foreign relations or national security without taking into account the dynamics of their relationships. One can not calculate how several different international players might react to the same event, employing purely theory. Therefore, it is impossible to determine all the factors pushing the Japanese to spend and transform their military, without understanding the key background events in its history with China, the Koreas, and the United States.
1) Japan and China, 1894-1945

Historical texts from the emergence of written record in Asia indicate that formal and informal relations between China and Japan existed centuries into the past, even throughout periods of isolation enacted by each country's respective government. Formal political relations have been traced back as far as the third century B.C., when multiple embassies were established between the Kingdom of Wei and Japan. Initially, the relationship between the two countries was characterized by the undeveloped, fragmented Japanese society learning from its culturally and structurally superior Chinese neighbor. This lasted through several centuries but interaction peaked during the Tang Dynasty when Japan first adopted a more centralized political structure. Still, during this time there is no record of any violent conflict.

As an inverse trend of Japanese economic and industrial growth versus the Chinese decline developed in the nineteenth century, relations between China and Japan deteriorated. The Japanese government awoke during this time to the realities of military strength when the Americans forced them to open their doors to trade and political relations in 1853. During the Meiji Era, the newly democratized government led by military and civilian coalition under the authority of the emperor placed a priority upon modernizing their traditional antiquated military and strengthening their economy. Unfortunately, while the Japanese learned, to some degree, from their contact with Western technology, the Chinese were not so open-minded and though the exchange of business and technology increased dramatically between Japan and the west, it did not in China. The surge in nationalism that resulted from the humiliation of conceding the United States carried over in Japanese interactions throughout East Asia. The events that ensued

37 Ibid., 572.
have stained relations between the two countries ever since. Within the fifty years of Japanese imperialism in China the darkest moments can be divided into three categories: the first Sino-Japanese War and related events, the invasion and occupation of mainland China, and Japanese occupation of Manchuria.

With the growth of the Japanese military and economy came a competitive spirit that was more like a silent competition with Western powers, culminating in the need to colonize and join the ranks of imperialist powers. In Japan’s relations with China, this led to the first Sino-Japanese War in 1894. Japan defeated the Chinese during battles between 1894 and 1895 in an attempt to take over the Korean peninsula, which then was a tributary state of China. As a result of the Treaty at Shimonoseki in 1895, Japan gained some control in Korea, and formal jurisdiction over Taiwan, as well as several island territories. The Japanese government forced the Chinese to pay large reparations and the rest of the country became more accessible to territorial seizure by other foreign governments. In addition, the Japanese were able to maintain an informal military occupation of the country through land leased for bases and port traffic. Japanese influence over China grew as a consequence of their Twenty-One Demands imposed on China in 1915. This made possible the stationing of further troops in China, placed Japanese advisors in the Chinese government, and gave the Japanese possession of Mongolia and Shantung, as well as several of the most prosperous northern Chinese businesses. As a result of the Sino-Japanese War and the insulting Twenty-One Demands the weak Chinese government took its first painful hits to its territory, national confidence, and military forces at the hands of the Japanese.

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40 Ibid., 592.
The second key phase of Japan’s violation of China began in 1904 with the Russo-Japanese War. Although the war itself did not involve the Japanese military it directly affected China through Chinese Manchuria. The Japanese effectively took over Russian assets in the province and in the process gained control of the most successful Chinese industrial region where the Russians had already begun to develop the mining and railway businesses. Their authority in Manchuria did not gain full stability until 1931. After losing much of the control they had first gained in the Russo-Japanese War, a staged explosion on a Japanese railway jumpstarted a Japanese invasion of the Liaodong Peninsula. After successfully defeating the Chinese troops Japan claimed Manchuria for their own under the name, “Manchukuo.” Although Manchuria was more fortunate than most Japanese occupied territories because it was industrially successful and thus prized, the Japanese still victimized the people. In Manchuria in particular, there are records of the Chinese prisoners used in medical experimentation. Thus, in addition to exploiting one of the only flourishing regions of China for their own economic benefit, the Japanese abused the Manchurian people in horrible ways.

Japanese imperialism in China climaxed with the invasion of the Liaodong Peninsula in 1931, which has been described as “the most important event in this period of Chinese history.” The occupation of Manchuria gave Japan the confidence for the subsequent invasion of China and bombing of Shanghai in 1937, which officially set in motion the second Sino-Japanese War. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident took place on July 7, 1937 near Beijing. The Chinese fell to Japanese forces who successfully took over Beijing and with it the Shanxi and Shandong provinces. On August 14, 1937, the superior Japanese air force, and superior naval forces attacked Shanghai, the only city that, to this point survived the economic breakdown of the rest.

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42 Ibid, 379.
43 Ibid, 635.
of China, and in December 1937 their army attacked the southern capital of Nanjing—one of the most infamous events of Japanese imperialism. During the attack of Nanjing, the Japanese utterly destroyed the city and everyone in it, committing forms of torture, rape, and murder of the most inhumane degree to civilians as well as military. To this day, there is no confirmed number of casualties because the countries of China and Japan can not agree on the total. However, one estimate puts the number at 300,000 victims.44

Japan’s assault on China lasted until the conclusion of World War II in 1945, and the adoption of Japan’s new Constitution in 1947.45 During this time they committed innumerable atrocities to the people of China. According to historian Rhodes Murphey, “Their slogan formula, with official approval, was ‘Kill all, burn all, loot all!’ and in many areas the Japanese military carried it out.”46 This history shows a relationship that began with Chinese superiority and relative ambivalence toward the inferior Japanese archipelago, and radically changed to one of military dominance and belligerence on the part of Japan. The significance of this power fluctuation and the events it entailed cannot be underestimated when examining current Sino-Japanese relations.

2) Korean Peninsula, 1592-1945

Prior to the Imjin Wars, the relationship between Korea and Japan was much like the traditional relationship Japan had first shared with China. For example, Murphey identifies the Japanese in the third century as, “provincial Koreans or Korean cousins” because of their similarities and cultural exchanges.47 However, as one can see this friendship did not last. Japan and South

44 Murphey, A History of Asia, 378
46 Ibid, 379.
Korea only normalized diplomatic relations in 1965, and they still have not successfully restored formal relations with North Korea. Japanese imperialist activity in Korea took place in three phases: the Imjin Wars, the occupation that took place as a result of the first Sino-Japanese War and the official annexation of the Kingdom of Korea by Japan. The effects of these events continue to plague relations between Japan and the Koreas today and play a part in the militarization debate. However, it is the details of the occupation that have more directly played over in the minds of Koreans in years since.

The historical events between Japan and the Korean Peninsula most relevant to Japan’s current military situation began long before the problems between China and Japan. Coinciding with the arrival of firearms in Japan in the 1500’s was Japan’s first foray into imperialism. A newfound military aggressiveness manifested itself in an attempt by Toyotomi Hideyoshi to invade Korea in 1592. This was the first negative contact between the two countries in their long history, outside of pirate attacks. However, Hideyoshi’s invasion, which is also known as the Imjin Wars, was a five year campaign that lasted from 1592 to 1598. Because the Yi Dynasty, the ruling party in Korea, was experiencing erosion through factionalism when Hideyoshi invaded they were not equipped to defend themselves. Over these five years they became victim to Hideyoshi’s superior military forces. Without the assistance of China, the surprise emergence of Korean military leadership and the death of Hideyoshi, Korea might have come under Japanese authority much sooner than it eventually did. Still the five years of war had lasting effects.

Although Korea was the only country besides the Netherlands to have contact with Japan during their period of isolation from 1603 to 1868, this was not necessarily to the benefit of

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Korea. While the Koreans never forgot about the devastation that resulted from the Imjin Wars, the Japanese never really forgot their desires to control the peninsula. With a step in the door from their years of exchange, and also as a result of the weakness that plagued Korea in all the years that followed Hideyoshi's invasion, in 1876 the Japanese were able to force Korea to sign its first official treaty.50 After looking at the history of western interference in Japan, one can infer that this was their first venture into Western-style imperialism, while Hideyoshi's invasions were more likely the result of a single powerful military leader. Essentially, the similarities to the American entrance into Japan ought to have been evidence of what was to follow. They did just what the United States had done to Japan decades prior, opening up a semi-isolated Korea to exploitation by the rest of the world. In 1894, Japan committed to its imperialist desires by fighting the Chinese in the first Sino-Japanese War. Between 1894 and 1895 the Japanese defeated Chinese forces to stake claim to the Korean Peninsula. Although technically Korea maintained its independence and thus was not a territory that could legally be fought over, they had lost much of the ability to exert their own strength after their treaty with Japan in 1868 opened them up to western dominance.51

The final and most destructive period in Korean-Japanese relations occurred when Japan finally annexed the Korean Peninsula in 1910. While they had attempted to control the area by making it a protectorate led by prominent Japanese politician Ito Hirobumi in 1909, this proved unsuccessful when he was assassinated in 1909.52 Although during the preceding decades the Japanese did not treat the people of Korea as free and equal partners on the peninsula, when they took formal control the treatment became especially destructive. According the Murphey, "[the] Koreans were treated, at best, as second-class Japanese," however, in general they were more

50 Hoare, North Korea in the 21st Century, 23.
51 Hoare, North Korea in the 21st Century, 23.
52 Hoare, 75.
like “a slave population.” He provides the former description because in addition to exploiting the country’s resources, the people were forced to give what little they had left of their own. They had to give of their names, and use Japanese names. They had to give up their language and use only Japanese in public, while being unable to teach their native language in the schools. The latter description is also accurate in that the Japanese forced the people to contribute to economic development they never benefited from and for a war effort that did not involve them. In addition, the many resources native to Korea were mined and cultivated by its people for transport to Japan, while the Japanese held all the positions of power. And finally, many of the women were forced into prostitution.

There are those who argue that the Japanese made some positive contributions to Korea during their occupation in the form of railways, mines, factories, and roads. However, the policies in Korea were much more destructive than they were in Taiwan or Manchuria, its two other colonies. The development that took place in these countries is proof of how Japan could have prescribed better policies in Korea. The assassination of Hirobumi was only one of the major acts of revolt against the Japanese. Further evidence of the horrible conditions in Korea under Japanese rule was the existence of opposition forces that fought back meekly during the thirty-five years of Japanese rule. In addition, there was a rebel government in exile that conducted business out of Shanghai, albeit without much success.

53 Murphey, 325.
54 Murphey, 323.
55 Hoare, 24.
56 Murphey, 324.
57 Hoare, 24.
3) Japan and the United States, 1853-1945

Although Japan never completely withdrew from the outside world, despite periods of separation such as during the Tokugawa period from, the United States did not successfully enter the country until the arrival of Commodore Perry in 1853. The evolution to imperialist Japan after the arrival of the United States was by no means a result of the same factors that domestically led to the rise of a military-based government. Alternatively, it is apparent in the analysis of two key events in Japanese history that it was the influence of the United States that led first to a build up of aggression Japanese military armament and belligerence and later to the transformation to a pacifist ideology.

Japan's move from internal military rule to external military influence, as well as to notable global power was not stimulated by the samurai culture or the politics of domestic rule, just as the factors that led to an emperor-led, and shogunate governed, state were not concerned with international status. Instead, during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Japanese government took a foreign policy position that was devoted to developing an international military presence. This raises the question of what first led Japanese mentality to evolve in such a way. The answer lies in their first encounter with the United States, specifically the response of the Japanese people, the subsequent military build-up, and the manifestation of the new Japanese foreign policy.

According to records provided in the U.S. Navy’s historical accounts, Commodore Perry first traveled to Uraga Bay in Japan with the intention of securing trading rights for the United States, at the request of President Millard Fillmore. Also, he wanted to gain access to docking rights for American whaling vessels in the area.58 These attempts to access Japanese markets

occurred during the height of Tokugawa's isolationist period, and as such Perry came prepared with the support of the United States navy, in particular steam ships, which had never before been seen by the residents of Japan. Radically inferior to the United States in terms of military capacity, the Japanese government was coerced into signing the Kanagawa Treaty 1854 which opened up two ports and navigational waterway to U.S. access and the Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1858. These agreements with the United States led to similar treaties with several other western powers.

One of the most obvious reflections of the influence of the United States' interference in Japanese affairs through the manipulation of the Kanagawa Treaty and the Treaty of Amity and Commerce is in the immediate response of the Japanese people. The immediate aftermath of the concessions of the Tokugawa shogunate was a popular feeling of shame. According to Wm. Theodore De Bary’s account of the encounter, it “provoked uproar from one end of the country to the other. The mounting discontent and agitation pointed unmistakably to the down fall of the tottering shogunate.” In general, several new public views arose because of this overall feeling of humiliation and in response more realistic up to date understanding of progress outside the confines of Japan. One 19th century scholar, Yokoi Shonan, reflected such beliefs, saying,

[W]e must observe today the conditions in all countries, greatly develop the system of our government in promoting the welfare of the people by innovating an enlighted rule, and earnestly make our country strong economically and militarily in order to avoid indignities from other countries.

