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Nuclear Weapons in Japanese Strategic Culture

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN JAPANESE STRATEGIC CULTURE

A Master's Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of

Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science, Defense and Strategic Studies

By

Logan Campbell

May 2023

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN JAPANESE STRATEGIC CULTURE

Defense and Strategic Studies

Missouri State University, May 2023

Master of Science

Logan Campbell

ABSTRACT

Acquiring nuclear weapons of its own has been inconsistent with Japan's post-Cold War strategic culture, which is heavily based on an identity and associated norms grounded in nuclear pacifism. However, Japan's strategic culture has been evolving with changing threat perceptions, eroding international nuclear nonproliferation norms, and declining confidence in US security guarantees. As Japan's strategic culture shifts towards a more pragmatic interpretation of its national interests, acquiring nuclear weapons may become a more easily legitimized option, one that would be entirely consistent with a remilitarized strategic culture. Scholarship on Japanese strategic culture is vast but lacks a strategic culture explanation for why contemporary Japan would pursue nuclear weapons. Pre-1945, Japan was an inward-oriented militaristic state. Post-1945, Japan became an outward-oriented pacifist state following its defeat in the Second World War. Japan rejected having its own nuclear weapons in congruence with pacifism and improving international relations to aid in the survival of the Japanese state. Japan relies on US extended nuclear deterrence for protection, but Japan's confidence in US security guarantees is decaying. As the US perceivably declines, Japan's security environment is becoming more hostile. If Japan decides to pursue developing nuclear weapons for domestic security, strategic culture can explain Japan's decision due to the factors of nuclear latency, interpretation of article 9 in Japan's constitution, Japan's adherence to the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (PNWT), and Japan's confidence in US security guarantees. The previously mentioned factors may force Japan to adapt its pre-1945 strategic culture for the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons to ensure the survival of Japan.

KEYWORDS: Japan, strategic culture, nuclear weapons, pacifism, remilitarization, nuclear latency, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, US security guarantees

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In the interest of academic freedom and the principle of free speech, approval of this thesis indicates the format is acceptable and meets the academic criteria for the discipline as determined by the faculty that constitute the thesis committee. The content and views expressed in this thesis are those of the student-scholar and are not endorsed by Missouri State University, its Graduate College, or its employees.

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CHAPTER 1: STRATEGIC CULTURE

Introduction

Japanese strategic culture experienced an expedient change following its defeat in World War Two. After Japan lost the Second World War in 1945, the United States imposed a pacifist strategic culture onto Japan. Japan's pacifist strategic culture was tested in the 1950s and failed. With the US military occupation of Japan ending and the looming threat of the Korean War expanding into Japanese territory, Japan's strategic culture could not remain pacifist. This section will explore Japan's venture into remilitarization and where Japanese strategic culture began to change from pacifism to remilitarization.

Japan's defeat in World War Two led to a change in culture. Once an aggressive imperial militaristic power, Japan is now a pacifist democratic unitary state. Japan's newly adopted paradigm after the Second World War bled into all facets of its culture, including strategic culture. Strategic culture is a sub-set of culture and is defined by Kerry Longhurst (Professor and Deputy Head of the Department of International Relations and Sustainable Development at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw) as, "a distinctive body of beliefs, attitudes, and practices regarding the use of force."¹ Japan's strategic culture became defensive to orient itself towards its broader pacifist culture. Two major effects of Japanese strategic culture were Japan rejecting having a conventional military force and developing its own nuclear weapons. Article 9 of the Japanese constitution states, "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.

¹ Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, "The Test of Strategic Culture: Germany, Pacifism and Pre-Emptive Strikes," *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 3 (2005): 341, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26298963>.

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.”²

However, the beginning of the Korean War in 1950, and the end of Japan’s occupation by US military forces in 1952, left Japan vulnerable. ³ In 1950, General Douglas MacArthur ordered Japan to create a National Police Reserve Force (NPRF) and of 75,000 men and expand the Maritime Safety Agency’s Personnel by 8,000.⁴ The purpose of the NPRF was to maintain public order, but after the US occupation of Japan ended in 1952, Japan realized the NPRF was not equipped for domestic defense against foreign adversaries. The National Safety Forces was created in 1952, combining the NPRF and the Coastal Safety Force into one agency.⁵ However, Japan’s NSF was still not an adequate defensive force; something more ‘military-like’ was needed. Reinterpreting Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution allowed Japan to create the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) in 1954 to serve as its defensive force against foreign adversaries.⁶ Over time, the JSDF evolved from a quasi-military force to a fully defensive capable modern conventional military force. Japan’s transition from the creation of a domestic lightly armed National Police Reserve Force in 1950 to the small ‘military-like’ JSDF in 1954, to a modernized conventionally armed JSDF with advanced military capabilities in the contemporary era, indicates a shift in Japanese strategic culture.⁷

² *The Constitution of Japan*, Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html.

³ Arakawa Ken-ichi, “The Cold War and the Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force,” *Army History*, no. 41 (1997): 14, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26304379>.

⁴ Ken-ichi, “Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force,” 10.

⁵ Ken-ichi, “The Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force,” 10.

⁶ Ken-ichi, “The Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force,” 10.

⁷ Ken-ichi, “The Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force,” 10.

Japan's Three Non-Nuclear Principles, established in 1967 are, "not possessing, not introducing, and not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons."⁸ The Three Non-Nuclear Principles were a Cabinet policy statement in 1967 based on Japanese Prime Minister Kishi's commitment to nuclear pacifism.⁹ Like Japan's subtle transition from the NPPR to the JSDF due to security concerns, Japan is beginning to show signs of wavering on its commitment to nuclear weapons pacifism due to security concerns. Japan is threatened by North Korea's development of nuclear weapons, China's military advancement, Russia's aggressive behavior in the Eastern hemisphere, and a shift in the global power balance. Japan is considering hosting US nuclear weapons, has not joined the PNWT, and has insinuated Article 9 is not preventative to the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons.¹⁰ Furthermore, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles are not forced by law.¹¹ Japan may be incentivized to pursue the development of nuclear weapons due to its increasingly hostile and volatile security environment. Japan's incentives to consider pursuing or developing nuclear weapons can be evaluated through an assessment of Japan's strategic culture, including factors of nuclear latency, interpretation of Article 9 in Japan's constitution, Japan's compliance with the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty, and Japan's confidence in US security guarantees. These factors must be weighed against Japan's strategic culture of self-

⁸ "Three Non-Nuclear Principles," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/nnp/index.html#:~:text=My%20responsibility%20is%20to%20achieve,line%20with%20Japan's%20Peace%20Constitution.>

⁹ James E. Auer, "Article Nine of Japan's Constitution: From Reunification of Armed Force 'Forever' to the Third Largest Defense Budget in the World," Duke University, *Law and Contemporary Problems* 53, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 178, <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4046&context=lcp>.

¹⁰ "Japan can Hold Nuclear Arms for Self-Defense: Govt," Reuters, January 19, 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-nuclear/japan-can-hold-nuclear-arms-for-self-defense-govt-idUST4792620061114>.

¹¹ Gregory Kulacki, "Does Japan have Nuclear Weapons," Union of Concerned Scientists: The Equation, May 1, 2020, <https://blog.ucsusa.org/gregory-kulacki/does-japan-have-nuclear-weapons/>.

defense and the renouncement of nuclear weapons. The genesis of Japanese strategic culture begins with inputs/sources, which influence Japan's way of war.

Inputs of Japanese Strategic Culture

Japan's strategic culture experienced three distinct phases: isolationist and non-military, militarist, and outward-oriented and non-military.¹² After World War Two, Japan transitioned from a militarist strategic culture to an outward-oriented and non-military strategic culture; contemporary Japanese strategic culture is still outward-oriented and non-military. Security challenges may force Japan to evolve its strategic culture once more into a strategic culture that resembles its past. Examining the inputs of Japanese strategic culture is critical to understanding the outputs/manifestations of Japanese strategic culture.

History.

Early Era. The Jomon Period (10,000 – 300 BCE) marks the beginning of the neolithic culture that arrived in Japan; scattered non-ethnically homogeneous hunter and gather communities dominated what is known as contemporary Japan.¹³ The Yayoi Period (300 BC – 250 CE) supplanted Jomon culture due to Chinese and Korean immigrants carrying influence from mainland Asia.¹⁴ During this period, rice production, advanced pottery techniques, the use of bronze, and social structures began to emerge, but there was no central authority yet.¹⁵

¹² Andrew L. Oros, "Japan's Strategic Culture: Security Identity in a Fourth Modern Incarnation?" *Taylor and Francis Online*, no. 2 (2014): 227 – 248, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/13523260.2014.928070?scroll=top&needAccess=true&role=tab>.

¹³ "Japan: Jomon Period (10,000 – 300 BCE)," University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/jomon-period-10000-bce-300-bce>.

¹⁴ "Japan: Yayoi Period (300 BCE – 250 CE)," University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/yayoi-period-300-bce-250-ce>.

¹⁵ University of Pittsburgh, "Yayoi Period."

Classical Era. The Yamato Period (250 – 710) and the Nara Period (710 – 784) are the beginning of central governance in the Yamato Province and the introduction of Buddhism and Confucianism from the Korean kingdoms.¹⁶ Taiki Reform in the Yamato Period reorganized Japanese culture based on learning imported from China, which not only included Buddhism and Confucianism, but also writing systems, bureaucratic organization, and legal theories.¹⁷ The first permanent capital was established at Nara during the Nara Period, and Japanese administrations and institutions emerged.¹⁸ The Heian Period (794 – 1185) is one of the culturally richest periods in Japanese history; the samurai/bushi class emerged, Murasaki Shikibu’s *Tale of Genji* and Sei Shonagon’s *The Pillow Book* was created, art moved away from Chinese style ink paintings to the colorful yamato-e style, and Waka poetry was developed.¹⁹ Court aristocracy began to distinguish Japanese culture as unique by producing masterful bodies of literature and refining societal aesthetics.²⁰

Medieval Era. The Kamakura Period (1185 – 1333) is the beginning of military rule, with Samurai replacing nobles as rulers of Japan; this period was the start of pervasive militarism in Japanese culture.²¹ After the Taira clan was defeated in the Genpei war near the end of the Heian Period, power shifted to the victor, Minamoto no Yoritomo. He declared himself shogun (military emperor) and reduced the imperial court to functionally a ceremonial role.²² War

¹⁶ “Japan: Yamato Period (250 – 710),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/yamato-period-250-710>.

¹⁷ “Japan – Timeline of Historical Periods,” Columbia University – Weatherhead East Asian Institute, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/japan_timeline.htm.

¹⁸ Columbia University, “Historical Periods.”

¹⁹ “Japan: Heian Period (794 – 1185),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/heian-period-794-1185>.

²⁰ Columbia University, “Historical Periods.”

²¹ “Japan: Kamakura Period (1185 – 1333),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/kamakura-period-1185-1333>.

²² University of Pittsburgh, “Kamakura Period.”

became increasingly prevalent during the Ashikaga Period (1336 – 1568).²³ The shogun, Ashikaga Takauji, established a Northern Imperial Court to wage war against the Southern Imperial Court, with the Northern Imperial Court emerging victorious.²⁴ War as a means of achieving power began to solidify as militarism in Japanese culture, leading to the Warring States Era (1467 – 1573).²⁵ This era occurred within the Ashikaga Period and was the result of daimyo (feudal lords) fighting for greater provincial control.²⁶ Persistent war plagued Japan, until the daimyo, Oda Nobunaga, and his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, brought order during the Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 – 1600).²⁷ Peace continued during the Tokugawa Period (1600 – 1867) where Japan experienced the most stability in its premodern history.²⁸ Military rule unified the country, leading to literature, artistic, and economic innovations.²⁹

Modern Era. The Meiji Period (1868 – 1912) begins with the collapse of the Tokugawa shogunate after the defeat of the Tokugawa loyalist in the Boshin War (1868 – 1869) and the restoration of the imperial court under Emperor Meiji.³⁰ Imperial Japan expanded northward into Korea, Taiwan, and half of the Sakhalin.³¹ Emperor Meiji modernized Japan to compete with Western powers and avoid the fate of China (China’s “century of humiliation”).³² The Taisho Period (1912 – 1926) started with the death of Emperor Meiji and his son, Taisho, inheriting the

²³ “Japan: Ashikaga Period (1336 – 1568),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/ashikaga-period-1336-1568>.

²⁴ University of Pittsburgh, “Ashikaga Period.”

²⁵ University of Pittsburgh, “Ashikaga Period.”

²⁶ University of Pittsburgh, “Ashikaga Period.”

²⁷ “Japan: Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1568 – 1600),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/azuchi-momoyama-period-1568-1603>.

²⁸ “Japan: Tokugawa Period” (1603 – 1868),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/tokugawa-period-1603-1868>.

²⁹ Columbia University, “Historical Periods.”

³⁰ “Japan: Meiji Period (1868 – 1912),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/meiji-period-1868-1912>.

³¹ University of Pittsburgh, “Meiji Period.”

³² University of Pittsburgh, “Meiji Period.”

position of Emperor.³³ Emperor Taisho contracted cerebral meningitis as an infant, and by 1919 was unable to fulfill official duties; his son served as a regent soon after.³⁴ Emperor Taisho's inability to govern as a strong central figure resulted in power shifting from the imperial court to the Diet (kokkai).³⁵ Consequently, there was a rise in the power of political parties and democracy.³⁶ During this period, Japan participated in WWI as part of the Allied powers. Japan seized German territory in East Asia and improved its military capability as the war progressed.³⁷

Following WWI, the beginning of the Showa Period (1926 – 1989) was a stark contrast to the democratic Taisho Period.³⁸ Michinomiya Hirohito became Emperor by ascending to the Chrysanthemum Throne.³⁹ Emperor Hirohito made significant changes to Japan. He aggressively pursued expansionism and joined the Axis powers at the start of WW2 in 1941 to assist in his Imperialist goals. His aspirations were supported by a strong pro-imperial and pro-military sentiment in the Japanese government.⁴⁰ Additionally, Japanese exceptionalism and imperial divinity were given codification in Kokutai no hongi (“Cardinal Principles of the National Polity”).⁴¹ By 1942 though, Japan's territorial gain during WW2 was halted at the Battle of

³³ “Japan: Taisho Period (1912 – 1926),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/taisho-period-1912-1926>.

³⁴ Ethan Segal, “Meiji and Taisho Japan: An Introductory Essay,” University of Colorado Boulder, 2015, <https://www.colorado.edu/ptea-curriculum/becoming-modern/meiji-and-taisho-japan-introductory-essay>.

³⁵ “Japan: Taisho Period (1912 – 1926),” University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/taisho-period-1912-1926>.

³⁶ University of Pittsburgh, Taisho Period.”

³⁷ Amon Kiilleen, “Japan's Victory in World War 1,” *Naval History Magazine* 35, no. 3 (June 2021): 339–359, <https://www.usni.org/magazines/naval-history-magazine/2021/june/japans-victory-world-war-i>.

³⁸ “Japan: Showa Period (1926 – 1989). University of Pittsburgh. <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/showa-period-1926-1989>.

³⁹ “Japan: Showa Period (1926 – 1989). University of Pittsburgh.

⁴⁰ “Japan: Showa Period (1926 – 1989). University of Pittsburgh.

⁴¹ “Japan: Showa Period (1926 – 1989). University of Pittsburgh.

Midway, and by 1945, Japan was crippled after a devastating loss at the Battle of Okinawa.⁴² Japan was forced to surrender after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki a few months after the Battle of Okinawa⁴³ Japan's defeat as the "aggressor" in WW2, revolutionized Japanese culture. Japan moved from militarism to pacifism. In the Postwar Period (1954 – Present), Japan became/is outward-oriented and developed a strong economy.⁴⁴ However, Japan carries the weight of an ancient strategic culture that is foreign to its current one. Its ancient strategic culture may arise out of a need for survival in the contemporary and future eras.

Ideology. Within strategic culture, ideology is a set of beliefs, ways of thought, or paradigm that provides a foundation for action on the use of force; it is a conceptual scheme with practical application.⁴⁵

Pre-1945. Since the Meiji period, Japan was governed under a religio-political system based on State Shintoism.⁴⁶ Japanese oligarchs in the 19th century reformed Shinto (The Way of the Gods) into a state religion.⁴⁷ State Shintoism was the worship of the emperor and the idea of the Japanese people being "of one mind and one spirit"; cultivated fervent nationalism.⁴⁸ Bushido (Way of the Warrior) was ideologically significant in State Shintoism. Although the

⁴² Megan Tzeng, "The Battle of Okinawa, 1945: Final Turning Point in the Pacific," *The History Teacher* 34, no. 1 (2000): 95, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3054378>.

⁴³ "Japan: Showa Period (1926 – 1989). University of Pittsburgh.

⁴⁴ "Japan: Postwar Period (1945 – Present)," University of Pittsburgh, <https://www.japanpitt.pitt.edu/timeline/postwar-period-1945-present>.

⁴⁵ "Ideology", Oxford Reference, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095956722;jsessionid=B140E99E1FCDC74822B8FB452A211486>.

⁴⁶ Naokon Kumada, "Theocracy vs Constitutionalism in Japan: Constitutional Amendment and the Return of Pre-War Shinto Nationalism," *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies*, no. 310 (May 2, 2018): ii, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19931>.

⁴⁷ "State of Shinto," GlobalSecurity.org, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/japan/shinto-3.htm>.

⁴⁸ GlobalSecurity.org, "Shinto."

samurai class was formally eliminated in the Meiji period, Bushido lived on to reinforce loyalty to the emperor and Japan.⁴⁹ The modern concept of Bushido was birthed by Inazo Nitobe in 1899, in his book, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*. Nitobe transformed ethical norms for samurai into an ethical code akin to the Western notion of chivalry but for Japanese society.⁵⁰ The ethical codes of Bushido are rectitude, courage, benevolence, politeness, honesty, honor, and loyalty.⁵¹ Bushido permeated Japanese culture, being referred to as the “religion” of Japan by Kaite Nakariya (a Japanese author during the Meiji period).⁵²

Post-1945. In 1945 after Japan’s defeat in World War Two, General Douglas MacArthur and the General Headquarters of the Allied Forces issued the “Shinto Directive”; the directive was an order to abolish “Governmental Sponsorship, Perpetuation, Control, and Dissemination of State Shinto (Kakka Shinto, Jinja Shinto).⁵³ Constitutional monarchy replaced State Shintoism and reduced the emperor to a mere figurehead.⁵⁴ Contemporary Japan resembles Western Democracy, carrying on the constitutional monarchy thrust upon them, but older Japanese ideology remains and is even growing in Japanese culture. Nationalism is prying Japan away from strong US influence and towards the interest of Japan.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ “The Modern Re-invention of Bushido.” Columbia University.
<http://www.columbia.edu/~hds2/chushinguranew/Bushido/reinvention.htm>.

⁵⁰ Columbia University, “Re-invention of Bushido.”

⁵¹ Hiroshi Nishigori, Rebecca Harrison, Jamiu Busari, and Tim Dornan, “Bushido and Medical Professionalism in Japan,” *Academic Medicine*, vol. 89, no. 4 (April 2014): 560–63,
<https://doi.org/10.1097/acm.0000000000000176>.

⁵² Cameron G. Hurst, “Death, Honor, and Loyalty: The Bushidō Ideal,” *Philosophy East and West* 40, no. 4 (1990): 513, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1399355>.

⁵³ Susumu Shimazono, “State Shinto and the Religious Structure of Modern Japan,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73, no. 4 (2005): 1078, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4139766>.

⁵⁴ “Occupation and Reconstruction of Japan, 1945-52,” Department of State – Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/japan-reconstruction>.

⁵⁵ Lalima Varma, “Japanese Nationalism: Response to Changing Regional and International Environment,” *China Report*, vol. 43, no. 1 (July 26, 2016) 57–68,
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000944550604300104>.

Religion. Religion can be categorized as an ideology that provides a foundation for metaphysical, non-material, or “supernatural” realities, which informs a strategic culture on its most sacred values.

Pre-1945. Shinto was the native religion of pre-literate society in Japan before the sixth century C.E. and entailed worshiping *kami* (deities).⁵⁶ Kami could be natural objects, such as trees, rivers, mountains, etc., or humans.⁵⁷ There was no formal doctrine and often existed as various forms of folk beliefs, but did have rituals and shrines.⁵⁸ The goal of Shinto was to facilitate harmony between humanity and kami.⁵⁹ Shinto was mostly related to nature and community but did form the basis for emperor deification and worship; Japanese leadership used Shinto to legitimize itself and justify war.⁶⁰

Buddhism arrived in Japan during the sixth century C.E.⁶¹ Japanese scholars learned of Buddhism through studying Chinese Buddhist texts, and were attracted to Buddhism because of its art, magic, and opportunity to form a closer relationship with China.⁶² Japan absorbed Buddhism into State Shinto.⁶³ The influx of Buddhism into Japan was accompanied by advancements from China and Korea, leading to a period of modernization in Japan, especially practices related to medicine.⁶⁴

Confucianism entered Japan during the sixth century C.E., and like Buddhism, was

⁵⁶ Paul Watt, “Japanese Religions,” Stanford University – Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education, October 2003, https://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/japanese_religions.

⁵⁷ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁵⁸ Kuroda Toshi, James C. Dobbins, and Suzanne Gay, “Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 7, no. 1 (1981): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.2307/132163>.

⁵⁹ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶⁰ Kuroda, Dobbins, and Gay, “Shinto in Japanese Religion,” 15.

⁶¹ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶² Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶³ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶⁴ Anna Andreeva, “Buddhism and Medicine in Japan,” Oxford Bibliographies, May 26, 2022, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780195393521/obo-9780195393521-0255.xml>.

discovered by Japan through its exposure to China and Korea.⁶⁵ This Chinese religion emphasized the importance of family, loyalty, and duty. Confucianism progressively spread throughout Japanese culture, until it was accepted as an ideology of the state during the Tokugawa Period.⁶⁶ Neo-Confucianism arose during the ninth century C.E. and was the controlling ideology of the Tokugawa government.⁶⁷ This new form of Confucianism emphasized hierarchy, roles, and responsibilities within society.⁶⁸ In Japan, Neo-Confucianism acted as a hierarchal system to encourage loyalty and obedience to Japan and its rulers.⁶⁹

Christianity was introduced to Japan in the sixteenth century C.E. and was met with strong resistance; the exclusivism of Christianity could not be blended into State Shinto like Buddhism and Confucianism.⁷⁰ Christian virtues were counter to State Shinto, upholding that human divinity and ultimate authority is with Jesus Christ only. Japanese rulers feared that Christianity would subvert their authority, leading to Christianity being outlawed in Japan from 1603-1887.⁷¹ Christianity was perceived skeptically as a “foreign Western religion”, and still is

⁶⁵ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶⁶ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶⁷ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁶⁸ Xuanting Mao, “Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, and Social Order: Transformation of Korean Society from Koryo to Choson,” University of California – Korean History Digital Museum, <https://koreanhistory.humspace.ucla.edu/items/show/36>.

⁶⁹ Mary Evelyn Tucker, “Religious Aspects of Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Thought of Nakae Tōju and Kaibara Ekken,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 15, no. 1 (1988): 55–69, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30234101>.

⁷⁰ Watt, "Japanese Religions."

⁷¹ Megumi Watanabe, “Modern Diffusion of Christianity in Japan: How Japanese view Christianity,” (Master’s thesis, Hawaii University, August 2004), 9, <https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/54867942-b912-4897-ad24-87b8aa4e2275/content#:~:text=Generally%2C%20the%20Japanese%20view%20Christianity,wit h%20their%20own%20cultural%20traditions.>

to an extent in contemporary Japan.⁷² Japan's rejection of Christianity demonstrates its commitment to State Shinto and the "Japanese way."

Post-1945. According to the US government in 2021, Japan's population identifies with the following religious affiliations: 88.9 million Shinto followers (48.6 percent), 84.8 million Buddhists (46.3 percent), 1.9 million Christians (1 percent), and 7.4 million adherents of other religious groups (4 percent); the category of 'other' and nonregistered religious groups includes Islam, the Baha'i Faith, Hinduism, and Judaism.⁷³ Most immigrants identify with religions other than Buddhism or Shinto.⁷⁴ When asked about religious belief, 62% of Japanese citizens identify with having no religious belief.⁷⁵ Religion in Japan is more so a general set of customs, traditions, and guidelines for life, rather than a worldview or paradigm.

Demographics / Education / Health of the Population / Economy.

Demographics. Japan's population size is 125, 507, 472 with a growth rate of -- 0.1%.⁷⁶ The urban population is 91.3%.⁷⁷ Population in major urban areas are: "TOKYO (capital) 37.217 million; Osaka-Kobe 11.494 million; Nagoya 3.328 million; Fukuoka-Kitakyushu 2.868 million; Sapporo 2.742 million; Sendai 2.428 million."⁷⁸ Japan is comprised of 98.5% Japanese, 0.5%

⁷² Watanabe. "Christianity in Japan," 9.

⁷³ "Japan 2021 International Religious Freedom Report." United States Department of State – Office of International Religious Freedom. 2021. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/JAPAN-2021-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf>.

⁷⁴ United States Department of State, "Japan Religious Freedom Report."

⁷⁵ Chara Scroope, "Japanese Culture: Religion," Cultural Atlas, 2021, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/japanese-culture/japanese-culture-religion>.

⁷⁶ "Japan Demographics." Country Reports.

<https://www.countryreports.org/country/Japan/population.htm>.

⁷⁷ Country Reports, "Japan Demographics."

⁷⁸ Country Reports, "Japan Demographics."

Korean, 0.4% Chinese, and 0.6% other.⁷⁹ The official language of Japan is Japanese; nonverbal communication is emphasized.⁸⁰

Education. Japan is a highly educated country. Tertiary attainment level (highest level of education, by age group) among 25-64 year-olds is the highest recorded by the Organization for Economic Co-operative Development (OECD).⁸¹ Additionally, Japan is ranked first in the OECD in the following: level of short-cycle tertiary attainment among 25-34 year-olds, the share of 25-34 year-olds who achieved a bachelor's degree or education equivalent, enrolment rate of 6-14 year-olds, enrolment of 3-5 year-olds in early education.⁸² Over 95% of Japanese are literate, and students consistently rank among world leaders in international mathematics tests.⁸³

Health of the Population. Low birth rates and an aging population are the two biggest concerns.⁸⁴ The fertility rate is 1.367 births per woman.⁸⁵ Those 65 and older comprise about one-third of the population.⁸⁶ A low fertility rate and an aging population can reduce Japan's workforce, economic growth, domestic stability, and overall strength of Japan.⁸⁷ Japan has a high

⁷⁹ Country Reports, "Japan Demographics."

⁸⁰ Country Reports, "Japan Demographics."

⁸¹ "Japan: Overview of the Educational System (EAG 2022)," Organization for Economic Co-operative Development, 2022,

<https://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=JPN&treshold=10&topic=EO>.

⁸² Organization for Economic Co-operative Development, "Japan Educational System."

⁸³ Lucien Ellington, "Japanese Education," Stanford University – Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education, 2005, https://spice.fsi.stanford.edu/docs/japanese_education.

⁸⁴ "Demographic Overview," Japan Health Policy NOW, <http://japanhpn.org/en/demographic/>.

⁸⁵ "Japan Fertility Rate 1950-2023," Macrotrends,

[https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/JPN/japan/fertility-](https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/JPN/japan/fertility-rate#:~:text=The%20current%20fertility%20rate%20for,a%200.07%25%20decline%20from%202020)

[rate#:~:text=The%20current%20fertility%20rate%20for,a%200.07%25%20decline%20from%202020](https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/JPN/japan/fertility-rate#:~:text=The%20current%20fertility%20rate%20for,a%200.07%25%20decline%20from%202020).

⁸⁶ Japan Health Policy Now, "Demographic Overview."

⁸⁷ "Goal E: Improve our Understanding of the Consequences of an Aging Society to Inform Intervention Development and Policy Decisions," National Institute on Aging,

[https://www.nia.nih.gov/about/aging-strategic-directions-research/goal-society-](https://www.nia.nih.gov/about/aging-strategic-directions-research/goal-society-policy#:~:text=Societal%20aging%20can%20affect%20economic,of%20chronic%20disease%20and%20disability)

[policy#:~:text=Societal%20aging%20can%20affect%20economic,of%20chronic%20disease%20and%20disability](https://www.nia.nih.gov/about/aging-strategic-directions-research/goal-society-policy#:~:text=Societal%20aging%20can%20affect%20economic,of%20chronic%20disease%20and%20disability).

life expectancy, at 91.35 for females and 84.95 for males.⁸⁸ Other than low fertility rates and an aging population, the Japanese population is healthy.

Economy. Japan is stable and has consistently strong economic power. In 2023, its economic freedom score is 69.3, making it the 31st freest economy in the world; ranked 6th in Asia.⁸⁹ Japan's GDP is \$5.6 trillion (ranked third in the world) with \$44, 739 per capita and a – 0.2% 5-year compound annual growth.⁹⁰ Its unemployment is 2.8%, inflation is –0.3% and public debt is 262.5%.⁹¹

Geography / Climate / Natural Resources / Environmental Concerns.

Geography. Japan is composed of primarily four islands that extend along the Pacific coast of Asia; islands from north to south are Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu (includes an additional 300 smaller islands).⁹² The total land area of Japan is about 378,000 kilometers. Japan's territory is heavily forested and mountainous, with about two-thirds of Japan being covered in forests and mountains.⁹³ Geopolitically, Japan is a strategic location in northeast Asia for Western and Eastern powers.⁹⁴

Climate. All four seasons are experienced with few temperature extremes due to the inland of Japan being no more than one hundred miles from the coast. ⁹⁵ Japanese territory has a subtropical (Okinawa, southern island) and subarctic (Hokkaido, northern island) climate,

⁸⁸ Japan Health Policy Now, “Demographic Overview.”