Consequently, Tokugawa rule ended less than a decade later in 1867 with the resignation of its final shogun.

59 De Bary, Volume 2, xxv.
Despite the success of shogunate rule in securing authority over the common people in the most developed regions of Japan, the militaries of these regimes were relatively primitive in terms of military technology worldwide. While the first recognition of the use of hand guns occurred in England in 1375, European guns were not even introduced into Japan until 1543 by Portuguese merchants. As previously mentioned, traditional Japanese warriors were described as utilizing specific skills in horseback and archery. In addition, Japanese warriors depended considerably on hand to hand combat using a variety of swords and other small weapons. It was not until the arrival of the Americans in 1853 that Japan realized the extent of their underdevelopment. The comparative capabilities of the Japanese military system were never revealed to its leaders because during the Tokugawa shogunate, Japanese rulers went through a period of extreme nationalism that led to a period of isolationism; western contact had been limited to Dutch traders and Asian neighbors. However, one of the immediate responses of scholars to the encounter with Perry at Uraga Bay was vehement recommendations for military reform.

If the shogunate issued a new decree, aroused the characteristic vigor and bravery of the Japanese, and united the hearts of the entire national with a firmly established military system based on clarified laws, not only would there be no need to fear foreign countries, but we could sail to various lands within a few years. And even if these lands should make armed attacks, we could, with our moral principles and courage be looked up to for our benevolent ways.

Even further reflecting the influence of the United States was the model of the newly developed Japanese navy off of aspects of the American naval force. As a result of the Uraga Bay incident,

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62 "Important Dates in Gun History."
63 Shonan, "Three Theses on State Policy," 548.
Katsu Awa, “the father of the Japanese military” studied naval science and construction in the U.S. and helped to develop the modern Japanese navy.

The final change that took place as a result of the United States’ influence after Perry’s expedition to Japan was a more invasive attitude towards the affairs of its neighbors. Within his Three Theses on State Policy, Shonan reflects this attitude towards China, in reference to their challenges with imperialism and the Opium Wars, “China and Japan are close neighbors. The results of China’s debacle are right before our eyes, causing us to shudder so that we cannot calmly sit back and watch.” This is almost a forewarning of the future imperialism of Japan. According to the Japanese scholar Naito Konan in 1894, the Japanese goal was to “spread Japanese civilization and ways to every corner of the world” starting with China. In 1894, Japan realized these goals by invading Korea and Northern China in the first Sino-Japanese War. They attempted this again by invading China south of Beijing in 1937.

Since 1853, when Commodore Perry and his fleet first landed in Edo Bay, the people of Japan and their respective governments have been both directly and indirectly influenced by the words and actions of the American government. Over a century and half ago, they were spurred to cast away bakufu rule and accept the change from isolationism. In response to the shame they felt over the easy submission of the shogun to the American navy, they were prompted to take advantage of newfound access to western ideas and technology, particularly advancements in military technology and style.

The onset of the newfound militarism of the Japanese government was clearly a result of the impact of the manipulative behavior of the United States. However, it was also the stepping stone to the next key stage in the evolution of Japanese armament and military philosophy as it

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64 Shonan, “Three Theses on State Policy,” 546.
currently stands. As previously stated, one result of the increased attention given to military modernization by successive Japanese governments was enhanced awareness of the events occurring in neighboring states. The increased strength and intensity galvanized in Japanese foreign policy was manifested in assaults on its Asian neighbors. Timing, however, was not on the side of the Japanese. In efforts to prevent further intervention by the United States in their affairs, Japan preemptively attacked the U.S. military base in Pearl Harbor in 1941. The resulting participation of the United States in World War II became the decisive factor in evolution of the entire military culture of Japan.

On a small scale, the attack on Pearl Harbor suggests that perhaps subconscious in the motives of Japanese officials was the memory of humiliation at the hands of the Americans. By initiating a premature show of force, they were in a sense retaliating against the U.S. for forcing their doors open decades before, attempting to prove that now they were the greater power. However, this is a minor proposition compared to the actual move from militarism to pacifism. The details of the battles on the part of Japan and the United States, are in themselves, somewhat insignificant. However, in the end, the United States again shamed the Japanese government. They responded to the Japanese with a full exhibition of their military and technological superiority in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. This time it was not steamships, it was nuclear weapons. The treaties were not Kanagawa or Amity and Cooperation. They were the Potsdam Declaration which was “A statement for the terms of the unconditional surrender of Japan.”

66 Spence, The Search for Modern China, 413.
67 “The Potsdam Declaration.” PILLARS OF PEACE Documents Pertaining To American Interest In Establishing A Lasting World Peace: January 1941-February 1946 no. 4, (Book Department, Army Information School, May 1946.)
The surrender formally occurred on September 9, 1945 with the *Japanese Instrument of Surrender*.  

The most obvious illustration of the United States' influences on the new military attitude of Japan was the construction of the new Japanese Constitution. Although it was based off of the Constitution of the United States, outside of the inclusion of the emperor in the rule of law, there is one key difference between the U.S. Constitution and the Japanese Constitution. Article 9 -- "Renunciation of War," reflects this. For the second time, the way Japan viewed militarism changed drastically as a direct result of the American presence.

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Chapter 3: Chinese Actions Influencing Japanese Remilitarization

There is no country that has had a greater influence over Japan through the course of history than China. Even today, although Japan has developed strategic relationships with other countries of the world, particularly the United States, due to their history and geography the decisions of the Chinese government will never cease to have a significant effect on Japan. As such it is no surprise that the actions of the Chinese authorities have played a part in raising the question of Japan’s remilitarization among the government and its constituencies. By looking at the specific ways in which China and its allies have provoked the Japanese in recent years, one might see how large a role China is playing in influencing the speed of Japan’s remilitarization. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, China’s treatment of joint claims over oil reserves in the East China Sea, increases in Chinese military expenditures and development, instances of Chinese naval exploration in Japanese waters, treatment of Japanese aid to China, and Chinese authorities’ response to extreme violations of human rights in the home countries of several of China’s closest allies.

1) Energy Standoff

As the world’s second largest consumer of oil, China’s need for energy resources is one of the country’s largest problems. As a result, the need has become a source of international conflict in many arenas. Between China and Japan, conflicting maritime claims to oil and gas reserves are their largest foreign policy dispute, with the potential to become the most dangerous. The area in discussion is the East China Sea which separates the two countries, particularly the Senkaku

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Islands which are located 300 kilometers southwest of Okinawa. The conflict is heightened not only because there are international laws involved, but also because there is a history of these islands passing hands. Although they were originally a part of China, since they first were taken over by the Japanese during the first Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the Senkaku Islands have been under the jurisdiction of the Chinese, the Japanese, and the United States. However, in 1978, with the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty, Deng Xiaoping said, “China tacitly admitted Japan’s practical control of the Senkaku Islands.” Still, in 1992, the Chinese passed a law opening up the islands for oil and gas development, hinting threats of military defense should there be any foreign interference.

Although the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) gives some guidelines for settling overlapping maritime jurisdiction, the Chinese government has managed to avoid them numerous times by refusing to recognize that other countries have legal claims to disputed territories. In this case, while Japan is willing to accept a median line, “China says its EEZ [and right to drill oil] should extend to the edge of its continental shelf, which would put the line almost up against Japan’s shores.” On the other hand, Japan refuses to agree to any joint exploration terms that have the precondition of Chinese ownership. Unfortunately, the issue becomes more precarious due to the fluidity of energy resources. Regardless, even if there were an agreement involving a median line, this would not be useful in controlling how much of the resources actually were extracted by either party. Thus, there are really only two probably outcomes: (1) cooperation over the energy reserves, including joint research and development, or (2) intense competition for the fuel resources, with no regard to the other party’s interests. While

72 Navarro, The Coming China Wars, 83.
the former option has the potential of significantly improving Sino-Japanese relations, unfortunately, it seems that the latter is the current course, and dangerously so. As economist Peter Navarro has stated, “The clash over oil and gas in the East China Sea has not simply been a childish war of words.” In the late 1990’s, China began exploring both sides of the proposed median line. By 2003, the Chinese government began test drilling on its side of the median line, and soon after the Japanese responded with similar tests. Although the Japanese have continued to address the issue using non-military means, the case is not so with China. The Chinese government responded to Japanese test drilling by sending two of its most advanced and heavily armed warships as a form of intimidation to accompany strong warnings by the government.74 Economist Peter Navarro’s book, *The Coming China Wars*, cites the *People’s Daily Online* as stating, “Japanese enterprises’ act of trial extraction of oil and gas resources in China’s exclusive economic zone…will not only make the East China Sea the most dangerous area for possible eruption of conflicts between the two countries, but will also worsen China-Japan relations.”75 With other similar confrontations occurring, there is no knowing what it will take to finally provoke Japan into action.

Unfortunately, all of the actions by the Chinese have clearly been enough to antagonize the government and people of Japan. According to Navarro, “The growing Chinese threat on so many fronts could finally tip what has become a delicate balance leading to development of nuclear weapons and the remilitarization of Japan.”76 In order for these problems to not escalate into a military confrontation, the two countries need to find some way to work together, and in the meantime, Japan must continue to reach for alternative ways to counterattack.

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74 Navarro, *The Coming China Wars*, 84.
75 Ibid., 82.
76 Ibid., 85.
2) Chinese Military Growth, Development, and Application

Closely linked to the problem of competition for the East China Sea reserves is the increasing growth of the Chinese military. In an article in the *Pacific Review*, research scholar Tsukasa Takamine cites the "changing perceptions of a militarily modernizing China" as a "key factor" on Japan's foreign policy agenda. The reality is that China has, in fact, focused a significant portion of its energy and resources on military development. The growth rate of Chinese defense spending has been in the double digits from 1989 through 2000 and has continued to grow exponentially. Navarro notes that "the rate of China's military spending is growing even faster than its economy." Currently, most striking is that this spending has been devoted almost completely to air and naval forces, signifying that these are the areas in which China sees either a threat, or a future. Military development is not always something to be feared since modernization of defense weaponry is considered necessary by many developed countries, and with a swelling economy a comparative rise in spending is not really out of the ordinary. The Japanese fear is the association of Chinese military expansion with a possibility that China might use it to seek a more hegemonic role in the East Asian region. Thus, the threats that have come alongside the aggressive competition in the East China Sea have the ability to be truly problematic if they are not taken seriously by Japanese policymakers.

3) Chinese Military Exploration

Active exhibitions of Chinese muscle further exacerbate the menace felt by the Japanese government because of China's military expansion. During the early 1990's, China conducted

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78 Ibid., 442-443.
regular nuclear tests which clearly provoked the Japanese government,\textsuperscript{80} who later protested China's decision to conduct war games and missile testing in the Taiwan Strait in 1995 and 1996,\textsuperscript{81} an indication of the determination of Japanese officials to maintain a harmonious environment in the East Asian region, threatened by China's provocative acts toward Taiwan. This was followed by Chinese maritime threats associated with the Senkaku Islands in 1997. Despite insufficient evidence, some Japanese even suspect China of sabotaging this area in the East China Sea with mines and reconnaissance.\textsuperscript{82} Even if untrue, suspicions such as these still breed paranoia and affect lawmakers. Provocative action continued in 2000, when China sent a military warship to circumnavigate the Japanese archipelago for intelligence gathering purposes, much to the alarm of the Japanese.\textsuperscript{83} Additionally, in 2004, the Japanese government was forced to send out two destroyers and an anti-submarine craft to pursue a Chinese nuclear submarine that had been exploring within Japanese waters near the Okinawa Islands.\textsuperscript{84}

In response to many of China's disturbing actions, the government of Japan made clear its extreme disapproval by issuing grant aid sanctions. In the opinion of Takamine, the applications of sanctions after the instances of nuclear testing "demonstrated the Japanese government's strong determination not to tolerate the further development of the PRC's nuclear weapons." After Chinese military maneuvers in the Strait of Taiwan, Japan cut its aid to China from US$71 million to US$4.4 million. Although Japanese authorities encouraged similar actions by the United States and the European Union (EU), Japan did not wait for their cooperation to

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 447.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., 450-453.
\textsuperscript{82} Eugene A. Matthews, "Japan's New Nationalism," \textit{Foreign Affairs} 82, no. 6. (Nov/Dec 2003): 74-82, 78.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 440.
put its own policies into effect – a sign that it saw the potential danger and took it seriously.  

Takamine says,

> From their [Japanese officials’] point of view, the power projection capability of Chinese conventional forces, as distinct from nuclear force, is still not a direct threat to Japanese security and will not become so for another few decades at least. For these policymakers and analysts, the ‘China Threat Thesis’ is based on the vague fear of China’s potential to become a dominant military and economic power in the region in the future, rather than on the reality of China’s current military capability.”

However, there is still the reality that, because of the geographic nature of East Asia, any military confrontation, even if it is directed at a neighbor, is potentially threatening to Japan. There is little chance that a dispute in the region could remain 100 percent bilateral.