⁸⁹ “Japan,” Heritage – 2023 Index of Economic Freedom, 2023, <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/japan>.

⁹⁰ Heritage, “Japan.”

⁹¹ Heritage, “Japan.”

⁹² “Japan Geography,” Country Reports, <https://www.countryreports.org/country/Japan/geography.htm>.

⁹³ “Japanese Territory,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, https://www.mofa.go.jp/territory/page1we_000006.html#:~:text=The%20territory%20of%20Japan%20comprises,Kyushu%2C%20and%20other%20smaller%20islands.

⁹⁴ Country Reports, “Japan Geography.”

⁹⁵ Country Reports, “Japan Geography.”

facilitating a diverse ecosystem of plant and animal life.⁹⁶

Natural Resources. Japan has minimal natural resources, other than fish.⁹⁷ Consequently, Japan is the largest importer of coal and liquified natural gas, and the second largest importer of oil.⁹⁸ Trade is vital to Japan; 90% of its energy requirements are imported.⁹⁹

Environmental Concerns. Volcanoes, earthquakes tsunamis, and typhoons are Japan's primary natural environmental concerns.¹⁰⁰ Man-made environmental concerns include air pollution and nuclear radiation. Air pollution from power plants causes acid rain, leading to the acidification of lakes and reservoirs; natural resources such as water, fish, and timber are degraded.¹⁰¹ Other than energy imports, Japan relies on nuclear power reactors for domestic power. In 2011, an earthquake-triggered tsunami damaged the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactor, causing a significant release of radiation.¹⁰² The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear incident temporarily impacted wildlife and theoretically increased the risk of thyroid cancer.¹⁰³ Severe public backlash forced Japan to reduce reliance on nuclear power reactors; fifty-four reactors supplying 30% of power in 2011 were reduced to thirty-three reactors supplying 5-10% in 2023.¹⁰⁴ Japan's nuclear reactors pose a risk, albeit a smaller risk, for a similar Fukushima Daiichi nuclear incident.

⁹⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japanese Territory."

⁹⁷ Country Reports, "Japan Geography."

⁹⁸ Country Reports, "Japan Geography."

⁹⁹ "Nuclear Power in Japan," World Nuclear Association, January 2023, <https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-g-n/japan-nuclear-power.aspx>.

¹⁰⁰ Country Reports, "Japan Geography."

¹⁰¹ Country Reports, "Japan Geography."

¹⁰² "Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station Accident," UNSCEAR 2013 Report, United Nations, <https://www.unscear.org/unscear/en/areas-of-work/fukushima.html>.

¹⁰³ United Nations, "Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station Accident."

¹⁰⁴ "Japan's Nuclear Power Plants," Nippon.com, March 10, 2020, <https://www.nippon.com/en/features/h00238/japan%E2%80%99s-nuclear-power-plants.html#:~:text=On%20March%202011%2C%202011%2C%20there,of%20the%20country's%20electric%20power.>

Hostile and Friendly Neighbors.

Hostile Neighbors. China, Russia, and North Korea are Japan's primary neighboring adversaries. China and Japan increasingly view each other negatively. In 2016, 87% of Japanese viewed China as unfavorable.¹⁰⁵ China's military advancement and aggression toward Japan have increased since 2016, and China desires to absorb Taiwan (a Japanese ally) as a Chinese territory.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is alarming for Japan, as it demonstrates Russia's willingness for conflict to protect security interests; Japan and Russia have competing security interests and share a historically contentious relationship. Russia, allegedly in response to Japanese sanctions, has increased military exercises near Japan.¹⁰⁶ Russia also has close relations with China.

North Korea's relationship with Japan is deteriorating, not only due to North Korea's close relationship with China but also because of its nuclear weapons and missile development.¹⁰⁷ Another point of contention is North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens during the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁰⁸ North Korea's hostile acts, such as firing an intermediate-range ballistic missile over the Japanese archipelago on October 3, 2022, strain Japan–North Korean relations.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Bruce Stokes, "Hostile Neighbors: China vs Japan," Pew Research Center, September 13, 2016, <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2016/09/13/hostile-neighbors-china-vs-japan/>.

¹⁰⁶ "Top Risks of 2023: Implications for Japan," Eurasia Group, January 3, 2023, <https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/Top-Risks-2023-Implications-for-Japan>.

¹⁰⁷ Rachel Blomquist and Daniel Wertz, "An Overview of North Korea-Japan Relations," The National Committee of North Korea, October 2022, <https://www.ncnk.org/resources/briefing-papers/all-briefing-papers/overview-north-korea-japan-relations>.

¹⁰⁸ Blomquist and Wertz, "North Korea-Japan Relations."

¹⁰⁹ Victor Cha, Ellen Kim, and Andy Lim, "North Korea Tests Missile over Japan," Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 5, 2022, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/north-korea-tests-missile-over-japan-0>.

Friendly Neighbors. South Korea and Taiwan are Japan's primary neighboring allies; the Philippines is a growing ally of Japan. South Korea and Japan are both major non-NATO allies, but their relationship with each other has been ambiguously friendly. Events in their shared history have caused disputes, such as Japan's colonization of South Korea and forcing South Koreans to serve Japan during World War Two.¹¹⁰ However, South Korea and Japan are rebuilding their relationship over concerns about North Korea's nuclear weapons program and China's geopolitical goals.¹¹¹ As of 2023, South Korea-Japan relations are improving; South Korea may become Japan's strongest neighboring ally.

Japan does not recognize the Republic of China in Taiwan as a legitimate government and has a policy of "working relations on a nongovernmental basis" towards Taiwan.¹¹² Japan has avoided outright support for Taiwan to avoid increasing tension with China.¹¹³ As of 2022 though, Japan has sent active-duty military attaché to its representative office in Taiwan.¹¹⁴ Taiwan is strategically significant for Japan and the United States and is emerging as a key neighboring ally for Japan.

In 2016, the Philippines and Japan signed a defense agreement allowing for the "transfer of defense equipment and technology from Japan to the Philippines; it also provides for the Philippines and Japan to conduct joint research and development, and even joint production, of

¹¹⁰ Frank Aum, "Mended Ties between Japan and South Korea would Boost Regional Security," United States Institution of Peace, July 28, 2022, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/07/mended-ties-between-japan-and-south-korea-would-boost-regional-security>.

¹¹¹ Aum, "Japan and South Korea Regional Security."

¹¹² Sabrina Shaffer, "Why Japan needs to talk to Taiwan," Foreign Policy Research Institute – Asia Program, September 15, 2022, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/09/why-japan-needs-to-talk-to-taiwan/#:~:text=Since%201972%2C%20Japan%20has%20not,a%20military%20response%20with%20Taiwan.>

¹¹³ Shaffer, "Japan needs to talk to Taiwan."

¹¹⁴ Shaffer, "Japan needs to talk to Taiwan."

defense equipment and technology.”¹¹⁵ In 2023, the Philippines and Japan agreed to further strengthen ties, by considering a, “visiting forces agreement”, in which Japan could, “send troops to the Philippines for disaster response and military drills.”¹¹⁶ The Philippines is a strategic partner for Japan and the United States for containing China.¹¹⁷

Outputs of Japanese Strategic Culture

Inputs of Japanese strategic culture influence the outputs of Japanese strategic culture; inputs are the ingredients, and the outputs are the final product. Understanding the outputs in identity, values, norms, and perceptual lens in Japanese strategic culture provides insight into future Japanese intentions.

Identity. Identity is how a nation perceives itself and comprises character traits a state embodies.¹¹⁸ Japan’s security identity is pacifist and “anti-militaristic”; exemplified in Japan revoking its right to use force in settling international disputes.¹¹⁹ Japan no longer wants to identify with its militaristic past, which is why Japan does not have a “normal” military

¹¹⁵ “The Philippines and Japan Sign New Defense Agreements,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 15, 2016, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/philippines-and-japan-sign-new-defense-agreement>.

¹¹⁶ Cliff Venzon, “Philippines, Japan pledge to Deepen Security and Economic Ties,” Nikkei Asia, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Philippines-Japan-pledge-to-deepen-security-and-economic-ties>.

¹¹⁷ Gregory B. Poling, Andreyka Natalegawa, and Danielle Fallin, “Building a US - Japan – Philippines Triad,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 1, 2023, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/building-us-japan-philippines-triad>.

¹¹⁸ Jeannie L. Johnson, “Strategic Culture: Refining the Theoretical Construct,” Defense Threat Reduction Agency – Advanced Systems and Concepts Office, Department of Defense, October 31, 2006, 11, <https://irp.fas.org/agency/dod/dtra/strat-culture.pdf>.

¹¹⁹ Matthew Brummer and Eitan Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands: Strategic Culture and Japan's Use of Force in International Disputes as Depicted in Ministry of Defense Manga Promotional Materials,” *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* 13 (2022): 91, muse.jhu.edu/article/851421.

posture.¹²⁰ Instead, Japan identifies as a “peace state” or “civilian power.”¹²¹ Congruent with Japan’s pacifist security identity, is Japan’s portrayal of the JSDF as “protective and reliable.”¹²² As the JSDF becomes closer to a fully functional military force, Japan emphasizes the defensive nature of its military posture. Japan’s seemingly paradoxical security identity as a pacifist yet increasingly militaristic defensive force, is causing uncertainty for Japan’s role in the international arena. Japanese are proud to be Japanese, but their pride is like “power without a purpose.”¹²³ In other words, Japan is a “great power that refuses to act like one.”¹²⁴ Japan’s identity is pacifism with defensive militarism (belief in maintaining a strong defensive force). In the future, Japan may move further along the militarism spectrum, embrace offensive military capabilities, and identify closer with its past strategic culture.

Values. Values are prioritized ideological factors within a state.¹²⁵ As per Japan’s security identity, Japan values pacifism.¹²⁶ Additionally, Japan values competitive success, pragmatism, and prudence.¹²⁷ On the Hofstede scale, Japan scores 95/100 for masculinity (competitive success), 92/100 for uncertainty avoidance (pragmatism), and 88/100 for long-term orientation.¹²⁸ Japan strives to be successful and is motivated to be the best. Its uncertainty avoidance within a competitive culture is expressed as pragmatism; finding the best solution with the least ambiguity. Masculinity and uncertainty avoidance contribute to Japan's long-term

¹²⁰ Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 91.

¹²¹ Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 91.

¹²² Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 98.

¹²³ Masaru Tamamoto, “The Ideology of Nothingness: A Meditation on Japanese National Identity,” *World Policy Journal* 11, no. 1 (1994): 89, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40209352>.

¹²⁴ Tamamoto, “The Ideology of Nothingness,” 89.

¹²⁵ Johnson. “Strategic Culture,” 12.

¹²⁶ Scroope, “Japanese Culture: Religion.”

¹²⁷ “Country Comparison: Japan,” Hofstede Insights, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/japan/>.

¹²⁸ Hofstede Insights, “Country Comparison: Japan.”

orientation. The desire to be successful and avoid uncertainty motivates Japan to be prudent. For Japan, being future-oriented is about getting ahead of the competition, fostering prosperity, and securing its existence. The JSDF embodies Japanese values and is portrayed as good and socially desirable to associate with because the JSDF will “contribute to the peace and security of Japan and the world.”¹²⁹ The expanded size, power, and capability of the JSDF are a symptom of Japan’s core values. Japan values greatness and the pragmatism of defending greatness. The JSDF, as an extension of Japan’s values, may evolve over time to fulfill its role as a defender of Japan.

Norms. Norms are acceptable behavior and practices.¹³⁰ For use of force, acceptable behavior is cooperation with the United States and using violence only when necessary for defensive purposes; for outcomes of a conflict, successful protection of Japanese lives entails victory, and failure to protect Japanese lives entails a loss (e.g. inability to intercept ballistic missiles); for social norms, Japanese citizens must be willing to defend Japan and appreciate those who defend Japan.¹³¹ The norms of pacifism and defensive militarism is creating tension in Japan. Japan is described as “abnormal” because of the discrepancy between its great power status versus its relatively weak military capability.¹³² Its constrained defensive posture is held back from expanding military capabilities due to lingering pacifism Security environment challenges are forcing Japan to reconcile the tension between the competing norms of pacifism and having a capable military force. Should Japan choose to meet its security challenges with

¹²⁹ Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 101.

¹³⁰ Johnson. “Strategic Culture,” 12.

¹³¹ Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 99-100.

¹³² Linus Hagstrom, “The ‘Abnormal’ State: Identity, Norm/Exception and Japan,” SAGE – *European Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 1(March 2015): 122-145, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5897917/>.

remilitarization, new norms will form to support less pacifism and more militarism for the safety of Japan.

Perceptual Lens. Perceptual lens is the paradigm through which states perceive reality.¹³³ Japan perceives its security environment as “increasingly diverse, complex, and hostile.”¹³⁴ China’s military activities, the buildup of Russian forces in the vicinity of Japan, and North Korea’s nuclear weapons program are perceived as threats.¹³⁵ According to Japan, China is a large powerful country that doesn’t observe rules, and North Korea is an ambiguous, rough, and unfair country.¹³⁶ Amidst the Ukraine crisis, territorial disputes, and Russian relations with China, Japan is skeptical of Russia.¹³⁷ Japan generally views states aligned with the United States as favorable (South Korea, Taiwan, Philippines, Western Europe, ect.) and those opposed to the United States as unfavorable or hostile (China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, ect.). Japan relies on the United States for protection, so a weakened United States is a national security risk for Japan. Consequently, anything that harms the strength of the United States or the Japan-United States relationship, is perceived as a threat to Japan.

Japanese Nuclear Deterrence for Japanese Security

The inputs and outputs of Japanese strategic culture have molded Japan into a pacifist state yearning to remilitarize for the existential security of Japan. The pull towards

¹³³ Johnson. “Strategic Culture,” 13.

¹³⁴ Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 101.

¹³⁵ “Security Environment Surrounding Japan,” Japan Ministry of Defense, https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/sec_env/index.html.

¹³⁶ Brummer and Oren, “We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands,” 102.

¹³⁷ Yoko Hirose, “Japan-Russian Relations: Can the Northern Territories Issue be Overcome?,” Center for Strategic and International Studies – Strategic Japan, 1-18, https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/180402_Strategic_Japan_Yoko_Hirose_paper.pdf?hYrXAqS45pW4vaKWsrE7ZNbqvbfI CkWN.

remilitarization originates in impending security concerns related to China, Russia, and North Korea; each state's activity has signaled potentially hostile intent towards Japan. However, remilitarizing might not be enough for Japan. Nuclear deterrence, via Japanese nuclear weapons, could be Japan's answer to its security environment concerns.

Japan's Security Environment.

China. China is advancing its military capacity and activities in sea and air space without transparency.¹³⁸ Chinese Coast Guard Law is ambiguous and problematic for Japan. China does not define "maritime areas under Chinese jurisdiction" and will take "all necessary measures, including the use of weapons" to defend its maritime jurisdiction.¹³⁹ China's sea and air forces activity in the East China Sea, Pacific Ocean, and Sea of Japan are intensifying and will likely continue to intensify.¹⁴⁰ In the East China Sea, Chinese naval and air forces are expanding the area of regular activities, and the number of air force scrambles is trending upward.¹⁴¹ In the Pacific Ocean, Chinese naval force advancements are frequently increasing, and air forces are employing more aircraft and routes.¹⁴² In the Sea of Japan, Chinese naval forces are conducting "confrontation exercises" and joint exercises with Russia, and air forces are participating in joint

¹³⁸ Japan Ministry of Defense, "Security Environment Surrounding Japan."

¹³⁹ "The Coast Guard Law of the People's Republic of China," Japan Ministry of Defense, https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/sec_env/ch_ocn/index.html.

¹⁴⁰ "China's Activities in East China Sea, Pacific Ocean, and Sea of Japan," Japan Ministry of Defense, February 2023, 7, https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/sec_env/pdf/ch_d-act_a_e_230208.pdf.

¹⁴¹ Japan Ministry of Defense, "China's Activities", 5

¹⁴² Japan Ministry of Defense, "China's Activities", 6

flights with Russia.¹⁴³ China also continues to intensify military activities in the South China Sea.¹⁴⁴

Russia. Russia is increasing military activity in the Pacific and Arctic Ocean, and conducting joint operations with China.¹⁴⁵ In the Northern Territories (about 100 miles from Northern Japan), the 18th Machine-Gun Artillery Division HQ and 49th Machine-Gun Artillery Regiment are stationed in Etorofu Island, the civilian airport in Etorofu Island is dual-use (three fighters deployed in 2018), SAM-300V4 missile systems are deployed to Etorofu and Kunashiri islands, and there are plans to deploy two surface-to-ship missiles in the Kuril islands.¹⁴⁶ Russia's military presence is slowly increasing in the Northern Territories.

North Korea. North Korea continues to develop its nuclear weapons program and displays hostile behavior towards Japan.¹⁴⁷ North Korea is seeking to operationalize its long-range cruise missiles, hypersonic missiles, and solid fuel-propelled ICBMs, along with developing tactical nuclear weapons and new short-range ballistic missiles.¹⁴⁸ North Korea has one submarine capable of launching a ballistic missile and plans to diversify its ballistic missile capability and survivability through submarines.¹⁴⁹ In 2022, North Korea launched intermediate-

¹⁴³ Japan Ministry of Defense, "China's Activities", 7

¹⁴⁴ "China's Activities in the South China Sea (China's development activities on the features and trends in related countries)," Japan Ministry of Defense, February 2023, 30 https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/sec_env/pdf/ch_d-act_b_e_230208.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ "Development of Russian Armed Forces in the Vicinity of Japan," Japan Ministry of Defense, February 2023, 3, https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/sec_env/pdf/ru_d-act_e_230208.pdf.

¹⁴⁶ Japan Ministry of Defense, "Development of Russian Armed Forces," 4.

¹⁴⁷ Japan Ministry of Defense, "Security Environment Surrounding Japan."

¹⁴⁸ "Recent Missile & Nuclear Development of North Korea," Japan Ministry of Defense, February 2023, 1, https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_act/sec_env/pdf/dprk_d-act_e_230208.pdf.

¹⁴⁹ Japan Ministry of Defense, "Development of North Korea." 1.

range ballistic missiles over the Japanese archipelago for missile testing; North Korea conducted a similar test in 2017.¹⁵⁰

Japanese Nuclear Deterrence. If Japan chooses to develop or acquire nuclear weapons, how would nuclear deterrence benefit Japan? One of the main benefits of a nuclear-armed Japan is less dependence on the United States.¹⁵¹ Instead of relying on US extended nuclear deterrence, Japan could rely on its own nuclear deterrence. Japanese nuclear deterrence could deter China's encroachment on Taiwan, Russia's military buildup in the Northern Territories, and North Korea's provocative behavior, since adversaries would need to contend specifically with Japanese nuclear doctrine, rather than only US nuclear doctrine; Japan might have a lower threshold or different conditions for employing nuclear weapons than the United States. Japan's security environment could become more stable by utilizing an assured retaliation nuclear posture, or an asymmetric escalation nuclear posture to allow for deterrence by ambiguity. Additionally, a large nuclear force is not necessary for deterrence if Japan's nuclear force can sustain an unacceptable level of destruction on adversaries. Nuclearization could benefit Japan, but also come at the cost of harming US – Japanese relations and provoking an arms race in Asia.¹⁵² A nuclear-armed Japan though would certainly be a greater deterrent to China, Russia, and North Korea.

¹⁵⁰ Cha, Kim, and Lim. "North Korea Tests Missile over Japan."

¹⁵¹ Yuri Kase, "The Cost Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization: An Insight into the 1968/70 *Internal Report*," *The Nonproliferation Review/Summer*, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2001, 65, <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/82kase.pdf>.

¹⁵² Kase, "The Cost Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization," 65.

Methodology

The method of study will be discussed for the logic of inquiry and how data was collected and analyzed for Japanese strategic culture and the factors of nuclear latency, interpretation of article 9 in Japan's constitution, Japan's compliance with the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty, and Japan's confidence in US security guarantees.

Logic of Inquiry. Information was collected using a qualitative research method. The methodological approach generally entails acquiring nonnumerical information through observation, experience, and documentation. Exploring Japan's incentives to pursue or develop nuclear weapons through a strategic culture paradigm necessitates qualitative research to explain the nuances. Information was analyzed using a descriptive analysis, in which data was seen for "what is." Collected data was further assessed for the meaning and implications in order to represent the data accurately. Information was selected based on reliability, accuracy, and consistency. Limitations though, lie in the interpretive ability to recognize reliable, accurate, and consistent data. Also, despite the perceived trustworthiness of a certain set of information, the data still may have methodological flaws. The primary flaw of concern is an inappropriate analysis leading to highly biased conclusions.

Methodology and Procedure of Data Collection. Observation and documentation are the primary sources of information used. The type of source serves at providing an accurate representation of how nuclear weapons may be integrated into Japanese strategic culture. Information was selected based on reliability, accuracy, and consistency.

Methods and Procedures of Data Analysis. Information was analyzed using a descriptive analysis, in which data was seen for "what is." Collected data was further assessed for the meaning and implications in order to represent the data accurately. Limitations though, lie

in the interpretive ability to recognize reliable, accurate, and consistent data. Also, despite the perceived trustworthiness of a certain set of information, the data still may have methodological flaws. The primary flaw of concern is an inappropriate analysis leading to highly biased conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: NUCLEAR LATENCY

Japanese strategic culture rapidly shifted from thousands of years of militarism to pacifism within a decade after WW2. Such an abrupt change cannot completely remove militarism within Japanese strategic culture, and security challenges are forcing Japan to reconsider if its newly adopted military posture of pacifism is reasonable. Moreover, Japan is showing signs of reconsidering its nuclear pacifism. With Japan modernizing the JSDF and slowly moving away from pacifism, will Japan do the same with nuclear weapons? Japan is a nuclear latent power. It has the means to develop nuclear weapons and a nuclear proliferation strategy that can justify the development of nuclear weapons. This chapter will explore Japan's nuclear latency, its insurance hedging proliferation strategy, and how Japanese strategic culture facilitates a nuclear weapons program.

Japan's Nuclear Latency

Nuclear latency is the “technical, industrial, material, and financial resources that a country requires to implement a military nuclear program.”¹⁵³ While Japan does lack expertise in bomb design, does not have a reliable delivery vehicle, nor an intelligence program to protect assets or nuclear testing sites, it does have the industrial, material, and financial resources necessary successfully begin a nuclear weapons program; technical resource requirements can be

¹⁵³ Timothée Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency: A Dual-Use Diplomatic Lever*, IRSEM, Report no. 93 (May 2022): 19, <https://www.irsem.fr/media/etude-irsem-93-albessard-japan-en-v2.pdf>.

met if so desired.¹⁵⁴

Nuclear Latent Capabilities. Japan is the only Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) non-nuclear weapon state possessing full-scale nuclear fuel cycle facilities.¹⁵⁵ Its nuclear facilities used to provide up to 35% of its energy, but after the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant incident, Japan scaled down its reliance on nuclear facilities (currently 7.2%).¹⁵⁶ Japan's nuclear power program uses large amounts of separated plutonium; separated out of spent fuel through reprocessing.¹⁵⁷ Plutonium in spent fuel cannot be used for a nuclear weapon, but separated plutonium can be used for nuclear weapons.¹⁵⁸ As of 2009, Japan possessed 6.7 metric tons of separated plutonium, which is enough to make 1,000 nuclear weapons.¹⁵⁹ Since 2018, Japan accumulated over 45 metric tons of separated plutonium, enough to make more than 5,000 nuclear weapons.¹⁶⁰ Japan is projected to increase reliance on "fast breeder reactors"; these reactors produce more plutonium than they consume.¹⁶¹ Japan is also building facilities that are eliminating the need to outsource its spent fuel for reprocessing, allowing Japan to domestically produce separated plutonium.¹⁶² Japan may have the capability to develop a small nuclear arsenal

¹⁵⁴ Emma Chanlett-Avery and Mary Beth Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future: Policy Debate, Prospects, and US Interests*, Congressional Research Service, February 19, 2009, 1-13, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/RL34487.pdf>.

¹⁵⁵ "Japan," Nuclear Threat Initiative, <https://www.nti.org/countries/japan/#:~:text=Japan%20does%20not%20possess%20any,has%20advanced%20WMD-relevant%20industries>.

¹⁵⁶ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 3.

¹⁵⁷ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 4.

¹⁵⁸ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 4.

¹⁵⁹ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 4.

¹⁶⁰ Alan Kuperman and Hina Acharya, "Japan's Misguided Plutonium Policy," Arms Control Association, October 2018, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-10/features/japan%E2%80%99s-misguided-plutonium-policy>.

¹⁶¹ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 5.

¹⁶² Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 4.

in less than one year.¹⁶³

Failure to Cross the Nuclear Threshold. Despite Japan's nuclear latency, it has refrained from crossing the nuclear threshold. Other than public consensus and constitutional restraints, Japan is held back by technical and financial costs. For technical requirements, Japan does not have advanced expertise in nuclear weapons design, a delivery vehicle, or an intelligence program to protect assets.¹⁶⁴ For financial costs, Japan would need to spend a substantial number of resources to safely build infrastructure for nuclear weapons due to its geography and concentrated populations.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, Japan's civilian nuclear facilities are under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards; difficult for a clandestine nuclear weapons program.¹⁶⁶ While the technical and financial costs are significant, they are not exorbitantly difficult to overcome. Given its advanced nuclear power program and infrastructure, and its increasingly sophisticated JSDF, Japan can develop the technical requirements for a nuclear weapons program.

Japan's Nuclear Proliferation Strategy

Japan is a nuclear latent power, so an important question to ask is, what is Japan's intent regarding its nuclear latency? Japan has a nuclear proliferation strategy, and nuclear latency is part of that strategy. The strategy is known as insurance hedging and entails frequently performing a cost-benefit analysis of US extended deterrence to determine whether relying on US nuclear weapons is worth the risk of Japan not having its own. Should US extended

¹⁶³ Steven Aftergood and Jonathan Garbose, "Nuclear Weapons Program – Japan," Federation of American Scientists, June 1, 2012, <https://nuke.fas.org/guide/japan/nuke/>.

¹⁶⁴ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 6.

¹⁶⁵ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 6.

¹⁶⁶ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 6.

deterrence fail or be perceived as too weak, Japan will claim “insurance” by developing nuclear weapons for its own protection. Among other nuclear proliferation strategies, Japan chose insurance hedging for a reason.

Nuclear Proliferation Strategies. According to nuclear strategy scholar Vipin Narang, there are four nuclear proliferation strategies: sprinting, hiding, sheltered pursuit, and hedging. Sprinting is an open pursuit to develop nuclear weapons as quickly as possible.¹⁶⁷ Hiding is pursuing nuclear weapons secretly.¹⁶⁸ Sheltered pursuit is developing nuclear weapons under the protection of a major power to deter counterproliferation aspirants.¹⁶⁹ Hedging relies on attaining the perquisites for developing nuclear weapons but not necessarily pursuing them; the strategy is about creating an option for developing nuclear weapons.¹⁷⁰ Within the hedging strategy, there are three kinds: technical hedging, insurance hedging, and hard hedging. Technical hedging is furthest from weaponization and has decentralized intent for creating the technological requirements for building nuclear weapons.¹⁷¹ Insurance hedging entails having the technological requirements met for developing nuclear weapons, undergoing possible theoretical work on weaponization, creating the ability to rapidly invoke a nuclear weapons program, and explicitly threatening to pursue nuclear weapons on a contingency.¹⁷² Hard hedging is the pursuit of becoming a threshold nuclear state (everything is in place to create nuclear weapons), but intentionally withholding from developing nuclear weapons.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Vipin Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” In *Seeking the Bomb: Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, January 11, 2022), 21.

¹⁶⁸ Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” 23.

¹⁶⁹ Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” 22.

¹⁷⁰ Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” 17.

¹⁷¹ Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” 17.

¹⁷² Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” 18.

¹⁷³ Narang, “Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources,” 19.

Indicators of an insurance hedger are having non-weapons grade fissile material production or potential work on producing weapons-grade fissile production, possible theoretical work on weaponization and dual-use vehicles, periodic interest in nuclear weapons, and an explicit threat to pursue nuclear weapons on a contingency; Japan exhibits all these the indicators of an insurance hedger.¹⁷⁴

Why Insurance Hedging? Japan became an insurance hedger for two reasons: it wants the option to develop nuclear weapons and does not want to forgo US extended deterrence. Japan relies on US extended deterrence for security, but pursuing nuclear weapons could remove Japan from the US nuclear umbrella. Congruently, Japan's security environment is hostile and becoming more so over time. If US extended deterrence failed, Japan could be under existential threat, so having the option to develop nuclear weapons is critical for the survival of Japan. Insurance hedging allows Japan to stay within US extended deterrence while preparing for abandonment/failure of the United States.¹⁷⁵

Technical hedgers typically do not face acute security threats.¹⁷⁶ Hard hedgers face acute security threats and may not have any formal security guarantees mitigating threats.¹⁷⁷ Insurance hedgers, like Japan, have acute security threats and formal security guarantees.¹⁷⁸ In essence, Insurance hedgers have the best of both worlds. They can prepare to develop nuclear weapons quickly, if necessary, and rely on extended deterrence of another nuclear power. Should security guarantees no longer exist though, an insurance hedger may move even beyond hard hedging,

¹⁷⁴ Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources," 20.