4) Chinese Responses to Reduction in Japanese Aid

Another issue that continues to frustrate much of the Japanese public is allocation of aid to their economically ballooning neighbor. Although supporting the Chinese economy has its benefits for the Japanese people, Japan has been China’s largest source of Official Development Assistance (ODA) since such projects began in the late 1970s. Japan’s aid to China over the years has totaled about US$28.1 billion, double the aid given by all other donor countries.

Although Japan’s goal has been and continues to be, to help China to develop an economy that is flush with the global system and as a result supplements Japan’s economic and political objectives, there are a few specific issues regarding ODA to China that have sparked strong responses from the general Japanese populace. First is the fact that the distribution of aid to China has not been altered to compensate for Japan’s own economic troubles or China’s

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85 Ibid., 447.
86 Ibid., 443.
successes. Related to this is the fact that China has significantly increased its defense spending over the last fourteen years. As prominent politician and nationalist proponent, Shintaro Ishihara, has complained, “We pour money into China so they can continue work on developing a hydrogen bomb.”89 Finally, China acts as if it were owed aid from Japan. This is depicted in the Chinese response to Japanese sanctions in 1995, when they linked the actions to the history of Japanese invasion, “China is the country that suffered most under Japanese aggression. That is why our receiving of grant-in-aid has a special historical background.”90 Thus, while ODA allocation may be determined by the Japanese government the general population of Japan focuses much resentment on the Chinese.

5) Risky Moves by China’s Closest Allies

Although China’s support of many of the world’s most belligerent heads of state might not alone provoke Japan’s increased militarization, it most certainly adds fuel to the fire. Some of China’s closest trade partners are some of the world’s biggest violators of human rights. This is an issue controversial to the Japanese government because it is historically recognized as the world’s checkbook when it comes to financing international humanitarian missions around the globe. China, on the other hand, cares little about issues that do not directly affect its own growth or decline.91 In fact, in some cases, Chinese bilateral deals have involved the sale of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear resources and technology, as well as protection of countries such as Sudan, Iran, and Angola from UN sanctions via China’s UN Security Council veto power, or at the very least their abstinence from voting on controversial topics.92

89 Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 78.
92 Navarro, The Coming China Wars, 72.
Despite its consideration of militarization, Japan’s official position is adamantly against nuclear proliferation. At the same time, China continues to provide other countries with nuclear materials, maintaining the policy of “Just business, no political conditions.” In the end, Japan is contributing a large portion of the funding for the international community’s fight against the very rogue states to whom China is providing weapons and the defense. In addition, they are providing aid to China, which is indirectly (or directly) supporting their own military development. Finally, the United States has used Japan’s potential militarization, more specifically its potential nuclear armament, as a tool to try and influence China’s relations with some of its dangerous allies. According to Navarro, “This gambit played directly into the hands of Japan’s nationalists and will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to put the nuclear genie back in its bottle.” Thus, while judging China based on the actions of its allies might alone be too critical, it is the ways in which China has continued to support, not just turn a blind eye, to these actions that continues to aggravate Japan.

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94 Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 79.
Chapter 4: Provocations By North Korea

After Japan opened up Korea to foreign influence in 1876, the nation essentially lost the ability to determine its own destiny. Even when independent, up through 1910, they were in effect at the beck and call of outsiders until being forced into thirty-five years of colonialism under the Japanese. In the end, with the conclusion of World War II, despite being the war’s only truly innocent party, they came out the victim. The Korean Peninsula was split into a Soviet-controlled North, and an American monitored South. Although technically these two big brothers no longer have jurisdiction over either state, the effects of their radically different policies have shaped leadership in both countries. Currently, North Korea is one of the most unpredictable states in the world, led by the undisputedly unstable dictator, Kim Jong Il. It is also dangerously close to the pacifist borders of Japan. For many reasons, the actions and policies of North Korea have played a distinct part in motivating the Japanese to reevaluate their military strategy. The importance to policymakers is evident in the inability for the two countries to formally normalize relations. The key problems with North Korea compelling Japan to remilitarize are: North Korea’s nuclear ambitions and other military provocations, disagreements involving Japanese abductees, North Korea’s relationship with China, and the fear of a North Korean Regime collapse.

1) Nuclear Weapons Development and Other Aggressive Military Behaviors

As the only country to have ever been attacked with an atomic bomb, Japan is particularly sensitive about issues involving nuclear development. They are a vocal signatory of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and only use the minimum technology necessary for alternative energy sources. While possession of nuclear weapons by China is certainly worrisome for Japan,
China is one of the few Nuclear Weapons States that is legal under the NPT. North Korea, on the other hand, was formerly a signatory, violated the treaty, and then withdrew. It is their nuclear ambitions and outwardly aggressive activity that are one of the driving forces behind Japanese military build up. The dangers they pose to Japan are evident in North Korea’s drive to develop nuclear technology, weapons acquisitions, and suspicious naval activities executed by Korean vessels in Japanese waters.

Although North Korea signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1985, their nuclear aspirations quickly became public between 1993 and 1994, and North Korea began to refuse inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Today, there are claims by members of the scientific community in the United States that they actually have been pursuing nuclear research since 1964. The United States quickly responded to international fears of an armed North Korea, by recommending a compromise in the U.S.-DPRK Agreed Framework. North Korea initially agreed to shut down the existing reactor and cancel future construction in exchange for a light-water reactor. In cooperation, Japan, among other countries, contributed a significant amount of aid to the impoverished country via a newly established Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) in an effort to reward them for their cooperation and ensure its preservation for the future. Unfortunately, since the 1994, North Korea has repeatedly acted in violation of the Agreed Framework. On August 31, 1998 they test shot a Taepodong missile over Japan, a missile with the capability to carry nuclear weaponry. In addition to identifying North Korea as a greater military threat to Japan, this incident pushed the

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95 Mitake, 244.
96 Yutaka Kawashima, Japanese Foreign Policy at the Crossroads, p 79.
99 Yutaka Kawashima, 79.
Japanese towards developing their own advanced surveillance system since they had been forced to rely on the United States for intelligence on the missile test.\textsuperscript{100} In 2002, the North Korean government reported having an active nuclear development program, particularly a uranium enrichment program, as well as active bombs.\textsuperscript{101} The same year they reopened nuclear facilities at Yongbyong, and began to reprocess their supplies of fuel rods.\textsuperscript{102} On February 24, 2003 they shot two more missiles over the Sea of Japan,\textsuperscript{103} and officially withdrew from the NPT.

Again in 2005, they pretended to take steps towards disarmament by joining the United States led Six-Party Talks, which concluded in an agreement to work towards a proposal for nuclear disarmament. However, with little faith in the North Korean government the director of the United States Defense Intelligence Agency at the time, stated,

\begin{quote}
Kim Chong-il may eventually agree to negotiate away parts of his nuclear weapon stockpile and program and agree to some type of inspection regime, but we judge Kim is not likely to surrender all of his nuclear weapon capabilities. We do not know under what conditions North Korea would sell nuclear weapons or technology.\textsuperscript{104}
\end{quote}

In 2006, North Korea continued missile tests, this time including its first major nuclear test. Although in the last couple of years North Korea has made further agreements in a return to the Six Party Talks that they walked out on later in 2005,\textsuperscript{105} they have not fully lived up to their promises, instead living up to the predictions of the Defense Agency Director.

As well as problems with nuclear development and missile testing, Japanese naval forces repeatedly discover suspicious North Korean vessels crossing into Japanese waters. The numerous encounters with ships culminated in the first violent confrontation involving the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[100] Yutaka, 83.
\item[101] http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/dpdk/6-party.htm
\item[104] http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/dpdk/6-party.htm
\end{footnotes}
Japanese Self Defense Forces since their creation after the American occupation. On December 18, 2001, Japanese forces discovered a North Korean spy ship disguised as a Chinese boat. They were forced to fire, sinking the ship and killing its crew, after a naval pursuit.\textsuperscript{106}

Another crisis closely linked to nuclear development is that of weapons acquisition. This issue became a serious international concern in the late 1990’s, when German reporters claimed that North Korea had purchased black market nuclear materials from Russia. It was later reported that in 1997 they received uranium enrichment technology from Pakistan,\textsuperscript{107} and in 1999, Kazakhstan revealed the illegal transfer of about thirty MiG-21 aircraft to North Korea through a Czech middleman.\textsuperscript{108} Additionally, a 2002 CIA report stated,

\begin{quote}
[North Korea] has been seeking centrifuge-related materials in large quantities to support a uranium enrichment program. It also obtained equipment suitable for use in uranium feed and withdrawal systems.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

As these are likely to only be examples of the success acquisitions of weapons, technology and nuclear material by North Korea, the problem is a serious concern to Japan. This is because regardless of the efforts being made on the part of the United States, South Korea, China, and Japan towards North Korea development, there are still parties working with the North Korean government, whether out of support, greed, or national desperation. So, while there should be some relief in the fact that North Korea’s nuclear testing has not necessarily has triumphant results, when there is the transfer of materials from external sources, the risk of an effective nuclear missile increases for a country in such a close proximity as Japan.

The clearest evidence of the sincere fears of the Japanese government to North Korea’s nuclear development and acquisition is the hold that has existed on the repayment of war

\textsuperscript{106} Eugene A. Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism” \textit{Foreign Affairs} 82, no. 6 (Nov/Dec 2003): 74.
reparations and the restoration of normalized relations. The two governments first began talking about reparations and normalization in 1989,\textsuperscript{110} however the repeated failure of North Korea to fully abandon their programs has hindered progress. In addition, in response to the missile tests in 1998, North Korea unilaterally stopped aid payments related to KEDO, an action which they have repeated in response to further provocations. Foreign policy analyst, Kamiya Matake identifies their initiative in stopping these payments as one of the strongest signals of the nuclear threat felt by Japan.\textsuperscript{111} As one can see, North Korea has been unable to offer any amount of transparency to its nuclear weapons programs, nor fulfill and maintain a single international obligation involving its military in the country’s relatively short existence. Thus, regardless of the future steps taken by North Korea to disarm, there is no reason to suspect that the Japanese government would do anything less than necessary to ensure their national security.

2) Abduction of Japanese Nationals

The second key problem with North Korea that has prompted a response from the Japanese government and is a factor influencing their rising militarization is the unresolved issue of several Japanese citizens that were abducted from their homes in the 70’s and 80’s. For many years, the North Korean government actively denied having anything to do with the mysterious disappearance of Japanese citizens. However, in 2002, Kim Jong Il admitted to his government’s kidnapping of at least sixteen Japanese individuals. The explanation that he gave for their abduction is that they were brought to Korea to teach Japanese to spies. At the time, North Korea released five of the victims, claiming the rest were dead. However, they were unable to provide details surrounding their causes of death. Additionally, they released the remains of one of these

\textsuperscript{110} Hoare, 135.
\textsuperscript{111} Mitake, 244.
casualties, but Japanese scientists later discovered that they were definitely not the remains of the intended. Currently, the North Korean government considers the case closed, despite Japanese attempts to have it reopened and reinvestigated. This issue is important for two reasons: the significance it has to Japanese nationalistic feelings, and its international implications.

The inconsistencies in the details released by Pyongyang, as well as their refusal to reconsider investigation have prompted severely negative political relations between the two countries. Although, North Korea took the first step in formal admission to the kidnapping, this does not presume a solution. Successive Japanese prime ministers, including the current leader Yasuo Fukuda have been adamant about their displeasure over the North Korean government’s investigations of the events. For leaders, the inability to find out what really happened, and secure the return of all the missing parties (or their remains) is, as one source describes it, “a symbol of national impotence.” Unfortunately, because the issue is more emotionally driven, and less strategically important it has been difficult for the current Prime Minister to prioritize it above the problem of nuclear development on their foreign policy agenda. Japanese leaders continue to use the retraction of war reparations to Pyongyang and the stalling of normalization talks as tools in influencing their treatment of the matter. Still, the Koreans carried out the abductions decades ago and the problem still is not resolved, and financial threats do not seem to work effectively as bargaining devices.

From an international standpoint, international law recognizes Japan’s legal right to act in response to the abduction of its citizens. According to Yutaka Kawashima, “the abduction of innocent foreign nationals by a state agent—and the possible killing of some of them—could be regarded as casus belli under traditional international law.” He also states, “if two states

112 Japan, N. Korea End Talks with Little Progress on Abduction Issue, 2.
maintained diplomatic relations, it would be possible at least for the offended state to convey through diplomatic channels not only its protest but also potential retaliatory measures, in the strongest possible terms,” while at the same time pointing out that technically Japan and North Korea do not have formal diplomatic ties, and even under the circumstances North Korea has not been cooperative. Thus, it appears that the pressure that Japan is feeling to find an alternative way to force North Korea to take responsibility for its indiscretions is founded.