¹⁷⁵ Vipin Narang, "The Varieties of Hedgers: India, Japan, West Germany, Brazil and Argentina, Sweden and Switzerland," In *Seeking the Bomb: Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, January 11, 2022), 85.

¹⁷⁶ Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources," 28.

¹⁷⁷ Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources," 28.

¹⁷⁸ Narang, "Strategies of Nuclear Proliferation and Their Sources," 28.

and choose a more aggressive nuclear proliferation strategy. In Japan's context, the United States is being leveraged for protection until the United States cannot protect; nuclear latency can be used to assure that US security guarantees are met (if the United States does not meet Japan's needs, it will build nuclear weapons).¹⁷⁹ When a non-nuclear armed Japan is not under US extended deterrence, it will be highly vulnerable, possibly causing Japan to sprint towards a nuclear weapons program if the domestic consensus against nuclear weapons can be resolved. For now, Japan is relying on the United States for protection but has the option to pursue nuclear weapons just in case that protection ceases.

Nuclear Latency in Japanese Strategic Culture

Japan's pacifism and defense-oriented military posture coincide well with nuclear latency and its nuclear proliferation strategy. There is no open pursuit of nuclear weapons, which is compatible with Japan's Three Non-Nuclear Principles, and insurance hedging is defense-oriented. Nuclear latency fits within Japanese strategic culture because the desire to have the option to create nuclear weapons always existed. As early as the 1950s, Japan deliberately chose to be a nuclear latent power and an insurance hedger.¹⁸⁰ Japan understood the deterrence value of nuclear weapons, especially in a security environment surrounded by nuclear powers and potential nuclear powers. For Japan, the United States would serve as its nuclear deterrent, which allowed Japan to maintain nuclear pacifism. Out of necessity, Japanese strategic culture has shifted from pacifism towards defensive militarism due to security concerns. Nuclear pacifism is still dominant in Japan's strategic culture though, but as Japan becomes more militarized, nuclear pacifism may begin to be replaced with nuclear realism. If US extended deterrence no longer

¹⁷⁹ Narang, "The Varieties of Hedgers," 81.

¹⁸⁰ Narang, "The Varieties of Hedgers," 80.

offers Japan the nuclear deterrence it needs, and domestic consensus against nuclear weapons is resolved, Japanese strategic culture could shift in favor of nuclear weapons as it did from pacifism to a defense-oriented military posture. Japan's reinterpretation of Article 9 in the Japanese constitution to allow for the creation of the JSDF, could indicate Japan's future regarding nuclear weapons.

CHAPTER 3: REINTERPRETATION OF ARTICLE 9

Japan's nuclear latency and insurance hedging strategy has been part of its post-1945 strategic culture from the beginning. Japan always wanted the option to create nuclear weapons, and having the option allowed Japan to leverage US security guarantees. When the United States ended its military occupation of Japan in 1952, Japan was vulnerable. Vulnerability quickly pushed Japan to reinterpret Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution to allow for the creation of a defensive force, known as the JSDF. Since its inception in the 1950s, the JSDF has evolved into an advanced conventional military force, minus full offensive capabilities, and an offensive military posture. Japan's reinterpretation of Article 9 after the United States withdrew military forces from Japan, may hint at Japan's attitude/behavior toward nuclear weapons if US security guarantees fail. This chapter will examine Japan's reinterpretation of Article 9, the effects of the reinterpretation, and how Japanese strategic culture could allow for a nuclear weapons program within the Japanese Constitution.

Japan's Reinterpretation of Article 9

Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, states, "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. 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" (The Constitution of Japan, Chapter 2: Renunciations of War, Article 9).¹⁸¹ There have been two

¹⁸¹ Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, *The Constitution of Japan*.

major instances in which Article 9 was reinterpreted, and in each instance, Japan reinterpreted Article 9 to allow for increased militarization and aggression. The two instances occurred in 1953 and 2014.

The 1953 Reinterpretation of Article 9. The start of the Korean War in 1950, the creation of the NPRF. The NPRF was created in 1950 after General MacArthur directed Prime Minister Yoshida to form a “75,000-man National Police Reserve.”¹⁸² The NPRF was necessary to maintain the domestic security of Japan while US forces were diverted to Korea.¹⁸³ In 1952, amidst the Korean War, the US military occupation of Japan ended.¹⁸⁴ Japan lost its only domestic military defense in a hostile security environment, and the NPRF was not up to the task of being the sole domestic defender of Japan. In 1952, Japan Prime Minister Yoshida stated, “to maintain war potential, even for the purpose of self-defense, would mean rearmament. This would necessitate revision of the Constitution” (Budget Committee of the House of Councilors, March 10, 1952).¹⁸⁵ Yoshida, head of the newly formed Japanese National Safety Forces (created in April 1952, NPRF was the ground branch) further went on to say that “defense potential” did not contradict Article 9 because there was “no capability to wage modern warfare” and therefore, “no offensive threat.”¹⁸⁶ For Yoshida, Article 9 was about “war potential” for settling international disputes and did not “prohibit military power for self-defense.”¹⁸⁷ In 1953, Yoshida and Shigemitsu (president of the Progressive Party), agreed that Article 9 grants Japan the right to self-defense; the Safety Agency Law was amended to reorganize the National Safety Forces

¹⁸² Auer, “Article Nine of Japan’s Constitution,” 176.

¹⁸³ Auer, “Article Nine of Japan’s Constitution,” 177.

¹⁸⁴ Department of State - Office of the Historian, “Occupation and Reconstruction of Japan, 1945-52.”

¹⁸⁵ Auer, “Article Nine of Japan’s Constitution,” 177.

¹⁸⁶ Auer, “Article Nine of Japan’s Constitution,” 177.

¹⁸⁷ Auer, “Article Nine of Japan’s Constitution,” 178.

into the JSDF.¹⁸⁸ In 1954, the JSDF was the official defensive force of Japan. Article 9 was successfully reinterpreted to allow the use of force if the use of force was “defensive.”

The 2014 Reinterpretation of Article 9. In 2014, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe greatly expanded Japan’s military posture. Through a cabinet decision, that “circumvented the constitutional amendment process”, Abe reinterpreted Article 9 to allow Japan to engage in “collective defense.”¹⁸⁹ Japan granted itself the right to engage in international conflict for collective defense, meaning, the JSDF is no longer restricted to domestic defense. Abes 2014 reinterpretation builds upon and stretches Yoshida’s 1953 reinterpretation; a seemingly offensive act may now be interpreted as defensive. Yoshida’s “defense potential” argument was expanded to encompass defense abroad. Japan may enact force on behalf of its allies, essentially allowing Japan to engage in offensive operations, but with a contingency of operations being defense-oriented. Justification for reinterpreting Article 9 to allow for collective defense, is Japan’s security; weakened allies and/or allies under attack threaten the “Japanese people’s right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.”¹⁹⁰ Japan continues to mold Article 9 to whatever it needs to be, and the progressively militaristic reinterpretation of Article 9 is having varied results for Japan.

¹⁸⁸ Auer, “Article Nine of Japan’s Constitution,” 178.

¹⁸⁹ Jeffery P. Richter, “Japan’s ‘Reinterpretation’ of Article 9: A Pyrrhic Victory for American Foreign Policy?,” Iowa University, *Iowa Law Review* 101, no. 3 (March 15, 2016): 1, 223-1, 262, <https://ilr.law.uiowa.edu/print/volume-101-issue-3/japans-reinterpretation-of-article-9-a-pyrrhic-victory-for-american-foreign-policy>.

¹⁹⁰ Kensuke Ueda, “Reinterpreting Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan,” The Constitutional Unit Blog, August 28, 2014, <https://constitution-unit.com/2014/08/28/reinterpreting-article-9-of-the-constitution-of-japan/>.

Effects of Japan's Reinterpretation of Article 9

Japan's 1953 and 2014 reinterpretation of Article 9 has brought about positive and negative effects. Foreign policy and security (external) are strengthened but domestic stability (internal) is weakened. The Japanese populous is not in agreement with its government; domestic consensus is firmly rooted in pacifism. Any shift towards remilitarization is met with resistance, as the events of WW2 are still persistent in the broader Japanese culture. Japanese strategic culture is pulling in the opposite direction and attempts to move towards remilitarization. Thus, the interpretation of Article 9 is controversial in Japan.

External Effects of Article 9 Reinterpretation. The two greatest external effects of Japan's Article 9 reinterpretation are Japan developing a military force, and improved relations with the United States. After 1953 the reinterpretation of Article 9, Japan created an opportunity to build a military force. Although the JSDF is not a "military force" in name, it functions practically as a military. The only stipulation is the JSDF cannot have full offensive capability and is relegated to a defense-only military posture. Having a standing domestic army allowed Japan to not only defend itself but also increase its deterrence capability. The 2014 reinterpretation of Article 9 further improved Japan's deterrent capability; for the first time since 1945, Japan could go on the offense in defense of an ally. Japan can better protect vital national security interests by signaling legitimate intent to use force on behalf of its allies. For example, China now must be concerned with a Japanese military response if it were to invade Taiwan. Before the 2014 reinterpretation, Japan could not legally attack China on behalf of Taiwan. The United States also benefited from the 1953 and 2014 reinterpretations of Article 9.

The advent of the JSDF in 1954 lessened resource burdens on the United State protecting Japan, and the United States gained a formidable ally in Northeast Asia (a strategically vital

area). Japan's military presence has become a major asset to the United States for containing China and Russia, which is why in 2014, despite domestic and some international disapproval, the United States approved the 2014 reinterpretation because it strengthened US foreign policy.¹⁹¹ The United States now has Japan's military support in a conflict with China and/or Russia. Japan's 1953 and 2014 Article 9 reinterpretations allowed Japan to create a military force in defense of Japan and its allies, and improve U.S – Japan relations. While external stability may have benefited from progressive remilitarization and an expanded military posture, internal stability has not.

Internal Effects of Article 9 Reinterpretation. After Prime Minister Abe reinterpreted Article 9 in 2014, there was a major public backlash; mass demonstrations occurred in Japan, including civil unrest.¹⁹² In an opinion poll, only 29% of Japanese citizens approved of the reinterpretation, with 55% disapproving.¹⁹³ Most Japanese citizens do not agree with the reinterpretation. Other polls have shown mixed results, with some even favoring approval for the 2014 reinterpretation, but the consensus generally trends towards disapproval of Japan's right to exercise collective defense.¹⁹⁴ Since 1945, Japan's culture has not changed significantly regarding its view on pacifism; there is strong resistance to using the JSDF for peacekeeping.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Richter, "Japan's 'Reinterpretation' of Article 9," 1,223.

¹⁹² Joshua Pickar, "Japan's defensive constitution: nuclear weapons as a better alternative than expanding collective self-defense," *Law School International Immersion Program Papers*, No. 20 (2016): 2, https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1025&context=international_immersion_program_papers.

¹⁹³ Pickar, "Japan's defensive constitution," 2.

¹⁹⁴ Kamiya Matake, "Japanese Public Opinions about the Exercise of the Right to Collective Self-Defense," *Discuss Japan: Japan Foreign Policy Forum, Politics*, no. 23 (September 25, 2014), <https://www.japanpolicyforum.jp/politics/pt201409252319074528.html>.

¹⁹⁵ Matake, "Japanese Public Opinions."

While opinions favoring pacifism have not changed significantly, they have changed slightly.¹⁹⁶ Security environment challenges have shifted the Japanese populous closer to accepting remilitarization. Additionally, the disapproval of the 2014 reinterpretation may have stemmed from a lack of understanding of what collective defense entails.¹⁹⁷ The Japanese people might be ready to accept remilitarization if the Japanese government can convince them. In the future, the same could be said about nuclear weapons.

Reinterpretation of Article 9 in Japanese Strategic Culture

A common cultural trope is that militaries are decades ahead of the societies they serve. For Japan, the trope appears to be true for its strategic culture. Japanese strategic culture is attempting to move beyond pacifism and towards remilitarization, but the broader culture still affirms pacifism. The 2014 reinterpretation of Article 9 made the tension between Japan's strategic culture and broader culture evident. Japan cannot move forward with remilitarization if the populace will not move forward with them. Article 9 is at the heart of a dilemma. Japanese strategic culture is contending with the urgency of its hostile security environment and moving away from a perceivably untenable pacifist military posture. Article 9 is pacifism codified in Japanese law and an idea solidified in Japanese culture. To circumvent Article 9 restrictions in law, Japan's leaders have been reinterpreting it to allow for the ongoing remilitarization of Japan. Japanese culture though does not want remilitarization, or at least does not think it does. Japan's populace is worried that Japan will become entangled in international affairs, possibly leading to a military conflict.¹⁹⁸ Opinions are slowly changing in Japan. Citizens recognize the security

¹⁹⁶ Mataka, "Japanese Public Opinions."

¹⁹⁷ Mataka, "Japanese Public Opinions."

¹⁹⁸ Pickar, "Japan's defensive constitution," 3.

threat of China, Russia, and North Korea, especially after Chinese, Russian, and North Korean military activity near Japan. There is a path to convincing the Japanese populous to accept remilitarization, but what about nuclear weapons?

The biggest hurdle in Japanese law for remilitarization is Article 9. Another alleged major hurdle is the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, but the Three Non-Nuclear Principles are not actually codified as law; they are a pledge by Japan's government. In 1959, Prime Minister Kishi in the House of Councilors states, "The Government intends to maintain no nuclear weapons, but speaking in terms of legal interpretation of the Constitution there is nothing to prevent the maintaining of the minimum number of nuclear weapons for self-defense."¹⁹⁹ The Three Non-Nuclear Principles were a Cabinet policy statement in 1967 that reinforced Japan's commitment to nuclear pacifism, but legally Japan could develop nuclear weapons. The two greatest obstacles though are breaching international duties for nuclear pacifism and convincing the Japanese populous. Other than international and domestic concerns, the pursuit of nuclear weapons within Japanese strategic culture is not impossible or unreasonable.

¹⁹⁹ Auer, "Article Nine of Japan's Constitution," 178.

CHAPTER 4: TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Japan's reinterpretation of Article 9 could be a sign that Japanese strategic culture is shifting away from pacifism. The 1953 reinterpretation granted Japan the right to protect itself with domestic military force, resulting in Japan creating the JSDF in 1954. The JSDF would evolve to become a regional military power. Amidst security challenges, Japan expanded its military posture in 2014 by reinterpreting Article 9 once more, to allow the JSDF to act in collective defense. Since 2014, Japan's strictly defensive military posture is only 'defensive' in name. While it may be unlikely that Japan would enact collective defense, Japan can legally perform offensive military operations in defense of an ally. The 1953 and 2014 Article 9 reinterpretations signal a change in direction for Japanese strategic culture. Another occurrence that signals change, is Japan's refusal to endorse the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Of the ninety-two signatories, Japan is not listed on the TPNW.²⁰⁰ Japan, a nuclear pacifist and great proponent of a nuclear-free world, has not ratified or even signed a treaty that seeks to totally eliminate nuclear weapons by prohibiting them.²⁰¹ This chapter will explore what the TPNW is, why Japan is not a signatory, and how Japan's refusal to endorse the TPNW could indicate further change within Japanese strategic culture.