3) Relations with China

North Korea’s relationship with China is a third force weighing into Japanese considerations for formal remilitarization. As previously explained, China is a looming threat to Japan’s national security for a number of reasons. At present, they are also the only ally of Kim Jong Il’s government. Although China does not fully support all of the decisions made in Pyongyang, because of the small amount of security their position offers, they defend them on many occasions in multilateral talks. North Korea is strategically valuable to China because it provides a geographic buffer between them and US forces in South Korea. As such, they have been active in negotiations for Korean reunification. As a way to gain influence in the North Korean and with Kim Jong Il, China issues them aid with no strings attached. This is a radically different technique from the others parties in the region, who tend to cut off aid when they want to influence the government’s policies. However, with no strings attached to their financial assistance, there is no guarantee that it the government uses it for the good of the people. In fact, it is almost definite that the donations go towards military purposes. Consequently, according to

114 Kawashima, Japanese Foreign Policy at the Crossroads, 81.
116 Ibid, 168.
117 Ibid, 169.
Fei-ling Wang, in his article, *Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China’s Views and Policy on Korean Reunification*, “Pyongyang is unlikely to move very close to the United States or Japan at China’s expense.” This is evidence that China’s friendship is necessary for North Korea’s survival. As it stands, Japan is also one of the largest contributors of aid to North Korea, and acts as one of its key trade partners. However, despite the benefits Japan offers for improved relations, the advantages to a friendship with Japan’s other biggest enemy outweigh them; the prospect of an alliance between two nuclear countries, in striking distance, with a historical grudge is treacherous.

4) The Dangers of Collapse

Another threat to Japan’s security is the looming danger of North Korea’s collapse. At the moment, the reason North Korea is one of the world’s most dangerous countries is because it is so unstable. The economy is in shambles and the leadership is volatile, but unlike many states with similar troubles, North Korea also has the technology and firepower to severely damage many of its close neighbors. The CIA World Fact Book lists the real growth rate of North Korea’s GDP in 2006 as -1.1%. Out of 219 countries, only six have a worse growth rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Growth Rate in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>11.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Korea</td>
<td>-1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>-1.20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>-1.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>-3.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaza Strip</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bank</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Information from CIA World Factbook
Also, in 2006 the country entered its thirteenth consecutive year with nationwide food shortages. The country’s key industry is military products and all of its other major industries can supplement military development in some capacity. The only reason that the country is not a victim to complete starvation is because of external aid, approximately $372 million worth in 2007.\textsuperscript{118}

Even though some of North Korea’s economic problems partially relate to natural disasters such as floods and poor agricultural conditions, the majority are a result of the screwed political priorities of its leadership. The government’s number one concern is military development. A report issued by the DPRK from the Budgetary session of a Supreme Peoples’ Assembly reported that in 2004 they allotted 15.6\% of their budget to military expenditures.\textsuperscript{119} If that percentage was true, and their estimated GDP of $40 billion from 2006 was also accurate, then in 2004 North Korea could potentially spend up to an estimated $6 billion annually on their military. The government also highly restricts the economic development. Some of their policies include restrictions on private farming, the cultivation of certain crops, the private sale of grains, and a food rationing system. Additionally, even though private aid has been the only thing keeping the country afloat, in 2005 North Korea decided to restrict against all non-developmental forms of aid, and donations from IGOs and NGOs with humanitarian missions.\textsuperscript{120} The large numbers of North Korean refugees fleeing to China, serves as proof of the horrible living conditions in North Korea. The problem is bad enough that it is now the main foreign policy dilemma between China and North Korea.\textsuperscript{121}

\textsuperscript{118} “North Korea.”
\textsuperscript{120} “North Korea.”
\textsuperscript{121} Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo,” 169.
All of these problems have a direct effect on the foreign and military policies of Japan.

In his book, *Japanese Foreign Policy at the Crossroads*, Yutaka Kawashima discusses the dangers of a rogue nation. He identifies them as having the following risks:

--The domestic situation can veer dangerously out of control, and under such circumstances deterrence no longer works against the regime...
--The regime tends to resort to brinkmanship in order to grab whatever concessions it can from other states, and the risk of mistaking a real threat for a bluff—and thereby precipitating a real catastrophe—can be high.
--There always remains the possibility of collusion between terrorists and the rogue state.122

Fei-Ling Wang also recognizes that the “economic crisis in North Korea and the danger of collapse of its regime has deepened the anxiety of the Japanese people about its possible use of military force.”123 Matake points out that “Even in the 1980s, Japanese media reports tended to praise North Korean achievements and criticize little.”124 While this could just be Japan acting kindly towards the people it used to bully, it did not treat South Korea the same way. Thus, it appears that this kind of behavior was much like the praise given to a party whom you are concerned about, hoping the encouragement will spur further achievements. The dangers posted by North Korea’s instability are not lost on the Japanese.

There is little doubt that North Korea poses a danger to Japan. Their nuclear ambitions and military provocations, relationship with China, refusal to readdress the abductees issue, and the risks associated with their collapse are only the most obvious reasons. International efforts to contain them have little success in the long-term, as North Korea is unable to adhere to a single agreement it makes. When the DPRK insists upon rejecting assistance for its own people, as they frequently do, there is little hope that they will act more kindly towards a historical aggressor.

North Korea maintains a historical resentment towards Japan, which manifests itself in all of this

123 Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo,” 244.
provocation behavior. Should the government reach a point where they feel they should seek revenge, the results could be shocking, and that is a risk the Japanese must seriously evaluate.
Chapter 5: The Pressures of South Korea’s Present and Future

Like their brother from the north, South Korea experienced many historical injuries in the last couple of centuries. The division of the peninsula was not of their own doing (though neither was it the fault of the Japanese), and, despite growing apart ideologically, neither country has lost the ambition for reunification. To the same degree, neither country has forgotten about the agony they endured together under imperialist Japan, regardless of the steps taken towards forgiveness. However, because South Korea developed completely independent of the volatile North, their status in the world and amongst their neighbors is radically different. Most importantly, South Korea and Japan have had normalized diplomatic relations since 1965, and Japan has formally apologized for its wrongs several times over. Nearly none of the reasons Japan feels vulnerable about North Korea apply to the South. However to say that South Korea has not played a role in Japan’s remilitarization would be too simple. South Korea’s part in Japan’s remilitarization is unique particularly because it is not as simple as it seems: instead there are two pressures, one that exists in the present and one in the future. The first pressure is that the direct weight of responsibility that comes from a simple alliance. The second is the indirect pressure that originates in the fear of what may come should the North and South ever reunite.

1) The Current South Korean-Japanese Security Relationship

Like its other two East Asian neighbors, South Korea holds strategic importance to Japan, and vice versus. Still, because of their history prior to Japanese imperialism, their common American influence, their geographic proximity, and the common threat of North Korean instability the two countries have become increasingly interdependent. South Korea is positioned very dangerously
beneath a country that has already attempted to take it over by force, under the pretense of unification. The official military doctrine of North Korea is based upon Kim Il-song's plan to eventually reunify through the application of military force, while maintaining the survival of DPRK regime. North Korea has already developed what they call a “mutually assured destruction strategy” (MAD) towards South Korea, which involves a missile program that would effectively destroy all of South Korea. They are also threatening a similar strategy towards Japan combining nuclear weapons and Nodong missiles. These threats have forced South Korea to seek, partially through the coercion of the United States, cooperation with Japan in elementary defense departments.

The idea of mutual security was first made official in the Korea Clause of the Nixon-Sato joint communique of November 1969 where Japan was forced to admit that the “security of the Republic of Korea is essential to Japan’s own security.” In 1981, Korean President Chun Doo-hwan tried to get $6 billion in aid from Japan because of the military expenditures they were forced to put forth on behalf of shielding the Japanese defense forces. In 1996, the two countries began a regular schedule of security policy meetings for increased collaboration and transparency. Currently, South Korea relies on Japan for cooperation in small scale naval operations because of their overlapping maritime boundaries and because neither country has the ability to protect their maritime territory alone. Jason Manesovitz goes so far as to describe their relationship as one of a “virtual alliance.” This suggests some amount of collective responsibility. According to him, South Korea is well aware that the destruction of Japanese

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126 Kawashima, Japanese Foreign Policy at the Crossroads: 89.
130 Manosevitz, "Japan and South Korea: Security Relations Reach Adolescence," 821.
defense forces, and American forces in Japan would greatly increase danger to their own security.\textsuperscript{131} Thus, although the South Korean government is not openly asking for Japan to remilitarize the growing regional responsibility puts greater demands on the Japanese government. At the very least their need for assistance requires Japan to have some form of military, the current Self-Defense Forces.

2) The Possibility of a Unified Korea

Although there is a clear pressure by South Korea for Japan to have some limited military capabilities the real pressures for remilitarization are indirect. They come from Japan’s fears of what might come from Korean reunification. Currently, the constructive relationship between the governments of South Korea and Japan relies upon the belligerency of the North Korean regime. Still, South Korea’s official policy is to work towards gradual unification with North Korea. This raises the question of whether or not a unified Korea will turn on Japan once the North and South are no longer a burden to each other.

Initial talks for normalization between Japan in South Korea in 1951 only took place because the United States obliged them to do so. The resolution of their problems was necessary for the United States’ Korean War campaign. Thus, the two countries have continued to work towards positive relations because they have been compelled by external forces—North Korea and the United States—to do so, not necessarily because they were self-determined. For South Korea, these renewed ties were never meant to be at the expense of reestablishing ties with the North. Seung Ko, in 1972, pointed out that “A unified and stronger Korea may also serve as an important force countering Japan in East Asia.”\textsuperscript{132} A Chinese foreign policy analyst also stated,

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid, 801.
\textsuperscript{132} Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo,” 169.
Japan, in the eyes of Chinese analysts, strongly prefers the status quo over Korean reunification. The geographic location, historical legacy, and standing disputes...have made the Japanese very sensitive to any changes or new developments in Korea. ‘A united and economically and militarily strong Korea that has deep historical hatred against the Japanese nation’ would necessarily threaten Japan’s security.133

In 1997, a Japanese analyst also wrote,

[Even if Japan were to send its SDF to fight alongside the the Americans helping the ROK against a DPRK attack (as the new Nippon-American security guidelines may imply), the South Koreans would likely turn around and fire at the Japanese troops.134

Although the two countries have renewed their diplomatic relationship several times over, and the government of South Korea has formally accepted Japan’s apologies for their wrongs of the past, the people repeatedly seem bitter and dissatisfied with the Japanese. South Korea remains antagonistic towards Japan for a number of reasons. The two largest are issues relating to historical events and the increasing economic imbalance.

The number of times the Japanese government has apologized, formally and informally, to South Korea for its wartime atrocities is difficult to count. Nevertheless, there are certain issues that the people of China, the DPRK and South Korea continue to bring up when trying to get something out of Japan.135 The key historical issues that remain contentious include “comfort women,” the Yasakuni Shrine, and historical inaccuracies in some Japanese history textbooks. As previously mentioned, during the Japanese occupation of Korea and China, they forced many women into prostitution. These women were referred to as “comfort women” and more than once former Japanese prime ministers, most famously Junichiro Koizumi, have denied that they were forced into their positions. Also, consecutive Japanese prime ministers insist upon visiting the Yasakuni Shrine, a site for mourning war dead. South Koreans argue that, because Japanese

133 Ibid, 178.
traditionally practice ancestor worship, in the process they are venerating the Class A War Criminals who are also laid to rest at the cemetery.\textsuperscript{136} The final issue, the misrepresentation of historical atrocities committed during Japanese imperialism, centers around the fact that the government approved the publication of isolated history textbooks by right-wing groups. Although these texts do not deny the actions of the Japanese they tend to leave out the most vicious details and downplay the severity of the actions by Japanese soldiers. Even though in 1990 the South Korea president stated that, “the apology question was now a closed issue,”\textsuperscript{137} the frequent media coverage suggests that it is not.

Also, while after WWII South Korea also underwent a period of American occupation similar to the Japanese, for a number of reasons such as attacks from the Soviet-occupied North, they did not regain full political freedom quite as soon. Along the same lines, because of the effects of Japanese colonization and the Korean War, they also did not gain the economic momentum of a fully democratized country as quickly. Upon the normalization of relations between South Korea and Japan, an agreement commenced for reparations payments of US$500 million in economic assistance.\textsuperscript{138} Trade relations were also restored, however excessive imports from Japan created a trade imbalance. During this time South Korea was also forced to dedicate a large portion of its budget to defense, while the Japanese still had not made excessive increases to its own military budget. Currently, Japan is South Korea’s second largest import partner and third largest export partner.\textsuperscript{139} In 2003, the trade imbalance between the two countries reached a

\textsuperscript{137} Matake, “Japanese Foreign Policy Toward Northeast Asia,” 244.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid, 241.
Thus, this has been a source of friction for the Tokyo and Seoul for several decades now. These problems together, plus memories of Japanese occupation that have been forgiven but not really forgotten, manifest themselves in a silent rage that renders Japan uneasy.

As one can see, South Korea’s influence on Japanese militarization is two-fold, one is in the interest of collective defense, and the other is in the interest of future security. There is no knowing if or when the Koreas will reunite. Therefore, for the time being, it is in the interest of regional security for Japan to maintain some level of self defense. And, at the same time, government officials realize that in their defense planning they must be mindful of future South Korean–Japanese relations. This mentality can and should be applied to Japan’s security policy for the entire region.