Overview of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

The Non-Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (prior to the TPNW) was endorsed by 160 states, including Japan, but failed to get a consensus on the final version during the 2015 review

²⁰⁰ "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," United Nations – Office for Disarmament Affairs, <https://treaties.unoda.org/t/tpnw>.

²⁰¹ "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," United Nations – Office for Disarmament Affairs, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/tpnw/>.

conference for the treaty.²⁰² Many states were not satisfied with the outcome and wanted to make progress on global nuclear disarmament.²⁰³ In Geneva in 2016, States reconvened to discuss and vote for a prohibition on nuclear weapons.²⁰⁴ States in favor of a nuclear weapons ban were successful, winning the vote 68-22.²⁰⁵ The United Nations adopted the TPNW; open for signature on July 7, 2017, and enforced on January 22, 2021.²⁰⁶ All nuclear-armed states opposed the ban, as well as most NATO countries and those reliant on extended deterrence.²⁰⁷ Japan was one of the countries opposing the TPWN. To better understand why Japan is not a signatory of the TPWN, it's important to know what exactly the TPNW entails.

Obligations of the TPNW. The TPNW prohibits States Parties from “developing, Testing, producing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, or stockpiling nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.”²⁰⁸ Signatories are also prohibited from “transferring or receiving nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, control over such weapons, or any assistance with activities prohibited under the Treaty.”²⁰⁹ In addition, States cannot threaten to use or use nuclear weapons, and are barred from allowing the “stationing, installation, or deployment of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices in their territory.”²¹⁰ Lastly, States Parties must provide “victim assistance and help with environmental remediation

²⁰² “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW),” Nuclear Threat Initiative, <https://www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons/>.

²⁰³ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁰⁴ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁰⁵ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁰⁶ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁰⁷ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁰⁸ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁰⁹ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²¹⁰ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

efforts.”²¹¹ To summarize, signatories cannot possess, transfer, or use nuclear weapons, and must provide aid to victims of a nuclear weapons attack.

Verification and Compliance With the TPNW. There is no verification regime in the TPNW. Each State Party must “maintain its existing safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)”; State Parties that have not must “at a minimum, conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement (INFCIRC/153).”²¹² State Parties have the right to withdraw from the TPNW if “extraordinary events related to the subject matter of the Treaty have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country.” Withdrawal will occur twelve months “after the receipt of notification of withdrawal by the Depository.” If the State Party is involved in a military conflict, then it will be under the obligation of the TPNW until the conflict has ended.²¹³ In summary, signatories must verify themselves under the International Atomic Energy Agency and will be permitted to withdraw from the TPNW if the treaty conflicts with national interests.

Japan’s Refusal to Endorse the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

Japan has not signed or ratified the TPNW and voted against an annual UN General Assembly resolution since 2018 that welcomed the adoption of the TPNW.²¹⁴ The UN General Assembly resolution repeatedly called for all states to become signatories and ratify the treaty “at the earliest possible date.”²¹⁵ Japan did not attend the first meeting of State Parties to the TPNW

²¹¹ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²¹² Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²¹³ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²¹⁴ “Japan,” International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, <https://www.icanw.org/japan#:~:text=In%20a%20statement%20to%20the,to%20change%20the%20current%20reality.%E2%80%9D>.

²¹⁵ International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, “Japan.”

on June 2022, despite international and domestic pressure to do so.²¹⁶ Japan's refusal to endorse indicates it has no intention to sign or ratify the TPNW, but why? There are explicit reasons why Japan has done so, and possibly tacit reasons too.

Explicit Reasons for Japan's Absence From the TPNW. Japan believes the TPNW is a vital treaty for creating "a world without nuclear weapons", but also believes the cooperation of nuclear powers is necessary for "changing the reality, and the truth that none of the nuclear-weapon states has participated in the treaty."²¹⁷ Japan's policy seeks a "realistic effort" toward a nuclear-free world by involving nuclear powers in the process of progressive nuclear disarmament measures.²¹⁸ Based on Japan's policy, it chose not to participate in the first State Parties meeting on June 2022 in Vienna.²¹⁹ The Japanese public supports Japan joining the TPNW, but the government does not.²²⁰ The reason Japan's government is not in favor of the TPNW is that the treaty is not realistic.²²¹ The treaty only serves to widen the power gap between nuclear and non-nuclear states by forcing non-nuclear signatories to forgo all pursuit of nuclear weapons while nuclear states remain absent from the treaty and continue nuclear weapon modernization.²²² Perhaps the most compelling explicit reason for Japan's absence from the treaty is its relationship with the United States. If Japan signs the treaty, "the relationship of mutual trust between Japan and the United States will be damaged and end in divorce."²²³ Japan considers US extended deterrence the only viable option in dealing with its security

²¹⁶ International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, "Japan."

²¹⁷ "Press Conference by Foreign Press Secretary ONO Hikariko," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, June 15, 2022, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/kaiken24e_000139.htm.

²¹⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Press Conference."

²¹⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Press Conference."

²²⁰ Sayuri Romei, "Nuclear Ban Treaty Offers Rare Chance for Japan," RAND, April 20, 2021, <https://www.rand.org/blog/2021/04/nuclear-ban-treaty-offers-rare-chance-for-japan.html>.

²²¹ Romei, "Nuclear Ban Treaty."

²²² Romei, "Nuclear Ban Treaty."

²²³ Romei, "Nuclear Ban Treaty."

environment.²²⁴ For Japan, “the extended deterrence of the US, with nuclear deterrence at its core, is indispensable to [Japan].”²²⁵ The US–Japan relationship is prioritized more than nuclear disarmament efforts, which is evident in Japan’s decision to remain absent from the TPNW. Other than the treaty being unrealistic and damaging the US–Japan relationship, Japan may have an implicit reason for abstaining from the TPNW.

Implicit Reasons for Japan’s Absence from the TPNW. The first implicit reason for Japan’s absence from the TPNW is concerns over China. If Japan signed the treaty, it will not only harm its relationship with the US but also China. Nuclear-armed China would be in direct opposition to Japan’s open commitment to seeing China de-nuclearized.²²⁶ Relations with Russia and North Korea would be harmed similarly. Japan also views its commitment in opposing China to be pointless due to China stated in 2022 it will not be “expanding its nuclear arsenal but taking steps to modernize its nuclear forces.”²²⁷ In 2021, China stated it was committed to “peaceful development and a nuclear strategy of self-defense.”²²⁸ It was also accelerating its development of nuclear warheads in 2021, allegedly attempting to amass one thousand by 2030.²²⁹ China has no intentions of denuclearizing, especially when in a great power competition with the United States. By signing the treaty, Japan would only worsen its relationship with China for no gain. Japan could be abstaining from the TPNW due to its tense relations with China, Russia, and North Korea, but might also be doing so because it has nuclear aspirations of

²²⁴ Romei, “Nuclear Ban Treaty.”

²²⁵ International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, “Japan.”

²²⁶ Romei, “Nuclear Ban Treaty.”

²²⁷ “Nuclear Disarmament: China,” Nuclear Threat Initiative, <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/china-nuclear-disarmament/>.

²²⁸ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “Nuclear Disarmament: China.”

²²⁹ Shannon Bugos, “Pentagon Sees Faster Chinese Nuclear Expansion,” Arms Control Association, December 2021, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-12/news/pentagon-sees-faster-chinese-nuclear-expansion>.

its own. Before resigning in 2020, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe called for Japan to host US nuclear weapons.²³⁰ While the Japanese public is firmly against hosting US nuclear weapons, Abe's statement might indicate that the Japanese government is more open to nuclear weapons than previously thought. Signing the TPNW would end Japan's nuclear aspirations, such as hosting nuclear weapons or pursuing nuclear weapons in the future. With US security guarantees potentially beginning to wane and Japan relying on US nuclear weapons for extended deterrence, Japan may want to keep its options open by not signing the TPNW. If US extended deterrence fails or Japan's security environment becomes untenable, it will need the option to pursue nuclear weapons rapidly; signing the treaty prevents Japan from doing so.

Japan's Refusal to Endorse the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Japanese Strategic Culture

The TPNW fits well within the presumably nuclear pacifist and defense-oriented Japanese strategic culture, but Japan's refusal to endorse the treaty says otherwise. While Japan is allegedly holding onto nuclear pacifism, it is not willing for the US to embrace nuclear pacifism. Japan wants the US to have nuclear weapons and have the intent to use them if necessary. Without a nuclear-armed United States, Japan has no nuclear deterrence. Not signing the TPNW and alluding to hosting US nuclear weapons indicates that Japan highly values nuclear deterrence and will not surrender US extended deterrence for nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, hosting US nuclear weapons is not entirely outside of Japanese strategic culture,

²³⁰ Justin McCurry, "China Rattled by Calls for Japan to Host US Nuclear Weapons," *The Guardian*, March 1, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/01/china-rattled-by-calls-for-japan-to-host-us-nuclear-weapons>.

since US nuclear weapons were deployed to Okinawa before 1972.²³¹ The US and Japanese governments even had secret discussions to allow for the “re-introduction of nuclear weapons onto Okinawa in the event of an emergency or crisis situation.”²³² Post-1945 Japanese strategic culture always had a nuclear weapons dimension, with nuclear deterrence being the primary focus. Japan not signing the TPNW reinforces its commitment to nuclear deterrence, but not necessarily the United States. The primary reason Japan sided with the United States is because it wanted to stay under the US nuclear umbrella. If nuclear deterrence leaves with the United States, then Japan may leave its nuclear pacifism since nuclear deterrence is critical for Japan. With China modernizing its nuclear force, and the US nuclear umbrella potentially weakening, Japan needs the option to pursue the development of nuclear weapons. Signing the TPNW worsens Japan’s security context and threatens to remove US extended deterrence, so Japan continually abstains in favor of being protected by nuclear weapons. Japan’s broader culture may be nuclear pacifist, but Japan’s strategic culture is not; the idea of a nuclear-armed Japan lingers. If the US cannot provide nuclear deterrence, Japan may provide itself.

²³¹ Mercedes Trent, “The History of US Decision-making on Nuclear Weapons in Japan,” Federation of American Scientists, August 21, 2019, <https://fas.org/blogs/security/2019/08/the-history-of-u-s-decision-making-on-nuclear-weapons-in-japan/>.

²³² Trent, “US Nuclear Weapons in Japan.”

CHAPTER 5: US SECURITY GUARANTEES

Japan's refusal to endorse the TPNM is not a hint of its commitment to US extended deterrence, it's an explicit statement. Signing and ratifying the TPMN means opposing the US nuclear arsenal that protects Japan. Japan will not compromise its relationship with the US by signing the TPNM because it relies on US nuclear weapons for deterrence against China, Russia, and North Korea. Being under the US nuclear umbrella is essential for Japan, but what if the umbrella was too weak to protect Japan or did not exist? Japan has questioned the strength of US security guarantees in the past and continues to do so in the present, especially after shifting power dynamics during the Russia-Ukraine War. The United States is perceived as a declining power by Japan. The United States populous is politically and culturally divided, it is waging an arguably failing proxy war against Russia in the Russia-Ukraine War, and China is economically challenging US superpower status. For Japan, the United States appears domestically unstable, incapable of containing Russia, and unable to retain economic dominance over China; this is deeply concerning for Japan. US extended deterrence has not deterred Chinese and North Korean military aggression near Japan, casting doubt on the entirety of the US nuclear umbrella. There are cumulative reasons for Japan to doubt US extended deterrence. Eventually, there may be enough reasons for Japan to supply its own nuclear deterrence. This chapter will inspect why Japan perceives the United States as a declining power, why it is concerned over US extended deterrence credibility, and how those concerns are impacting Japanese strategic culture.

Japan Doubting US Security Guarantees

Just before the start of WW2, the United States abandoned isolationism and embraced interventionism. After achieving victory in WW2, the United States began advancing its geopolitical interests across every continent, eventually becoming the most dominant global power. No state dared to challenge the United States militarily, economically, or geopolitically, and any who did, failed to dethrone US superpower status. Japan could trust the United States, as it was successful at deterring threats unsuccessfully challenging threats that were not deterred. However, Japan has begun to doubt US extended deterrence because the United States is perceivably failing to deter and successfully challenge Japan's and the United States' predominate adversaries (China, Russia, and North Korea). As Japan witnesses division in the United States, China usurping the United States as the dominant superpower and performing unhindered military activities near Japan, Russia successfully defying NATO, and North Korea ignoring US sentiments over nuclear weapons modernization and sending missiles over Japan, it may reconsider if US extended deterrence will work when Japan needs it too.

The United States Divided. The United States is politically and culturally divided. The two-party system of the 'Republicans versus the Democrats', has caused the country to split. The Republican and Democratic parties are becoming further apart on the political spectrum and share less in common than they once did, causing an even greater fracture within the US population. The divide is more than political and has evolved into a culture war. This was evident in the 2020 US election, in which 89% of Trump supporters believed that if Biden were elected it would result in long-lasting harm to the country; 90% of Biden supporters said the

same.²³³ Since the 2020 US election, the division has worsened. Domestic instability will impact US foreign policy. For example, 40% of Republicans believe support for Ukraine is too much, and 43% believe the Russian invasion of Ukraine does not pose a major threat to US interests.²³⁴ In contrast, 32% of Democrats believe support of Ukraine is too much, and 29% believe the Russian invasion of Ukraine does not pose a major threat to US interests. There could be opposite solutions to the same foreign policy problem solely based on which political party is in control. The wide variance in US foreign policy due to division within the United States is not assuring to Japan. If a conflict or security threat involving Japan occurred, US politicization of the issue could result in US support or abandonment of Japan. Japan's security context of US division affecting foreign policy is worsened when considering that China is becoming a peer competitor of the United States and performing military activities near Japan at an increased frequency.

China's Rise to Power. China's economy is as large if not larger than the US economy.²³⁵ China is closing the gap between Chinese and US economic power and has even overtaken the US in some areas.²³⁶ China has the world's largest economy, displaced the US in manufacturing workshops, is the number one trading partner of most nations in the world, and

²³³ Michael Dimock and Richard Wike, "America is Exceptional in the Nature of its Political Divide," Pew Research Center, November 13, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/11/13/america-is-exceptional-in-the-nature-of-its-political-divide/>.

²³⁴ Amina Dunn, "As Russian Invasion Nears One-Year Mark, Partisans Grow Further Apart on US Support for Ukraine," Pew Research Center, January 13, 2023, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2023/01/31/as-russian-invasion-nears-one-year-mark-partisans-grow-further-apart-on-u-s-support-for-ukraine/>.

²³⁵ Graham Allison, Nathalie Kiersznowski, and Charlotte Fitzek, "The Great Economic Rivalry: China vs the US," Harvard Kennedy School – Belfer Center for Science and International Studies, March 23, 2022, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/great-economic-rivalry-china-vs-us>.