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140 “South Korea’s Trade Imbalance with Japan Ballooning” AsiaPulse News (August 2003): http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_go1523/is_200308/ai_n9065232 (accessed March 1, 2008).
Chapter 6: The Role of the United States in Japanese Remilitarization

The United States and Japan are closely linked as allies, and have been since the signing of the first US-Japanese Alliance. After looking at the key events in the history of the US-Japanese relationship that led to the modernization of the Japanese military and its real rise as an imperialist power, followed by the switch to constitutional pacifism and now their current dynamics which have caused rumors of rearmament to circulate, it is clear that there is one common denominator, the United States. It is evident that if not for the influence of the United States Japanese leaders would not have made integral decisions in the regards to changes in Japanese military policy. Ever since they designed the passivism clause unique to the Japanese Constitution they have directly and indirectly influenced the Japanese progression towards military rearmament. The two ways in which they have directly influenced remilitarization efforts are through changes in the United States-Japan alliance, and in appeals for assistance in Middle Eastern war efforts. Indirectly, they are affecting the changing attitude towards a stronger Japanese military because of declining confidence in the United States, changes in the worldview towards pre-emptive self-defense, and economic gains related to increased military spending.

1) The Contemporary US-Japan Joint Security Alliance

The most obvious way in which the United States has influenced the speed of Japan’s remilitarization is through their security alliance. The United States and Japan signed their first security pact in 1951. This was upgraded in 1960 to become the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan. The purpose of the treaty seemed to be to set guidelines for the protection of Japan and the Far East, and put in writing the permission for the
United States to maintain a presence in Japanese territory. The actual document is very vague with only ten articles, six with substantive content. Still there are some notable statements from the Treaty. Article III, for example requires both parties to, “maintain and develop, subject to their constitutional provisions, their capacities to resist armed attack.”\(^\text{141}\) Although the statement clearly refers to Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, it presumes that Article 9 allows for some action on the part of the Japanese to provide for their own self-defense, albeit in cooperation with the U.S. The following article states, “The Parties will consult together...whenever the security of Japan or the Far East is threatened,”\(^\text{142}\) effectively giving the U.S. and Japan equal responsibility for decisions regarding defense. Article 9, however, is most controversial. It states,

> Each party recognizes that an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional provisions and processes. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.

This Article was the cause of a lot of unrest among the Japanese constituency. It forced the Japanese to accept that a small level of collective defense within Japanese territories would have to be practiced. It clarifies that the safety of American forces in Japan is necessary for the security of Japan. In doing so, it technically circumvented laws prohibiting collective defense, although that made it no less controversial. The treaty does not even define danger, attacks, or threats to security. Therefore, the Japanese were obliged to sign a treaty with very imprecise


terms and only one measure of protection, subjective to equally ambiguous constitutional provisions.

Although the two parties renewed the initial treaty several times, it was in 1997 that the two countries drafted the associated Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation. By providing, “a general framework and policy direction for the roles and missions of the two countries and ways of cooperation and coordination, both under normal circumstances and during contingencies,” the agreement refreshed the Mutual Treaty for Cooperation and Security by clarifying the responsibilities of the United States, and more importantly Japan. These guidelines include many provisions that highlight the primary role of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces, as well as intimate Japan’s broader security obligations, creating a framework for a growing definition of defense. The Guidelines state early, in Article 3, that “Japan will possess defense capability with the scope necessary for Self-Defense.” Within Chapter 2 of the same article, it mentions both parties’ active participation in United Nations Peacekeeping and Humanitarian missions. Although it does not require such participation the inclusion of the statement suggests U.S. expectations for Japan in areas of transportation, medical services, information sharing, education and training. This is particularly interesting because all active participation in such activities by Japan began after the Guidelines were drafted. Upon reading further one can see in Article 4 that there is specific mention of “when an armed attack is imminent.” It specifically states, the two governments “will prepare to respond to activities which could develop into an armed attack against Japan.” Although the document stipulates that they use diplomacy first, it does not rule out the possible need for a preemptive military response. Thus, the United States opened the door for the Japanese to strike first. Also Article 4

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consistently lists Japanese Self-Defense Forces as the primary respondent to armed attacks and other defense situations. Although their responses are required to be coordinated, the United States’ assistance is always supplementary to the SDF, and while it states that the U.S. must introduce reinforcements at the earliest possible stage it does not specify as to what the earliest possible stage is, and what the acceptable reasons for them to hold back are. In regards to “other threats,” the Guidelines indicate that the United States “will support in appropriate ways depending on the situation” without denoting which threats it will or will not respond to. 144 The final obvious example of efforts by the United States to broaden SDF expansion is in Article 5, *Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan*. This article opens up the SDF to involvement that is “not geographic but situational.” It recognizes the right of each party to be involved in relief activities, measures to deal with refugees, search and rescue (in Japanese territory), noncombatant evacuations (including assistance to third party countries), and sanctions. 145 While not requiring participation in any of these activities, their inclusion in the guidelines implies that they are suggested.

It is very clear in reading the Guidelines that the United States has relinquished many of its primary responsibilities for Japan’s defense to the Japanese. By making the Self-Defense Forces the first respondent in all defense situations they have pushed for SDF expansion. In addition, by linking the document to specific optional activities to which the United States is already an active participant, the U.S. government made clear their expectations for Japanese leaders in regards to its foreign and military policy. Although in Chapter 2 of the Guidelines it specifies that the document does not require the implementation of new legislation by either government, “[they] are expected to reflect in an appropriate way the results of these efforts,

144 *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation.*
based on their own judgments, in their specific policies and measures.” The United States applied these pressures knowingly and Article 2 supports this. By including the former statement the United States attempts to avoid the blame for any political decisions the government of Japan is forced to make, while however strongly, expressing their interests.146

In 2005, the role and mission of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces expanded further with the two countries issued the “U.S.-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future,” on October 29, 2005.147 In this document the alliance between the two countries takes on a new character, with regards to international security as well as the security of Japan. It reflects a new focus on international peace cooperative actions, as reflected in the second chapter of Article 2 of the document:

Bilateral cooperation in improving the international security environment to achieve regional and global common strategic objectives has become an important element of the alliance. To this end, the U.S. and Japan contribute as appropriate based on their respective capabilities, and take necessary measures to establish effective posture.148

As in previous statements, the exact nature of Japan’s participation is not fully clear beyond acceptance of greater responsibility at home, and the realignment and relocation of some of U.S. forces out of Japanese territory, leaving the agreement open to much interpretation. However, in the view of one critic, “Given the fused state of strategy and operations, it could be hard for one party to stay uninvolved if the other gets into a conflict. The opinion of the United States regarding the expansion of the Japanese military is obvious from their alliance and its modifications over the years. They have made it necessary for the Japanese government to make

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decisions within their legislature affecting both foreign policy and their approach to defense, while leaving being vague enough to leave room for future reinterpretation.

2) Wars in the Middle East

The next manner in which the United States has pressured the Japanese government to remilitarize relates closely to the US-Japan Alliance. After World War II, as the international community saw that Japan would emerge as an economic power, there were many people who felt that they might eventually use their success to gain the political respect that they might have gained from their imperialistic ambitions in the first half of the twentieth century. Eventually, there were parties, including the United States that expected a country with such economic power to take a greater part in international security. Still, it was not until the Gulf War in the early 90’s that anyone demanded Japan to do so. At the time, they were unsuccessful in passing legislature that would allow Self Defense Forces to even assist in non-combat roles. Instead, they ended up committing $13 billion worth of aid to the Gulf War fund at the insistence of the United States and George Bush, Sr.149

The United States leadership of George W. Bush asked Japan again to commit themselves to assisting in Middle Eastern war efforts after they entered Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. Soon following their first calls for support, the Diet passed the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. This law allowed Prime Minister Koizumi to order the dispatch of six SDF transport aircraft to Pakistan for the delivery of relief supplies to Afghan refugees and ships to the Arabian Sea to provide the United States with limited supplies.150 In 2003, the Japanese government passed the Special Measures Law on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance.

As a result, they eventually sent over 500 soldiers to Samawa, Iraq with the goals of fixing the water supply, handing out medicine, and structural rebuilding. Although they were unable to participate in combat, or even defend forces from other countries participating in similar relief missions,\(^{151}\) it was the first deployment of Japanese ground troops to a war zone under the pacifist regime. Additionally, it is greatly as a result of their immense needs in the Middle East that the United States and Japan went as far as pointing out their common international priorities in the *U.S.-Japan Alliance: Transformation and Realignment for the Future*. There is a certain likelihood that through this document the U.S. hopes to gain more operational support in their efforts in the Gulf region.

3) The Decline of Japanese Confidence in the United States

Often cited in articles discussing modern Japanese attitudes towards remilitarization is the declining confidence in the ability of and motivation for the United States to defend Japan. As previously stated, there exists a grand scale security alliance between the United States and Japan that has formally been in effect since the end of the Cold War and informally since the United States disarmed the country in 1945. Ever since, the United States has been responsible for the defense of the Japanese people under what writers refer to as a security umbrella, or in discussion of weapons of mass destruction, a nuclear umbrella. However in recent years, frequent treaty renewals and supplementary agreements do not seem to provide the same sense of safety and assurance as did past promises. These feelings appear to relate to a couple of different concerns: increasing U.S. defense commitments around the world, the September 11\(^{th}\) attacks on the United States, and differing foreign policy priorities in East Asia.

For as long as the United States has been a country they have been reasonably active internationally, whether in trade or politics. They began making an impression under Theodore Roosevelt after the Spanish-American War, with the launch of their own imperialist aspirations. Their authority reaffirmed itself during the First and Second World Wars, and their reach continues to stretch around the world. This increased involvement has lead to declining confidences in the United States through concerns that their forces are overcommitted and in the end, will only come through for themselves. Today, these worries grow with the number of overseas U.S. military projects. Defense Department numbers indicate that there are over 700 United States bases overseas in more than 130 countries. It is suspected that including secret bases and utilized bases from other countries the number is closer to 1,000. They also have formal defense commitments with fifty countries and there are several more countries with which they have defense ties or strategic interests, not to mention, the United States is a member of the United Nations and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In addition, the first priority listed on the website for the Department of Defense is to win the war on terror, which has led to the commitment of inordinate numbers of troops to Afghanistan and Iraq. It is this widely thinning net that worries the Japanese. Additionally, according to international relations theorist Kenneth Waltz, “beginning in the 1970’s, Japan had increasing doubts about the reliability of the American nuclear deterrent...[just as] Western European countries began to wonder whether the United States could be counted on to use its deterrent on their behalf, thus

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risking its own cities.”\textsuperscript{154} With so many commitments, in the end it is no secret that the most important will remain its own people.

Thus, a second reason that Japan is losing faith in the United States is differing priorities. These worries were felt when the United States first began to move troops from South Korea to Afghanistan before the Gulf War.\textsuperscript{155} Today, there are those that argue that the U.S policies towards North Korea – isolation in particular – are endangering the Japanese people, because they are causing additional belligerency. They feel the United States should have recognized desperate efforts by North Korea to reach out for economic help, but because Japan is dependent on the US military for their defense, they have to stand by their North Korean policies.\textsuperscript{156} Instead of making issues in East Asia a priority, Japanese defense official Masanori Nishi believes, “America’s interest in ‘maintaining regional stability is shaky.’”\textsuperscript{157} The Japanese see U.S. devotion to causes like Iraq. Also, polls such as one by the newspaper Asahi Shinbum show that 60% of Japanese citizens do not support the Iraq war effort.\textsuperscript{158}

When the United States fell victim to terrorist forces on September 11, 2001, in a well-organized and executed plan that killed over 3,000 people, audiences around the world witnessed with shock and terror. It was a surprise to many that it was possible for the largest world power to become the victim---most surprisingly by a non-state actor. It was the first time since Japan struck Pearl Harbor that an attack occurred on United States soil. As a result, the new fear prompted a variety of responses. In Japan, as in many countries, the response was a decline of faith in the United States’ ability to provide them with protection against similar attacks, and a


\textsuperscript{155} Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War,” 53.

\textsuperscript{156} Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 4.

\textsuperscript{157} Waltz, “Structural Realism After the Cold War,” 61.

\textsuperscript{158} Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 4.
reevaluation of their own self-defense capabilities. Additionally, support for revision of Article 9 increased. The desire for greater self-defense resulted in the approval of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Bill less than a month later providing confirmation of these feelings.

4) Economic Gains from Japanese Militarization

Much of the focus on military procurement within Japan is closely related to their strategic relationship with the United States. In addition to their close security relationship, since the Americans first entered Japan there has also been a very close economic relationship. However, the balance of trade never benefited the United States the same way it benefited the Japanese economy, thus there has been a resulting imbalance between the countries for decades. Today, according to trade research done by the U.S. Commercial Service, “The interoperability of military technology and equipment has strongly favored U.S. defense suppliers over European and other third-country suppliers, except for helicopters and aircraft engines.” In other words, one industry through which the United States does make money off of the Japanese is in military parts. The Japanese spare no expense for self-defense weaponry, and their key import partner in this department is the U.S.

As a result of the North Korean threat, in 2005 Japan entered an agreement with the United States to reinvigorate the Star Wars Missile Defense Program. The program, which is worth more than $60 million, was lacking in certain essential technologies that would make it fully functional to the United States. Japan will bring their superior knowledge in certain areas of technology to put the system into working order. This is evidence of not only the very

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159 Ibid, 4.
cohesive relationship between the two powers in terms of military technology, but it shows how the necessity for the success of the Star Wars Missile Defense Program, as well as the continued attempts to expand the functions of the SDF have led to Japanese inclusion in the project. Most importantly, however, they also represent an economic benefit to the United States. By bringing Japan onto the Missile Defense project, the United States has made it possible to cut their own expenses, by dividing them with the Japanese. Even though U.S. companies are not profiting from the technology created by the Japanese, neither is it coming out of the U.S. government’s budget. For example, in 2004, the SDF requested $1.2 billion for missile defense, a significant increase from years before.¹⁶²

Although this is not a formal push on behalf of the United States for Japan to remilitarize, money has always been a valuable part of their alliance—with Japan accepting the responsibility for a large portion of the American military expenses in their country. One can see that the move to remilitarize would only help the United States financially. Thus, with the Missile Defense Project as proof, the United States is happy to allow the SDF forces to take up new realms of responsibility.

5) Preemptive Self-Defense

Another area where the United States has indirectly influenced Japanese military policies is in their understanding of self-defense. This is a result of the United States’ use of a claim to “preemptive self-defense.” In one source, the definition of preemptive self-defense is,

Entitlement to use unilaterally, without prior international authorization, high levels of violence to arrest an incipient development that is not yet operational or directly threatening, but that, if permitted to mature, could be seen by the

¹⁶² Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 2.
preemptor as susceptible to neutralization only at a higher and possibly unacceptable cost to itself.\textsuperscript{163}

According to this author, this relates to the term “anticipatory self-defense” which can point to a “palpable and imminent threat,” but the two are not quite the same. Either way, the Charter of the United Nations which gives the legally accepted specifications for what is and what is not self-defense, does not specifically allow either.\textsuperscript{164}

In their article titled, \textit{The Past and Future of the Claim of Preemptive Self-Defense}, Michael Reisman and Andrea Armstrong propose the idea that because the United States initially utilized the specific term “preemptive self-defense” to justify their actions in the Middle East, they set a precedent allowing similar validation should other countries need to prevent a looming threat.\textsuperscript{165} In making this claim the authors do not say any country’s claim is legal, but instead that because the United States is the topmost military power, their actions have and will be duplicated. This is the case for the Japanese, who passed several new laws and directives after September 11, 2001, which was also the catalyst for the United States’ own actions.

Generally speaking, Japanese Self-Defense legislation does not directly prohibit preemptive strikes. It only says that the SDF must use the minimum force necessary to ensure the security of the country and its citizens. While early legislation makes no mention of cases that might prompt such a response, newer government statements elude to the possibility that such a case could exist. As previously stated, in the new Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation both parties agree to act in response to situations when an armed attack is imminent. Aside from mentioning diplomacy as the first course of action when such a situation arises, the document does not specify the alternative measures they ought to take, nor does it rule out any


\textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
specific possibilities. By specifically mentioning the imminence of an attack, the Guidelines imply anticipatory rather than preemptive responses. However, government officials have delivered verbal statements more specifically addressing a Japanese willingness to make use of their own claim to preemptive actions. In February 2003, for example, Japanese defense minister Shigeru Ishiba stated that “Japan could launch a preemptive strike to defend itself if necessary.” Another official stated that, “attacking North Korea’s missile bases should legally be considered as self-defense.” Israel, Iran, India, France, China, Australia, and Taiwan among other countries, have each taken similar stances to Japan’s since the United States’ claim to a right to preemptive action. This supports the argument that Japan’s own claims are a consequence of the actions of the United States in this regard.

There are many American citizens and government officials who express desires for the Japanese to take responsibility for their own defense, more actively support the United States and return the favor should the American defenses ever be threatened, and accept a more well-rounded international leadership role. Looking at several different factors directly and indirectly linking the United States actions to the Japanese desire to reevaluate their current military plan, one can see that this is more than just public sentiment. In some cases, the government is open about the pressures it is putting on their ally’s leadership, as with the security treaty and its supplementary agreements, and in its request for assistance in Middle Eastern war efforts. Some might be known, but are not vocalized, such as in the economic benefits the U.S. receive from increased Japanese military spending. Still others are completely incidental, such as in the case of preemptive self-defense doctrine and lost confidences. Even so, there is a definite connection

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166 Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 1.
between the actions and influence of the United States and the policy decisions the Japanese government seems to be making towards a more elaborate military.
Chapter 7: Analysis

As previously stated, the exact definition of Japanese “remilitarization” is pretty unclear. To be honest, this is partially because the word itself is somewhat manufactured to describe the process Japan has and will be undergoing to move away from its classification as a pacifist state. Still, because remilitarization is a fairly undefined concept, and more of a process than a result, it is not simple enough to ask, whether or not Japan will do so, how an external actor might react if they do, or even if they should. Instead, one must look again at the many number of different components that realize this categorization. The first and most obvious factor that one must evaluate is Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. In conjunction, there is some associated legislation that ought to be considered. Additionally, analysis of the development and acquisition of nuclear weapons, the expansion of the Self-Defense Forces, and the military’s role internationally are essential to better understanding what Japanese “remilitarization” could mean for the future. By breaking down the concept into these components it is easier to analyze how the key actors influencing the decision might react if Japan were to make certain vital decisions. In addition, by factoring the pressures that have already been identified, and possible reactions, it should be easier to determine how advisable such actions on the part of the Japanese government might be.

1) What does remilitarization really mean?

There is more than one way that the Japanese government can choose to address the problem of Constitutional revision. One would be to rewrite the Constitution altogether, and the other would be to concentrate on Article 9—Renunciation of War. For the sake of this topic, the creation of
an altogether new constitution is not going be taken into account because the reasons for such an extreme action extend well beyond the realm of military or defense, and also because if the government was to take that route, they would still need to decide the fate of Article 9, specifically or a provision like it. One can also look at the specific article in similar terms.

Either the government can choose to take it out, or revise it. Article 9 has two crucial components. The first,

Aspiring to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes,

Has not been challenged forthright. However, the government has directly tested the second chapter,

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of the belligerency of the state will not be recognized,

If Japan was to revise Article 9 instead of delete it, they would likely keep those parts that are not controversial. For example, there is no debate that the country values peace, justice, and order. Also, few would disagree with the statement about the belligerency of the state. However, they would probably address the maintenance of the Self-Defense Forces. In addition, while Japan has not entered into any combat situations since they enacted the Constitution, whether foreign or domestic, they might choose to make more specific, or perhaps more vague, the instances in which war is unavoidable (i.e. self defense) or international intervention is acceptable. To be more clear, by making Article 9 more vague it would be easier for them to manipulate in the future, and would also account for unforeseeable scenarios. Making a decision about how to deal with Article 9 could force the government to also amend coordinating laws, such as the Self-
Defenses Law and/or the law concerning the use of outer space for military uses, to reflect possible changes over acceptable uses of the military.

The second factor that is important to any analysis of a “remilitarized” Japan is the expansion of the armed forces. Currently, the Self-Defense Forces Law restricts the military to the “minimum level necessary to successfully defend the country.” This is a very vague statement, however there was an additional provision passed by the Diet limiting military expenditures to 1% of the country’s GDP, and a restriction on offensive weaponry. The Self-Defense Forces have an air, maritime, and ground divisions, made up of over 240,000 members (approximately the same number as a similarly sized Great Britain). Despite the limit on their defense budget they spend more than all but a few other countries, and have some of the most technically advanced equipment in existence. There are those who argue that this is not enough to defend against armed attacks and that because of a lack of combat experience the SDF is not adequate to defend against a real invasion. Consequently, the decision to further “remilitarize” could mean greater defense spending, and increases in the number of military personnel, and the acquisition of so-called offensive technology.

This leads to the next consideration: development and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. Even if Japan is willing to continue the policy of only utilizing the minimum means necessary to provide self-defense, this does not necessarily exclude nuclear weapons. Countries toting nuclear capabilities surround Japan. In addition to China and North Korea, there are also India and Pakistan to the south. If the government was to revise Article 9 to be more clear about the legitimacy of the use of self-defense, then there is no way to really judge “minimum means.” However, they would need to rescind the Three Non-Nuclear Principles of 1964. Also, it would mean dropping out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, of which they are a vocal signatory,
and the only other country to do so is North Korea. They would be joining the ranks of only six other countries not to be party to the treaty. The expansion of the Self Defense Forces also links to another issue that has led to controversy involving its legality in regards to the current Constitution. This is the participation of the Self-Defense Forces in international efforts. Right now, the Self-Defense Forces are active participants in non-combatant peacekeeping missions through the United Nations and provide logistical support to U.S. forces in the Middle East. Their deployment is questionable because in both cases it is military forces providing more than domestic security, and in the case of the latter, it is directly in support of acts of war. Still, the government has worked its way around these questions. The case of “remilitarization” addresses the unsolved problem of “collective self-defense.” While “collective self-defense” is an important privilege of UN membership, the Japanese consider it a violation of Article 9. As such, even though the SDF are members of United Nations coalitions, they are unable to provide reciprocal protection for their allies working alongside them. Thus, remilitarizing might mean SDF are able to enter combat in defense of non-Japanese citizens.

2) Possible Reactions to Japanese Militarization
As is evident, the “remilitarization” of Japan has many possible facets. Some are inherently connected, while others are not. Thus, analyzing possible reactions of the key parties provoking the Japanese to move towards making any of these key decisions is also more complicated.

The Chinese interest in Japan’s decision to revise article 9 is a consequence of the two countries’ volatile histories. In his article about Chinese “realpolitik”, Tomas Christensen argues that the Chinese are very much concerned about Japanese militarization. However, instead of
recognizing their own role in the matter, they closely tie Japanese militarization to the status of Japan’s relationship with the United States; either the withdrawal of the United States from the region at any level, or further encouragement of Japan’s military excess by the US and Japan’s ultranationalists will be the leading causes of official militarization. Chinese officials identify the potential for Japan’s rearmament as high, and claim it has been Japan’s intention since the end of World War II to regain power and hegemony. According to Christiansen, while Chinese foreign policy analysts recognize that post-World War II cultural pacifism, domestic politics, and economic issues in Japan will stand in the way of militarization, they do not think such roadblocks will remain indefinitely. They “anticipate and fear Japan’s renaissance as a world-class military power in the early 21st century.”

China’s fear has been reflected in the many symbolic battles that the two countries have fought over the years. Former Prime Minister Koizumi’s and others’ visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, where the souls of war criminals, as well as of millions of ordinary soldiers are said to rest, is a source of resentment and the cause of protests by the Chinese. They further object to the toning down in textbooks of some of the Japanese atrocities committed during World War II, and Japan’s bid to become a member of the UN Security Council. Also, the growth of the Japanese “defense” forces has not been lost on the Chinese government.

It is difficult to gauge exactly how the Chinese government would respond if Japan were to remilitarize, however, there are likely to be two possible scenarios, and China’s final reaction is certainly contingent on how far Japan decides to go with its remilitarization efforts: just amending Article 9, or acquiring nuclear weapons. If the former is true, Chinese authorities will probably continue to protest, and use the event as another way to bolster unity within their own

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169 Christiansen, "Chinese Realpolitik," 43
170 Ibid., 38.
country without actually acting in such a way to damage economic ties between the two powers. However, if Japan were to go nuclear, there is the potential that China would feel a real threat and thus act more dynamically.

The first possibility is based on theories about Chinese nationalism discussed in Caroline Rose’s article, ‘Patriotism is not taboo’: Nationalism in China and Japan and Implications for Sino-Japanese Relations. Rose essentially describes the Chinese government as using specific events to direct Chinese feelings toward a common enemy, thus boosting national unity. In her article, Rose states that, “patriotic rhetoric is not necessarily translated into an aggressive foreign policy. In China’s case it is more often aimed at creating the illusion of internal unity in the face of a perceived foreign or domestic threat.”172 The majority of problems between the two countries since World War II have been purely symbolic issues. Accordingly, the response has been essentially all bark and no bite, and overall, most incidents tend to end in cooperation. Rose also cites Downs and Saunders’ economic theories for why the two countries will, for the most part, continue to act passively. Downs and Saunders have suggested that, because the two economies are so intertwined, both governments have been acting in such a way as to maintain bilateral relations. While Japan and China have had the opportunity to act more aggressively, during specific conflicts the Chinese government has taken a moderate stance.173 Along the same lines, according to Yang Bojiang,

China’s next strategic diplomatic task will be to improve its soft power and moral image within the international community [in light of its recent economic growth] to avoid unnecessary obstacles to its continued development. Japan may be helpful to China in this regard because neighboring countries will use China’s relationship with Japan as an important index by which to gauge how China will treat its neighbors during its rise.”174

173 Rose “‘Patriotism is not taboo,’” 178-179.
If this is the case, then acting too strongly in response to Japan’s remilitarization would make the PRC look foolish to the rest of the international community, and provide Japan with additional justification for its belief that it need to compete with China militarily. While there is always the possibility is that China will take action against Japan by cutting diplomatic ties, or putting into place trade barriers, this would be a clear violation of its own policy against mixing business with politics. In 1995, when Japan tried to contain China’s military activity by sanctioning aid, the Chinese responded with the public statement that, “China opposes Japan’s attempt to attach political conditions to the economic cooperation between the two countries because this attempt will harm the healthier development of bilateral relations.”