²³⁶ Allison, Kiersznowski, and Fitzek, "The Great Economic Rivalry."

has the largest number of most valuable global companies.²³⁷ Influence follows from having an economic hegemony, and the United States no longer has an economic hegemony, meaning the United States has lost influence and China has gained influence. China is increasing military activity around Japan as well, and US extended deterrence has not deterred China. Relative to China, the United States is weaker. China's nuclear weapons modernization also poses a concern for Japan since it can deter the United States. Japan knows the US economy is not as dominant, and that US extended deterrence has not prevented Chinese military activity near Japan; coupled with China surpassing the United States economically and potentially becoming the dominant superpower, Japan may question if it can rely on the United States to deter China in the event of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan. Russia's invasion of Ukraine might provide a clue to Japan's perception of the credibility of US security guarantees.

Russia's Defiance of NATO. On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine.²³⁸ Russia's alleged reasons for the invasion were partly related to the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe via Ukraine. In response to Russia, NATO placed various sanctions on Russia and waged a proxy war in Ukraine. The United States was at the helm of the sanctions against Russia and the proxy war in Ukraine. As of April 2023, the conflict is still ongoing a year later, and NATO failed to cripple Russia economically and secure victory through a proxy war. Against NATO's best efforts, barring a direct military conflict, Russia is slowly advancing through Ukraine. As a major proponent and supporter of Ukraine in the Russia-Ukraine War, the United States was unsuccessful at deterring Russia and could lose its proxy war. Parallels have been made between the Russia-Ukraine War and a potential China-Taiwan War, and Japan

²³⁷ Allison, Kiersznowski, and Fitzek, "The Great Economic Rivalry."

²³⁸ Stefan Ellerbeck, "1 Year on: A Timeline of the War in Ukraine," World Economic Forum, February 23, 2023, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/02/ukraine-war-timeline-one-year/>.

seeing how the outcome of the Russia-Ukraine War thus far, likely does not give Japan confidence in the US capability to deter or win a war against China. North Korea is another threat that Japan perceives the United States has failed to deter.

North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Expansion and Modernization. The United States has attempted to denuclearize North Korea for decades to no avail. Despite sanctions and positive inducements, North Korea continues to expand its nuclear arsenal and modernize its nuclear forces.²³⁹ In 2022, North Korea was estimated to have enough material for more than one hundred nuclear weapons. It successfully tested missiles that could strike the United States with a nuclear warhead and launched ballistic missiles over Japan on multiple occasions. While the United States is not solely responsible for the denuclearization of North Korea, Japan relies on the United States for its security. North Korea is a serious security threat to Japan, and its greatest security asset, the United States, failed to denuclearize and deter ballistic missile testing over Japan. There are amounting reasons for Japan to doubt US extended deterrence.

Japan's Declining Confidence in the Credibility of US Extended Deterrence

The United States is divided, which negatively affects domestic stability and foreign policy. In addition, China's economy is competitive with the United States and could surpass the United States as the global superpower. The United States has also failed to deter Chinese military activity near Japan, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and North Korea's nuclear modernization. Japan's security environment is worsening. Its enemies are stronger and its greatest ally, the United States, is weaker. Japan's case against the credibility of US extended

²³⁹ "North Korea's Military Capabilities," Council of Foreign Relations, June 28, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/background/north-korea-nuclear-weapons-missile-tests-military-capabilities>.

deterrence rests on US superpower status and deterrence failure against China, Russia, and North Korea.

US Superpower Status. The United States is considered the dominant, and arguably the only superpower in the world. China still lags behind the United States in the most important measurements of national power and could fall further behind in the coming decades.²⁴⁰

However, trends in China's economic, geopolitical, and demographic development suggest China will arise to become a superpower.²⁴¹ Even if China does not replace the United States as the sole global superpower, it will likely hold a similar superpower status as the United States.

The United States may no longer be the dominant or only superpower. Japan relies on US strength for security, so it is inevitably tied to US dominance. If the US loses or shares its superpower status with China, Japan will be neighboring an adversary as powerful or more powerful than the United States. Japan, having cause for concern, may doubt the deterrence value of the United States. In attempting to preserve its regional power status, Japan might consider a nuclear-armed Japan to be a greater deterrent than relying on US nuclear weapons.

Japan could have its own nuclear weapons doctrine and control escalation. Currently, Japan is at the whim of US nuclear doctrine, and a stronger China might deter a weaker United States from escalating on behalf of Japan; a nuclear-armed Japan would not have either of those problems.

US superpower status is important for Japan because it correlates with influence, which

²⁴⁰ Michael Beckley, "Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower," American Enterprise Institute, October 6, 2019, <https://www.aei.org/articles/unrivaled-why-america-will-remain-the-worlds-sole-superpower/>.

²⁴¹ Rupert Bruce, "The Next Superpower? Social Infrastructure Holds the Key," Julius Bar, October 18, 2022, <https://www.juliusbaer.com/en/insights/future-insights/shifting-lifestyles/who-is-the-next-superpower-social-infrastructure-holds-the-key/#:~:text=the%20superpower%20contenders%3F-,By%202050%2C%20more%20countries%20are%20likely%20to%20be%20defined%20as,its%20economy%20is%20currently%20faltering.>

correlates with deterrence. Recent US deterrence failures, such as the inability to deter the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Chinese military activity near Japan, and North Korean missile launches over Japanese territory, could be a sign that US influence is declining, leaving Japan more vulnerable.

US Deterrence Failures. Japan's perceptual lens indicates that any threat to the United States is a threat to Japan, and therefore, US deterrence failures are intricately linked to Japan's ability to deter adversaries. Its primary adversaries are China, Russia, and North Korea, and the United States could be perceived by Japan as failing to deter all three. China is performing military activities near Japan at an increased frequency, Russia invaded Ukraine and is slowly acquiring territory, and North Korea is modernizing its nuclear weapons forces; the United States failed to deter each threat. US deterrence capability is essentially Japan's deterrence capability since Japan is under US security guarantees and lacks an offensive military doctrine and nuclear weapons. If the United States cannot deter China, Russia, and North Korea, then Japan cannot. Japan has experienced numerous confrontations with China and North Korea over its military activities, and the US nuclear umbrella did nothing to stop these progressive encroachments.²⁴² If Japan cannot trust the United States to act on its behalf for small challenges, then it may question the reliability of the United States for larger challenges.²⁴³ The United States did not deter China's and North Korea's military activities near Japan, nor did it deter Russia's invasion of Ukraine, so why would the United States be able to deter China's and North Korea's further encroachment on Japan or a Chinese invasion of Taiwan? Is the United States truly capable of deterring China, Russia, and North Korea? Would the United States really use nuclear weapons

²⁴² Van Jackson, "Raindrops Keep Falling on my Nuclear Umbrella," May 18, 2015, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/18/raindrops-keep-falling-on-my-nuclear-umbrella-us-japan-south-north-korea/>.

²⁴³ Jackson, "Raindrops Keep Falling."

in defense of Japan? These are potential questions emerging in Japanese strategic culture. For Japan's security, having its own nuclear weapons could be the best option to assure it has nuclear deterrence and a means of self-defense against its nuclear-armed adversaries.

Doubting US Extended Deterrence in Japanese Strategic Culture

Since 1945, the alliance between Japan and the United States has been foundational in Japanese strategic culture.²⁴⁴ Japan's nuclear pacifism is derived from US extended deterrence. Within Japanese strategic culture, the possibility of Japan's pursuit and development of nuclear weapons is contingent on the effectiveness of US extended deterrence against Japan's adversaries.²⁴⁵ Unfortunately for Japan, US extended deterrence has not quelled the nuclear modernization of China and North Korea or prevented them from operating militarily around Japan. Deterrence is like psychological warfare and relies on an enemy's recognition of the credibility of the threat presented to be deterred.²⁴⁶ China, Russia, and North Korea are testing US deterrence credibility, and the results are China and Russia furthering geopolitical goals, and North Korea expanding and modernizing its nuclear force. China's and North Korea's capability to launch nuclear strikes against the United States create a vulnerability.²⁴⁷ The United States may be less willing to honor security guarantees to Japan if China and North Korea have second-strike capability.²⁴⁸ US – Chinese economic ties might influence the US strategic calculus.²⁴⁹ North Korea is also not an existential threat to the United States but is to Japan.²⁵⁰ As a nuclear

²⁴⁴ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 45.

²⁴⁵ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 45.

²⁴⁶ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 45.

²⁴⁷ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 46.

²⁴⁸ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 46.

²⁴⁹ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 46.

²⁵⁰ Albessard, *Japan's Nuclear Latency*, 46.

hedger, Japan would pursue nuclear weapons on the contingency of its security environment becoming untenable. Japan's strategic culture shifted rapidly when the US occupation of Japan ended; its security environment was untenable without a domestic military force. Japan was no longer strictly pacifist and adopted a defense-oriented military posture. If relying on US extended deterrence becomes untenable for Japan's security, another shift could happen in Japanese strategic culture, in which Japan abandons nuclear pacifism and adopts a defense-oriented nuclear weapons posture. Japan has remilitarized in the past when left vulnerable. It could do so again but with nuclear weapons.

CHAPTER 6: NUCLEAR PACIFISM TO NUCLEAR REALISM

Conclusion

Before 1945, Japan's strategic culture was militaristic and inward-oriented, imperialistic, and aggressive. After 1945, Japan's strategic culture became pacifist. It abandoned militarism, imperialism, and aggressive foreign policy, instead choosing to be outward-oriented and pacifist. In Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, Japan forfeited the right to use force as means of settling international disputes.²⁵¹ To accomplish Japan's commitment to pacifism, Article 9 stated that Japan could not maintain land, sea, and air forces, as well as any war potential assets.²⁵² Japan was truly pacifist, but it could afford to be pacifist because the United States protected Japan. US military forces occupied Japan until 1952.²⁵³ Amidst the Korean War beginning in 1950 and the end of US military occupation in 1952, Japan had no immediate protection.²⁵⁴ The creation of the NPRF in 1950 planted a seed in Japanese strategic culture. Complete pacifism was abandoned. The NPRF became the NSF in 1952, and the NSF evolved into the JSDF in 1954. Each iteration of Japan's defensive force became more militarized, to the point where the JSDF is now one of the most formidable militaries in the world. It lacks full offensive military capability due to its defensive military posture but is a modernized defensive military force. Japan also expanded its military posture in 2014 to allow for collective defense, meaning the JSDF can engage in offensive military operations to defend an ally.²⁵⁵ Japanese

²⁵¹ Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, *The Constitution of Japan*.

²⁵² Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, *The Constitution of Japan*.

²⁵³ Ken-ichi, "Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force," 10.

²⁵⁴ Ken-ichi, "Foundation of the Japanese Self-Defense Force," 10.

²⁵⁵ Richter, "Japan's 'Reinterpretation' of Article 9," 1, 223.

strategic culture is slowly remilitarizing, and the broader Japanese culture is slowly accepting remilitarization.

While Japan may no longer be a true pacifist state, given its war potential and expanding military posture, it does remain a nuclear pacifist. Japanese strategic culture though never abandoned nuclear realism; US nuclear weapons protecting Japan are viewed as vital. Nuclear pacifism is only an option if US extended deterrence works. As a nuclear hedger, Japan may arm itself with nuclear weapons if US extended deterrence does not work. Its security environment is worsening. China and North Korea are modernizing their nuclear weapons forces, China is performing military activity near Japan more frequently, North Korea has launched missiles over Japan, and Russia successfully invaded Ukraine and is increasing its military presence near Japan. US extended deterrence did not prevent any of these actions. Japan might be concerned that being under the US nuclear umbrella is not enough to deter adversaries. There is amounting reason for Japan to cross the nuclear threshold.

Japanese strategic culture is moving away from pacifism and towards remilitarization. The same might happen with Japan's nuclear pacifism. Its strategic culture could begin to move away from nuclear pacifism and towards the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons. Japanese strategic culture shift from pacifism to remilitarization is one sign of Japan's potential move away from nuclear pacifism. The other signs are Japan's nuclear latency, interpretation of Article 9 in Japan's Constitution, compliance with the TPNW, and confidence in US security guarantees. Despite the movement towards remilitarization, Japanese strategic culture is enveloped in self-defense, and its self-defense culture may be the point on which the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons hinge upon. Either Japanese strategic culture will abandon the ethos of self-defense or will incorporate nuclear weapons as an extension of self-defense; the

latter is probably more likely. The idea of a nuclear-armed Japan must be weighed against Japan's strategic culture of self-defense and renunciation of nuclear weapons. Current trends in Japanese strategic culture, Japan's security environment, and shifts in global power dynamics indicate that Japan's commitment to nuclear pacifism could fall like Japan's commitment to pacifism. If Japan is vulnerable, it will defend itself. If relying on US extended deterrence leaves Japan vulnerable, Japanese strategic culture can justify the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons for the security and prosperity of Japan.

Discussion

In this section, the results of the research will be summarized, followed by the interpretation and implications of the research. Next, the limitations of the research will be discussed, and recommendations for future research will conclude the thesis.

Summary of Results.

Japanese Strategic Culture. The early era of Japan was the beginning of the neolithic culture that arrived in Japan, and the introduction of Chinese and Korean culture into Japan.²⁵⁶ Rice production, advanced pottery techniques, the use of bronze, and social structure started to emerge.²⁵⁷ The classical era marked the beginning of central governance in Japan, as well as the introduction of Buddhism, Confucianism, the samurai/bushi class, bureaucratic organization, and legal theories.²⁵⁸ Masterful bodies of literary work were produced by Japan's court aristocracy, distinguishing Japan as a unique culture.²⁵⁹ The medieval era was the start of military rule, with Samurai replacing nobles as rulers of Japan; militarism became pervasive in Japanese strategic

²⁵⁶ University of Pittsburgh, "Jomon Period."

²⁵⁷ University of Pittsburgh, "Jomon Period."

²⁵⁸ University of Pittsburgh, "Yamato Period."

²⁵⁹ Columbia University, "Historical Periods."

culture.²⁶⁰ The modern era began with a strong militarized Imperial Japan in 1868 and ended in a militarily weak pacifist Japan in 1945. After Japan lost WWII, it adopted pacifism into its strategic culture.

Japan's ideology before 1945 was based on State Shintoism, and after 1945 was based on Western Democracy.²⁶¹ Japan's religion before 1945 was Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism.²⁶² After 1945, contemporary Japan largely identifies with having no religious beliefs, but still clings to Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism; religion is more so a social custom than a worldview.²⁶³ Japan has an educated, healthy, and homogenous population, although its birthrate is declining. Its economy is also strong.²⁶⁴ Japan has few natural resources, so it relies on imports. There are also environmental concerns about Volcanoes, earthquakes tsunamis, and typhoons.²⁶⁵ Japan is surrounded by powerful and aggressive hostile neighbors (China, Russia, and North Korea), and has a few friendly neighbors (South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines). Inputs of Japanese strategic culture has influenced the output of Japanese strategic culture.