On the other hand, it is necessary to also consider the possible reactions of China to nuclear expansion in Japan. It is in this case that Japan has reason to worry. According to an annual report to Congress about the military power of the People’s Republic of China issued in 2007, texts from the People’s Liberation Army support the idea of preemptive strikes:

PLA authors describe preemption as necessary and logical when confronting a more powerful enemy. Chinese doctrinal materials stress that static defenses are insufficient to defend territory based on the speed and destructive power of modern forces. As a result, PLA operational concepts seek to prevent enemy forces from massing and to keep the enemy off balance by seizing the initiative with offensive strikes. According to PLA theorists, an effective defense includes destroying enemy capabilities on enemy territory before they can be employed.

The Chinese have proven in the past that they are willing to use this excuse, and one can see now through smaller acts of intimidation against Japan, Taiwan, and other countries in the region that they are not past utilizing military means. The most worrisome issue is China’s own possession of nuclear weapons, and the concern that should they feel so threatened, they might use them.

However, as long as the United States promises to provide its nuclear umbrella, China might be hesitant to use them.

Some suggest that China and Japan would benefit from Japanese militarization, provided the two parties immediately recognize the potential for an arms race, but instead choose to act together when problems arise in the region. If China recognizes the benefit of greater regional security, and Japanese militarization does not lead to development of a nuclear program, then an active response to amending the constitution would not be likely.

As one of the biggest security threats to the country, in contemplating remilitarization, Japan must consider possible reactions by North Korea. It seems that for North Korea to initiate a war against Japan for Constitutional revisions that would only legalize actions the government already committed would be very risky. It would place them in a dangerous position towards the United States, the allied partner of Japan. The United States has already named North Korea part of the “axis of evil” and shown what they might do to Kim Jong Il when they invaded Iraq and ousted Saddam Hussein. One way in which to forecast possible North Korean reactions is to look at past experiences. One previous example would be when the government of Japan stopped trade and admission of North Korean ships into Japanese ports after the 2006 nuclear test. Even though North Korea claimed they would consider Japan’s response to be an act of war, they did not follow through with retaliatory attacks. Whether this was fear at the involvement of the United States or was just an idle threat it is difficult to determine. Another instance that might give some insight into the future reactions of Kim Jong Il is their most recent dispute with South Korea. Recently, the new South Korean president, Lee Myung-bak, warned North Korea that their continued economic investment would be contingent upon the North’s successful

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177 Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 81.
178 Arase, 576.
disarmament. This is a rapid change from previous policy that used economic aid as a tool for building positive relations between the two countries. Unfortunately, North Korea has responded with very hostile terms. Not only did they expel South Korean workers from joint business operations, but they shot off short range missiles. North Korean air force jets have been flying dangerously close to the border, and North Korean officials have insulted and warned the government of South Korea. One very serious statement made a North Korean newspaper was, “The Lee regime will be held fully accountable for the irrevocable catastrophic consequences to be entailed.” This was after the previous threat, “Everything will be in ashes, not just a sea of fire, if our advanced pre-emptive strike once begins,” already made by the Korean Central News Agency. However, this is much like how the North Korean government acted in the early 90s when the North Korean government made similar threats without actually following up with military strikes. These past incidents give an example of how Kim Jong Il might respond to dramatic moves by the Japanese. If the trend holds true then they are most likely to counter with hostile statements and threatening offshore acts by the military. There is no pattern for actions more serious than harassment.

However, one of the most agreed upon characteristics of the North Korea government is that it is unpredictable. With a long list of historical resentments towards their neighbor, Pyongyang’s relationship with Japan is not significantly better than it is with the U.S. North Korea stated in 2003 that they recognize their own right to preemptive self-defense, and threatened that “North Korea was entitled to launch a preemptive strike against U.S. forces rather

181 Choe, “North Korea Threatens to Reduce South Korea to ‘Ashes’ at the Slightest Provocation.”
than wait until the American military was finished with Iraq.”\textsuperscript{182} It would be no surprise to learn that they would extend this threat to include Japan, especially since they are the United States’ close ally and the home to American military bases. Fortunately, the most recent nuclear missile tests were not successful enough for North Korea to use them against Japan.

In the opinion of two University of Kyoto professors, “the best way for Japan to avoid being the target of North Korean nuclear missiles is for the prime minister to declare without delay that Japan will arm itself with nuclear weapons.”\textsuperscript{183} However, based on the little conclusive evidence that exists, and on their geographic proximity, the ability of North Korea to actually invade it seems that there is a risk that North Korea would actually strike preemptively if Japan were to announce seriously an intention to develop nuclear weapons. Japan’s technological superiority is very obvious, and their ability to produce nuclear weaponry quickly would be no surprise. This risk will likely increase should North Korea successfully detonate a nuclear weapon in the meantime.

Another factor to consider when analyzing possible reactions by Pyongyang, to remilitarization in Japan is their economic relationship. This is important in two ways. Depending on the reliance of either party on the trade, either North Korea could respond with economic sanctions or other barriers to trade, or they could opt against damaging their trade partnership. Economically, North Korea is not reliant on Japan for trade. This is because they like to believe that they are self-reliant. Although there has traditionally been an exchange of goods between the mainland and a North Korean trade cooperative in Japan, in response to after North Korea conducted nuclear tests in 2006, the Japanese government forbade all North Korean ships, goods, and citizens from entering Japanese territory. Also, in the past, Japan was one of

\textsuperscript{182} Reisman, 546.
\textsuperscript{183} Matthews, 4.
the largest aid donors to North Korea by way of the KEDO agreement, but considering the most recent actions by Pyongyang in violation of the terms of the original Joint Declaration, the status of any aid to the country is as unstable as its leadership. Thus, North Korea does not have anything to lose in terms of its economic relationship with Japan were it to respond by reacting violently, nor does it have anything to gain by cutting ties.

It appears that South Korea has already come to accept Japanese SDF participation in international relief efforts. In 1995, a public opinion poll in South Korea reflected that more people in South Korea support Japan’s participation in future PKO missions worldwide. This was a large difference from their feeling in 1991. However, that has not altered their feeling that, “Japan’s recent moves to expand its military role pose the greatest threat to East Asia security.” During Koizumi’s leadership, South Korean officials, including the head of state opined that “as long as [Japanese] support for the United States complies with their pacifist constitution we will not take issue with the matter.” Fortunately for Japan, if they choose to revise their constitution and expand their military capabilities, South Korea will probably not react dangerously, and negative responses would likely alter after Japan displays that it can act responsibly within its new regulations. This is evidenced by the necessity of their current relationship with Japan and examples of their ability to work through disagreements before.

As mentioned earlier, part of the pressure on Japan to remilitarize is the new responsibilities it has in working with South Korea towards security in the common maritime territory. Thus, the South Korean government can not ignore that a greater ability to defend Japan also means a greater ability to support the South Korean government against North Korean maritime threats. This has heightened since the recent expulsion of South Koreans from joint

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184 Midford, “Japan’s Response to Terror,” 342-343.
185 Ibid, 347.
186 Ibid, 347.
business ventures in a common zone between North Korea and South Korea. The newest leader of South Korea seemed to place disarmament of North Korea as a higher priority than reunification, when he told Kim Jong Il that future development of the common economic zone would not be possible without progress in denuclearization—the incident that spurred the expulsion. By making denuclearization such a high priority, South Korean leadership recognizes the imminent threat of an unstable neighbor. With Korean ties growing apart rather than together, the South will need a remilitarized Japan as an ally as opposed to an enemy.

On a smaller scale, South Korea and Japan have been active trade partners since their normalization. Japan is South Korea’s second largest importer after China. They are also still receiving aid and reparations payments from the Japanese government for the imperialist period. Were they to cut ties they would endanger this necessary income. So far, in other disputes it has been possible for the two countries to peaceably resolve their problems. For example, South Korea and Japan have a standing territorial dispute over the Takeshima/Tokdo islands. Although the South Korean government initially reacted to Japan attempts to approach the islands by sending out gunboats to intercept them, the two governments have since opted to both withdraw from the area until they can come to a settlement over the dispute.\footnote{Arase, “Japan, the Active State?,” 578.} Also, in 2001, in response to Koizumi’s visit to Yasukuni Shrine Seoul cancelled planned military cooperation, but allowed exercises to resume in 2003.\footnote{Midford, “Japan’s Response to Terror,” 344-349.} Even though this took longer to resolve, it is still evidence that the two countries can work out their issues diplomatically given time. Taking into account the many apologies the Japanese government has offered for their past transgressions and the South Korean government’s repeated acceptance of these apologies, their ability to handle their worries...
about Japan’s military ambitions in a diplomatic fashion would prove that they really are willing to move on.

Like in the case of China and North Korea, if Japan were to announce a decision to acquire nuclear capabilities South Korea would probably have stronger reactions. This could mean cutting diplomatic ties or applying sanctions. However, because of the current security of South Korea, it would be unforeseen for them to act militarily. They would lose a defense against North Korea, and since there would not actually be an immediate threat to South Korea if Japan had nuclear capabilities, they would not have the support of the United States, a further ally of Japan.

Out of all the external players pushing Japan towards remilitarization, the United States is the only one that would genuinely like for it to occur, and thus would respond positively to nearly any decision made by the Japanese. As has been shown, the United States has been actively campaigning for a more active Japanese military. This a reflection of both the government and the public opinions, and has been since the Gulf War, when, according to Midford, “the United States House of Representatives voted 370 to 53 to start withdrawing troops from Japan unless Tokyo increased its ‘burdensharing’ if contributions to the U.S.-Japan alliance.”\(^\text{189}\) More recently in 2004, Colin Powell said,

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\text{If Japan is going to play a full role on the world state and become a fully active participating member of the Security Council, and have the kind of obligations that it would pick up as a member of the Security Council, Article 9 would have to be examined in that light.}\(^\text{190}\)
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This is in spite of the many Peacekeeping Operations that the Self-Defense Forces have participated in, and after Japanese leadership made it possible for the SDF to provide logistical support in Afghanistan and assist in rebuilding efforts in Iraq. The United States’ would

\(^{189}\) Midford, “Japan’s Response to Terror,” 334.
\(^{190}\) Arase, “Japan, the Active State?” 572.
congratulate Japan on the revision of Article 9, because an expanded military and a broader definition of their abilities would allow them to focus less on security in the East Asian region and mean additional support in overseas missions.

The only scenario in which the United States would be unsupportive is if Japan announced a plan for developing and acquiring nuclear weaponry. Currently the United States is widely recognized as a deterrent for conflict in East Asia. Although they would welcome greater responsibility by Japan in providing security against North Korea and China, their analysts who are even better equipped to predict the dangerous responses of Japan’s neighbors to their acquisition of nuclear weapons ought to know that it could radically affect the greater peace and stability of the region. Still, even though they would disagree with a move by Japan to announce such a controversial plan it is more likely that they would treat Japan as they do Israel, an ally who refuses to release the actual status of their nuclear program. There is also the chance that while the U.S. would verbally oppose this kind of announcement by Japan, they would not necessarily disagree with their possession of nuclear weapons. Again, as in the case of Israel, it would provide them with another potentially nuclear ally in another strategic area. Still, this latter proposition is purely exploratory.

3) Advisability of Remilitarization

After studying the historical background, the current provocations, and the resultant potential reactions of the key parties influencing Japan’s decision, it is possible to discuss the advisability of any level of Japanese remilitarization. As it stands the most important issue for the Japanese government and public to talk about is Article 9. To reiterate, the Japanese will have two options for dealing with the constitutional provision concerning the ‘Renunciation of War,’: scrapping it
altogether, or revision. Article 9 and the "pacifism" that it confers upon the people of Japan is a form of national pride. Moreover, it proclaims to the world the position of Japan. Considering the negative history that Japan has with China and the Koreas that they are unable to distance themselves from, it seems to be important to repeat that the Japanese over mission is to strive for international peace, and their official position is 'anti-war.' Even with all of the security threats pressuring Japan to reexamine their military, the Japanese continue to renounce the uncalled for provocations of its neighbors. It is because they do not recognize a country's right to belligerency or an offensive war that they understand it is their right to defend themselves. While these may seem like insubstantial statements, Article 9's symbolism in contemporary Japan is much like the symbolic figure of the emperor. They both remind the people of their past and what led them to be who they are now, while at the same time exhibiting it to the world. Therefore it is important that Japan does not lose these crucial aspects of their national identity.

However, the rest of Article 9 ought to be revised. As it stands the greater part of Japanese society and the international community recognize that in creating much of the legislation post-WWII involving national defense, Japan's leaders sidestepped Article 9 and relied on its lack of specificity. In order to for the Japan to be able to successfully maintain all aspects of the SDF and continue their good works, they cannot tiptoe any longer. By taking the steps necessary to allow for self-defense in the Constitution, they will make this possible. Since amending the Constitution for changes to Article 9 will not actually change much in terms of the scope of the military, it will not directly affect any of the neighboring countries. Instead, it will act as Japan's voice in telling its threatening neighbors that they have accepted the responsibility for their own defense, and thus cannot be threatened by words or small deeds. Taking the step to making self-defense a constitutional right will give the SDF some backbone in dealing with
future provocations. Because it does not seem to be in the best interests of China or South Korea to do more than bark about a written change that reflects activity that began decades ago, there should be little worry about the response. The support of the United States, who also does not want to risk further problems with North Korea, will likely help ensure that this decision will not further heighten the security risk of Pyongyang.

As a result of these revisions, there will need to be some editing of additional legislation. It is at this time that the government needs to decide the fate of former Prime Minister Miki Takeo’s limit on military spending, and thus the expansion of the SDF. As it stands, 1% of Japan’s GDP has provided them with one of the world’s largest military budgets. As an archipelago, air and maritime forces are always going to be most important, and at present they have arguably the most technologically advanced maritime forces. Their total number of personnel is about the same as the United Kingdom, a geographically similar country. Although Matthews argues, “combat readiness requires experience with warfare and high risk training. Japan has had neither for 60 years, and as a result, its troops can barely deal with natural disasters such as earthquakes, let alone foreign armies,” his support for the statement is lacking. It is unfair to make this judgment, after even the United States, the country with the world’s highest military power, was unable to successfully respond to the natural disaster, Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans is still picking up the pieces. Also, the United States has made offers to allow members of the SDF to train at bases in the United States. This would allow them a variety and level of training that they cannot get in Japan. Thus, it does not seem necessary to greatly expand the budget for the self-defense forces, and legislature such as Takeo’s will ensure that it does not ever get out of control, or that Japan is taken advantage of by the United States or

Matthews, “Japan’s New Nationalism,” 3.
regional allies for its security budget. Also, it will satisfy neighbors who are concerned about the future ambitions of the military.

Already Japan has faced and overcome criticism from its neighbors at the expansion of its SDF into peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. After seeing that Japan’s assistance did not lead to imperialism in the host countries, China and South Korea accepted that Japan can fulfill peaceful responsibilities overseas. In “The Rising Sun Slowly Sets,” Yoel Sano identifies all of the major conflicts where Japan has been absent: “Israel-Palestine, India-Pakistan, the former Yugoslavia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Sudan or Indonesia.” However, he fails to mention all of the PKO missions and rebuilding projects where Japan is and was present. Through the revision of Article 9 and the appropriate legislation, Japan needs to ensure that such projects continue. In the process, they also need to reaffirm the mission stated in the Preamble of their Constitution,

> We believe that no nation is responsible to itself alone, but that laws of political morality are universal; and that obedience to such laws is incumbent upon all nations who would sustain their own sovereignty and justify their sovereign relationship with other nations.

Since the creation of the Constitution, Article 9 has taken precedence over this important message. As Japan remilitarizes, they need to constantly remind themselves and their global audience, that these ideals are also central to the people; they need to stress that their pacifism is not isolationism. It is key, however, that also they secure the right to collective self-defense in UN peacekeeping missions, and allied humanitarian work. Until they do, there will not be equality between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and their international colleagues. It is critical that Japan earns the respect for their efforts so that they will be recognized as a leader.

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This should be reflected in all aspects of Japan’s foreign policy, particularly in regards to participation in international organizations and the United Nations. After, North Korea shot missile over Japan in 2006, the Japanese government Japan took a “course of uncharacteristic activism in the UN, calling for a Security Council meeting and offering a draft Security Council resolution under chapter 7 of the UN Charter to check the North’s missile development.”\footnote{194} This is an example a way they should propose solutions to problems, instead of initiating their own conflicts. This is the kind of leadership that will project a non-threatening, and at the same time un-intimidated image to its provocateurs.

Finally, it is not advisable for the government of Japan to announce nuclear ambitions, or to decide now that it is in their interests to develop a nuclear weapons program. As one can see, it is likely to incite a dramatic response by all of its neighbors. Even the United States, the biggest supporter of Japan’s remilitarization, is not likely to stand by their side on such a decision. In 1967, former Prime Minister Sako Eisaku pledged \textit{Three Non-Nuclear Principles}: no possession, production, or introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan.\footnote{195} Unfortunately, since then, time and time again Japanese officials comment about the relationship between nuclear weapons and the Constitution, and the country’s nuclear capabilities. While former Prime Minister Koizumi was one of the most recognizable Japanese politicians to push for increased military strength, it is the current prime minister, Yasuo Fukuda, who in 2002 argued that Article 9 does not reference nuclear weapons, and prominent politician Ichiro Ozawa, presently head of Japan’s Democratic Party, who stated “Japan could counter any Chinese threat by producing ‘three to four thousand nuclear warheads. ... If we get serious, we will never be beaten in terms

\footnote{194}{Arase, “Japan, the Active State?” 576.}  
\footnote{195}{Arase, “Japan, the Active State?” 564.}
These are very risky statements for a party to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty to make. The number of similar comment made by other members of the government over the years cause Japan to look suspiciously guilty about their nuclear capabilities, as Greenpeace pointed out in 2002. This is dangerous when Japan has neighbors such as China, a nuclear power, and North Korea, a rogue state, who both claim the right to preemptive action, and historic vengeance. They ought to reiterate their confidence in their alliance with the United States and the protection granted by the NPT. If, by chance, Japan already has nuclear weaponry, they should maintain their silence. The last thing they need is to be lumped into the delinquent company of North Korea, as an NPT dropout.

197 Ibid, 3.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

In today’s global world, where internationalization is symbol of growth and success, it is imperative that Japan address the issue of their remilitarization as it relates to its peers. In examining the relevant histories, current pressures, and possible reactions of China, North Korea, South Korea and the United States as they influence Japanese remilitarization it is clear that while Japan must move forward in remilitarizing, they cannot do so without limitations, and nor at the expense of their Constitution’s honor and mission.

Although Article 9 currently bars against Japan’s right to go to war or possess military forces that can start a war, the country presently does maintain a military—the Self Defense Forces—in the conventional sense. In addition, they have passed legislation making it possible for them to assist in overseas humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, and provide support for the United States in anti-terrorism projects. Thus, the SDF has been represented in Iraq, Afghanistan, and East Timor, among others. The over 240,000 military personnel serving in the SDF and $40 billion devoted annually to the physical protection of the country are evidence that the government's official interpretation of Article 9’s restrictions, that they can retain the minimum level of armed strength necessary to ensure the safety of the populace, is not very limiting. Their leadership has permitted Japan to have the same or, as in most cases, better military capabilities than other sovereign countries, despite being the one country to have such a strong legal commitment to pacifism. It is questionable what physical changes would even come from revision of Article 9, or if these changes—outside of acquiring nuclear weapons—would indeed strengthen their military much more.
Still, it is obvious that the official decision to revise the Constitution would more than raise a few eyes. The Koreas and China continue to view Japan as the imperialist aggressor who abused their people years ago. Japan’s treatment of the Koreans when they first forced them to sign a treaty much like the treaty the US imposed on Japan in the 19th century and later when they turned them into a colony is engrained in their minds. Their attempts to dominate the Chinese, when they were at their weakest, in an effort to be more like Western powers, and their absolute inhumane disrespect of civilian Chinese in the process, resulted in a modern resentment towards the Japanese. While Japan has apologized for the crimes they committed, both countries continue to bear a grudge for small memories of the negative history, through arguments over issues like textbooks and comfort women. All three countries have stated fears that Japan will return to its former imperialist persona and the revision of the Japanese constitution would only act as evidence to them of this.

Nevertheless, China, North Korea, and South Korea fail to recognize their own roles in Japanese remilitarization. In the case of China, their resentment of Japan and much of the rest of the world is manifesting itself in dangerous provocations towards the Japanese. Their government continues to increase military spending, growth, and development, as well as exploration in areas outside of their own territory. They are addressing their energy deficiencies by stirring up trouble in the East China Sea, and tend not to appreciate efforts by the Japanese government to resolve their issues, as in the case of aid. Additionally, their questionable allegiances only add to the threatening front they present for Japan. Along the same lines, North Korea’s military development is extremely menacing. Their refusal to dismantle their nuclear program is alarming and the recklessness with which they “test” their weapons, considering their proximity to Japan is frightening. Their unwillingness to cooperate, as seen also in talks over the
abduction of Japanese nationals, is another danger, as is their relationship with China and the overall fragility of the country and its leadership. South Korea, although averse to Japanese rearmament, has benefited from it. However, were the Koreas ever to reunify, there remains a chance that they might turn back on all the positive steps that have occurred in their relations with Japan since normalization, possibly with a newfound confidence, as well. These are all dangers that are impossible for Japan to ignore.

Furthermore, the Japanese relationship with the United States has continuously pushed them towards revision of their Constitution. It is quite possible that the United States regrets that they included Article 9 in the Japanese Constitution at all. Now, it almost seems as if they are trying to distance themselves from many of the problems in the East Asian region by passing some of the responsibility for regional security to Japan. Historically, the United States has played a big part in some of the most crucial changes to Japanese military methodology. Now, specific changes in the roles of both the United States and Japan in their long running security relationship are transforming the very nature of their partnership, necessitating further Japanese military involvement. Also, the Japanese participation in many of their overseas missions is a result of direct and indirect pressures from the United States. Despite greater cooperation between the two countries in these departments, the Japanese’s confidence in the United States’ ability and willingness to protect them should any of their neighbors’ threats come true, is dwindling. Not to mention, the United States’ posture on preemptive action has influenced China, North Korea, South Korea, and Japan. These changing policies towards preemptive activity in Japan’s neighboring states directly affected Japan’s own policies.

The future decisions of Japan are likely to produce forceful reactions from each of these very involved neighbors. The reactions of each of these countries are vital considerations for the
Japanese government and its constituency in deciding the fate of Article 9 and future growth for their Self-Defense Forces. Fortunately, the growing economic bond between China and Japan and Japan’s interdependency with South Korea in terms of security make it unlikely that either country will respond in such a way that would risk long-term damage to relations with Japan, especially if Japan was to only formally change the identity of the Japanese military. North Korea might react more strongly with additional missile testing and more hostile incursions into Japanese territory. Similar questionable decisions by the Japanese government have resulted in similar reactions by each of these countries. However, there is a significant chance that if Japan was to announce a plan for developing a nuclear program or acquiring nuclear weapons, that any one of these party’s governments would take more serious action, including revoking diplomatic relations and even attacks. Similarly, the United States would probably not react positively as such a decision would affect security in the region, possibly requiring their involvement during a time when they are already stretched very thin. In the end, when considering the external side of this debate, Japan will have to weigh the dangers from the parties pushing them towards militarization with their potential reactions.

As the pressures posed by China, North Korea, South Korea, and the United States exhibit, the biggest reason behind Japan’s progression towards remilitarization is insecurity. They are alarmed by North Korea because of their unpredictable violence and South Korea because of their indecision. They are concerned about the Chinese as a result of their reckless and bullish attitude. Finally, they are anxious about the United States because of their necessary withdrawal and eagerness to make use of Japan’s future. As a result, the advisability of Japan’s remilitarization is contingent on its ability to address these fears. In a sense, the whole issue of a
remilitarized Japan is somewhat symbolic; if Japan were to revise Article 9, there would be few immediate changes, to a great extent that is the problem.

In order to face China, North Korea, South Korea and the United States, Japan needs to be honest with itself. This means realizing that they already made the decision to remilitarize therefore their Constitution should reflect it. They have to recognize that their goal is not power in the hegemonic sense, it is international respect and the authority that comes with leadership. To the same token, they do not need to follow a predefined path to get there. Instead, they need to utilize their own mission and character to create a new path to their goal. This means reclaiming the commitment to the lessons they learned from their mistakes in the first half of the twentieth century: remember the importance of international unity, which was forgotten behind Article 9, without doing the same to their pacifist ideals in the process. Oftentimes people forget that to be pacifist does not mean one has to be passive. Thus, in 2005, when the nationalist politician and Tokyo governor Ishikara Shintaro observed, “...regional tensions and uncertainties may finally stimulate Japan to emerge from its futile passivity and become a strong nation,”¹⁹⁸ the deeper meaning is greater than his surface references to global power. His statement reflects the importance of active leadership, hopefully through example. In this way, the Japanese can respond to the future provocations with the highly advanced tools at their disposal.

¹⁹⁸ Arase, “Japan, the Active State?” 560.
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