Japan identifies as pacifist and anti-militaristic and no longer wants to identify with its militaristic past.²⁶⁶ As per its identity, Japan values pacifism.²⁶⁷ It also values competitive success, pragmatism, and prudence.²⁶⁸ Norms in Japan dictate that the use of force is acceptable in cooperation with the United States and that violence is appropriate if used for defensive

²⁶⁰ University of Pittsburgh, "Kamakura Period."

²⁶¹ Kumada, "Theocracy vs Constitutionalism in Japan," ii.

²⁶² Watt, "Japanese Religions."

²⁶³ Scroope, "Japanese Culture: Religion."

²⁶⁴ Heritage – 2023 Index of Economic Freedom, "Japan."

²⁶⁵ Country Reports, "Japan Geography."

²⁶⁶ Brummer and Oren. ""We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands." *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* 13 (2022): 91.

²⁶⁷ Scroope. "Japanese Culture: Religion." Cultural Atlas. 2021.

²⁶⁸ "Country Comparison: Japan." Hofstede Insights.

purposes.²⁶⁹ Japan's perceptual lens views its security environment as increasingly hostile due to China, Russia, and North Korea.²⁷⁰ China is advancing its military capacity and activities in sea and air space without transparency.²⁷¹ Russia is increasing military activity in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans and conducting joint operations with China.²⁷² North Korea continues to develop its nuclear weapons program and displays hostile behavior towards Japan.²⁷³ If Japan chooses to acquire nuclear weapons to deter China, Russia, and North Korea, it will lessen Japan's dependence on the United States.²⁷⁴ Additionally, Japan's security environment might improve because Japan would have complete autonomy over its nuclear weapons doctrine for deterrence. A nuclear-armed Japan would be a greater deterrent.

Japan's Nuclear Latency. While Japan does lack expertise in bomb design, does not have a reliable delivery vehicle, nor an intelligence program to protect assets or nuclear testing sites, it does have the industrial, material and financial resources necessary successfully begin a nuclear weapons program.²⁷⁵ Technical resource requirements can be met if so desired. Japan has full-scale nuclear fuel cycle facilities and has produced over 45 metric tons of separated plutonium, which is enough to make 5,000 nuclear weapons.²⁷⁶ Japan might have the capability to build a small nuclear arsenal in less than one year.²⁷⁷ Japan has not crossed the nuclear threshold mostly because of domestic consensus, constitutional restraints, technical and financial costs, and its relationship with the United States. However, Japan's nuclear latency is part of its nuclear

²⁶⁹ Brummer and Oren, "We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands," 99-100.

²⁷⁰ Brummer and Oren, "We Must Protect This Peace with Our Hands," 101.

²⁷¹ Japan Ministry of Defense, "Security Environment Surrounding Japan."

²⁷² Japan Ministry of Defense, "Development of Russian Armed Forces," 3.

²⁷³ Japan Ministry of Defense, "Security Environment Surrounding Japan."

²⁷⁴ Kase, "The Cost Benefits of Japan's Nuclearization," 65.

²⁷⁵ Chanlett-Avery and Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future*, 3.

²⁷⁶ Kuperman and Acharya, "Japan's Plutonium Policy."

²⁷⁷ Aftergood and Garbose, "Nuclear Weapons Program - Japan."

proliferation strategy of hedging. If US extended deterrence fails and/or Japan's security environment becomes untenable, Japan might pursue nuclear weapons.

Japan's Reinterpretation of Article 9. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, states, "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. 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" (The Constitution of Japan, Chapter 2: Renunciations of War, Article 9).²⁷⁸ Japan reinterpreted Article 9 in 1953 and 2014. The 1953 reinterpretation led to the creation of the JSDF and was justified under Article 9 because defense potential did not equate to war potential.²⁷⁹ The 2014 reinterpretation permitted collective defense (offensive military in defense of an ally or allies) and was justified under Article 9 because Japan's domestic security can be contingent on the security of allies.²⁸⁰ Japan's 1953 and 2014 reinterpretation of Article 9 increased Japan's security, US–Japan relations, and international influence. Domestic consensus, specifically on the 2014 reinterpretation, was largely negative.²⁸¹ Amidst security concerns though, the domestic consensus is slowly becoming accustomed to the idea of remilitarization. Other than international and domestic concerns, the pursuit of nuclear weapons within Japanese strategic culture is not impossible or unreasonable.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The TPNW prohibits States Parties from "developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, or stockpiling nuclear

²⁷⁸ Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, *The Constitution of Japan*.

²⁷⁹ Auer, "Article Nine of Japan's Constitution," 177.

²⁸⁰ Ueda, "Reinterpreting Article 9."

²⁸¹ Pickar, "Japan's defensive constitution," 2.

weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.”²⁸² Signatories cannot “transferring or receiving nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, control over such weapons, or any assistance with activities prohibited under the Treaty”, threaten or use nuclear weapons, and are barred from allowing the “stationing, installation, or deployment of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices in their territory.”²⁸³ State Parties must provide “victim assistance and help with environmental remediation efforts.”²⁸⁴ All nuclear-armed states opposed the TPNW, including Japan. Japan’s explicit reasons for not signing or ratifying the TPNW are that the treaty is an unrealistic attempt at banning nuclear weapons, and committing to the treaty will harm the US–Japan relationship.²⁸⁵ Tacit reasons are that the China–Japan relationship will worsen, and Japan could have nuclear weapons aspirations. Japan’s refusal to endorse the TPNW casts doubt on its commitment to nuclear pacifism. By not signing or ratifying the TPNW, Japan may want to keep the option of hosting or developing nuclear weapons open.

Japan Doubting US Security Guarantees. Japan might doubt US security guarantees because of division in the United States, China usurping the United States as the dominant superpower and performing unhindered military activities near Japan, Russia successfully defying NATO, and North Korea ignoring US sentiments over nuclear weapons modernization and sending missiles over Japan. The political and cultural divide in the United States is causing domestic instability, leading to the politicization of US foreign policy issues and polarized solutions. China’s economy is as large if not larger than the US economy and has overtaken the US in some areas.²⁸⁶ As a result, China’s international influence is rising. US extended

²⁸² Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁸³ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁸⁴ Nuclear Threat Initiative, “(TPNW).”

²⁸⁵ Romei, “Nuclear Ban Treaty.”

²⁸⁶ Allison, Kiersznowski, and Fitzek, “The Great Economic Rivalry.”

deterrence has not prevented Chinese military activity near Japan. Furthermore, Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, was not deterred by the United States.²⁸⁷ Despite NATO placing sanctions on Russia and waging a proxy war in Ukraine, Russia progressively acquired territory in Ukraine; the United States was at the helm of the sanctions and proxy war. Lastly, the United States failed to prevent North Korea's nuclear weapons expansion and modernization, and missile tests over Japan.²⁸⁸ These could be perceived by Japan as deterrence failures, which harms the credibility of US extended deterrence. Japan has remilitarized in the past when left vulnerable. If relying on US extended deterrence leaves Japan vulnerable, Japan might pursue nuclear weapons.

Interpretation and Implications of Results.

Japanese Strategic Culture. From the Yayoi Period (300 BC – 250 CE) to the early Showa Period (1926 – 1989), Japanese strategic culture was militaristic. War was a common means of settling domestic and international disputes. The only time Japan's strategic culture embraced pacifism, was in 1945 after its defeat in WWII. The change from militarism to pacifism was inorganic, and more so forced upon Japan. Nonetheless, Japan accepted pacifism into its strategic culture. Japan's pacifism slowly eroded after the introduction of the NRPF because the NRPF eventually led to the contemporary JSDF. Japan's strategic culture inputs necessitated a shift towards remilitarization, such as its hostile and friendly neighbors and ideology (strong tendency towards nationalism). As a result, Japan's contemporary strategic culture outputs are a combination of its pre-1945 and post-1945 strategic culture. The foundation of Japan's identity, values, norms, and perceptual lens is grounded in its pre-1945 strategic culture (nationalism, exceptionalism, and traditionalism), but has been blended with its post-

²⁸⁷ Ellerbeck, "1 Year on: A Timeline of the War in Ukraine."

²⁸⁸ Council of Foreign Relations, "North Korea's Military Capabilities."

1945 strategic culture (pacifism). On the surface, Japanese strategic culture is pacifist. Beneath the surface, Japanese strategic culture is still foundationally pre-1945, which is where remilitarization may be originating from and where the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons could arise from.

Japan's Nuclear Latency. Nuclear latency within Japan's hedging strategy allows Japan to benefit from US extended deterrence while being prepared to build nuclear weapons quickly. Should US extended deterrence fail, Japan has the capability to rapidly produce a small nuclear arsenal. Japan's hedging strategy is very telling of its strategic culture. Japanese strategic culture wants to benefit from US security guarantees by remaining pacifist, but at the same time has developed a modernized military force for 'defensive purposes.' As Japan's dependence on the United States lessens, it becomes more militarized. In the same way, Japan's hedging strategy allows Japan to remain a nuclear pacifist so it can stay under the US nuclear umbrella, but at the same time is building up its nuclear latency for 'peaceful purposes'. As Japan's dependence on US extended deterrence lessens, it may move closer toward the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons.

Japan's Reinterpretation of Article 9. Japan's reinterpretation of Article 9 is perhaps the most indicative sign of Japan's strategic culture shift. Article 9 codified pacifism into Japanese law, making it the biggest hurdle for remilitarization. Japan successfully reinterpreting Article 9 in 1953 and 2014 suggests that pacifism is falling out of favor or might have completely fallen out of favor considering Japan's advanced military force. Japan is reinterpreting Article 9 to remove the hurdle toward remilitarization, as each reinterpretation has allowed Japan to become more militarized. The broader Japanese culture is resisting change, but Japanese strategic culture is successfully dragging Japan along out of perceived necessity. When Japanese strategic culture

perceives that a nuclear-armed Japan is necessary, it may begin to chip away at the folly of nuclear pacifism to garner public support, as it did in the past when moving from pacifism to remilitarization. Japanese strategic culture might already be deconstructing nuclear pacifism by reinterpreting Article 9. It could be preparing to introduce the idea of a nuclear-armed Japan in the future.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Interestingly, Japan was among the non-signatories of the TPNW. Nuclear pacifist Japan joined all the nuclear-armed states in protesting TPNW. While this does not mean Japan is not a nuclear pacifist, it does mean that Japan is not willing for other states to be nuclear pacifists. Nuclear weapons are necessary for Japanese security because Japan views nuclear deterrence as vital in deterring its adversaries. How Japan's belief in nuclear pacifism coincides with its belief in nuclear realism is in US extended deterrence. Japan can afford to remain as nuclear pacifist because the United States is not a nuclear pacifist; Japan is protected by US nuclear weapons by US extended deterrence. Japan explicitly stated that it did not sign the TPNW because it would harm its relationship with the United States (i.e. access to US extended deterrence). If Japan were no longer under the US nuclear umbrella, there would be a clash between its nuclear pacifism and nuclear realism. By not signing the TPNW, Japan could be implicitly saying that it values nuclear realism more than nuclear pacifism. Japan wants to be protected by nuclear weapons, whether by US nuclear weapons or possibly by Japanese nuclear weapons; the TPNW contradicts both options. Japan not signing the TPNW is a strong declaration of its commitment not necessarily to the US–Japan relationship, but ironically to nuclear weapons. While Japan claims to uphold nuclear pacifism, it will not give up nuclear deterrence. In the future, this means that Japan might pursue its own

nuclear weapons for deterrence if the United States no longer provides the nuclear deterrence Japan needs.

Japan Doubting US Security Guarantees. US security guarantees are critical in Japanese strategic culture. Without US security guarantees, Japanese strategic culture would be significantly more militarized. The JSDF might not exist because in its place would be a fully functional modern military force for offensive and defensive purposes. Nuclear pacifism might not exist either because, without US extended deterrence, Japan may have no nuclear deterrence unless it arms itself with nuclear weapons. In essence, US security guarantees keep Japan pacifist and exclusively self-defense paradigm. Japan could remain, pacifist, because the United States protects it. Whenever the United States withdrew protection though, Japan remilitarized, such as in the 1950s when US military occupation of Japan ended. Japan's contingency plan if US nuclear weapons no longer protect them is the nuclear weapons proliferation strategy of hedging. Japan is nuclear latent, is not part of the TPNW, can reinterpret Article 9 if necessary, and has or can acquire the necessary resources to build nuclear weapons rapidly. Arguably, the only factor holding Japan back is US security guarantees, which is one of the primary contingencies of Japan's hedging strategy. Japan can build a cumulative case against the credibility of US extended deterrence and probably is already doing so considering how important nuclear deterrence is to Japan. If Japan increasingly raises doubt about US security guarantees, it could be a sign that Japan is considering the pursuit and development of nuclear weapons.

Limitation of Results. Results are limited to a Japanese strategic culture paradigm. Data was filtered through Japanese strategic culture and presented as a representation of Japan's strategic culture. Put simply, results represent Japan's perspective and biases. Other strategic cultures, such as the United States, China, Russia, and North Korea, was accounted for, but their

perspective was not represented in the results. Research may have left out other key factors in explaining Japan's incentives to consider pursuing or developing nuclear weapons; results were limited to Japan's strategic culture, nuclear latency, interpretation of Article 9 in Japan's Constitution, compliance with the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty, and confidence in US security guarantees.

Recommendations for Future Research. Future research on exploring Japan's incentives to pursue or develop nuclear weapons should include the representation of other strategic cultures, specifically the United States, China, Russia, and North Korea. Including the perspectives of these strategic cultures can provide further insight into Japan's security environment. More importantly, Japan's perspective on these strategic cultures should be incorporated to better understand the dynamic between Japan and the United States, China, Russia, and North Korea. Other factors should be considered as well to provide a comprehensive narrative on Japan's incentives to pursue or develop nuclear weapons.

Summary. Japan as a country has existed for more than 2,500 years. Its strategic culture of militarism developed over thousands of years of warfare but was abruptly abandoned. After 1945, Japanese strategic culture experienced a revolutionary change; Japan became pacifist. The abrupt change in strategic culture did not last long though. The Korean War and the end of the American military occupation in Japan during the 1950s necessitated that Japan remilitarize. Since the creation of the NPRF, Japan has gradually remilitarized over several decades. Contemporary Japan has a powerful modern military force, which is contrary to the pacifist strategic culture it allegedly adopted after 1945. Japan is moving away from a pacifist strategic culture but still embraces nuclear pacifism. However, the remilitarization of Japanese strategic culture could indicate that Japan is in the beginning phases of removing its nuclear pacifism.

Security environment concerns and doubts about US security guarantees prompted Japan to invest in its nuclear latency, reinterpret Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution to allow for militarization, and not sign the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty. The previously mentioned factors may be hinting at Japan's departure from nuclear pacifism; it might trade nuclear pacifism for nuclear realism by pursuing and developing its own nuclear weapons.

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