

Andrew Feinberg

US-Japan Policy 1941-2018:

The Continuation of Great Power Politics

Master's Thesis in Globalization, Transnationalism and Culture

Trondheim, May 2018

Supervisor: Hans Otto Frøland

Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Faculty of Humanities

Department of Historical Studies



NTNU – Trondheim
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

Abstract

This paper examines the durability of the US-Japan alliance by retracing its historical development. It describes how US and Japanese geopolitical goals have shifted from 1941 to the present. It employs the realist geopolitical theory of Professor John Mearsheimer and the soft power theory of Professor Joseph Nye to examine the relevance of Japan to US interests in Asia. The research concludes that Japan remains an indispensable ally primarily due the strategic threat posed by the growing Chinese military presence in the region. In point of fact, the relative weakening of Japanese economic power in the face of a rising China has been the greatest boon to US-Japan relations since the Cold War. In spite of President Trump's personal objections to America's involvement in international institutions, the status quo will likely persevere for several decades due to the continuance of certain geostrategic pressures.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis advisor Hans Otto Frøland and my academic advisor Anette Knutsen for their contributions to this effort. Professor Frøland spent several hours in consultation to help craft and refine this thesis.

Foreword

This paper contains several East Asian names, which ordinarily consist of a surname followed by a given name. I follow naming conventions in this thesis that mirror most Western media, meaning that Japanese given names appear before surnames, while Chinese and Korean given names appear after surnames. See the examples below.

- Shinzo Abe [given name, surname]
- Xi Jinping [surname, given name]
- Kim Jong-un [surname, given name]

Table of Contents

1.0 – Introduction	1
1.1 – Assessment of Relevant Research	5
1.2 – Conceptual Approach: Realist Geopolitical Theory v. Soft Power	8
1.3 – Thesis Structure and Argument Overview	12
2.0 – A Long-Term Assessment of US Strategic Interests in East Asia	14
2.1 – Japan	14
2.2 – Russia	19
2.3 – China	20
2.4 – North Korea	24
2.5 – South Korea	26
2.6 – Conclusion	27
3.0 – Domination and Occupation: 1941 – 1952	29
3.1 – Japan as an Existential Threat	29
3.2 – Demilitarization and Democratization	32
3.3 – The Red Scare in Asia	37
3.4 – Conclusion	40
4.0 – Redemption: 1952 – 1991	41
4.1 – The Economic Miracle	42
4.2 – Japan as a Competitive Threat	47
4.3 – Conclusion	51
5.0 – Stagnation: 1991 – 2018	53
5.1 – The Lost Decade	53
5.2 – The Nye Initiative	55
5.3 – The Post-American Pacific?	59
5.4 – Conclusion	62
6.0 – Thesis Conclusion: The Continuation of Great Power Politics	64
Figures	67
Tables	69
Images	71
Bibliography	74

I have actually always disagreed with the idea that the work that we're involved in [diplomacy] is *chess*. Chess is a game where two people sit there quietly and can actually think out their moves. I think the work that we're involved in is more like *billiards or pool*, where somebody comes and there are a bunch of balls in the middle of the table and they hit a ball hoping that it will get into the pocket on the other side but usually it hits a bunch of other balls in a... some kind of a *non-scientific or predictable way*. It is much more horizontal and dynamic. Now I had a Chinese student who said it was all predictable, but I have never seen billiards played in a predictable way.

- US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (NATO, 2010)

1.0 – Introduction

American foreign policy has undergone a gradual shift in recent decades as world events have reshuffled power dynamics throughout the globe. World War II provided the US with an extremely clear strategic directive—to halt and reverse German and Japanese territorial expansion and restore liberal democracy to those countries. The Cold War represented a similar but more gradual struggle against communist expansion. The US foreign policy establishment advanced national interests and international values through the creation of institutional structures that promoted free market capitalism around the globe. This effort also involved military intervention on behalf of anticommunist allies in Cuba, Korea, Vietnam, and elsewhere.

A decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the attacks of September 11th, 2001 ignited a loosely defined “War on Terror” that has been waged ever since. The lengthy US military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq that followed suit soured much of the American public on the idea of the US playing a leading role in global affairs. The phrase “America First,” originally the rallying cry of WWII-era non-interventionism, evolved into the slogan of President Donald Trump’s own brand of illiberal populism. The belief among many Americans that the US has little obligation to come to the defense of other nations has been remarkably persistent from the early 20th century to the present day. This reality remains apparent regardless of how little non-interventionism has actually been practiced in US foreign policy. This is perhaps an indication of the less-than-democratic tendencies of nominally-democratic institutions in the present-day United States.

Donald Trump, a real estate developer and business tycoon [from the Japanese *taikun*, or “great lord”], ascended to the presidency on a nationalist and protectionist platform. For

decades, Mr. Trump had built a public persona as an advocate for steep tariffs to rectify “one-sided” military and trade agreements. He has repeatedly criticized the UN, NATO, NAFTA, and the TPP for being “unfair” to the US, notwithstanding America’s role in shaping these institutions. Despite Mr. Trump’s very public statements in the late 1980s that the US should force Japan to pay more for its own defense, as president, he has mostly maintained the status quo in the bilateral relationship. The likely reason has been his strong personal friendship with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, cemented during the President’s state visit to Japan in November of 2017.

As many other world leaders had wisely intuited by then, Abe understood that Trump was a man who was simple to placate. Flattery in the form of an homage to his successful 2016 campaign has typically been enough to win his favor. Upon their first meeting, Abe presented Trump with an unusual *omiyage* [a Japanese souvenir of high cultural significance]—a white trucker hat with gold, uppercase lettering: “Donald & Shinzo: Make Alliance Even Greater.” After nine holes of golf and an expensive *teppanyaki* dinner, the effort seemed to have paid off in spades—the president was eager to gush about Abe to the traveling press corps: “our relationship is really extraordinary,” he said. “I don’t think we’ve ever been closer to Japan than we are right now” (Bennett, 2017). It is likely that the president was referring to his own personal feelings towards Japan, but he may have been correct in the broader sense as well.

Polls of US adults conducted near the beginning of the Trump presidency reflect the fact that Trump’s persistent “tough talk” against the “free-riding” Japanese has not resulted in less popular support for the transpacific alliance following his political ascent. In December of 2016, the month after the election, the average American rated their feelings towards Japan as a 60 on a 0° [terrible] to 100° [excellent] scale, up from the low-to-mid-50s throughout the 1990s. Bipartisan consensus, a rarity in contemporary American politics, shone through in the numbers—both self-identified Republicans [58°] and Democrats [62°] gave Japan decent marks. The long-term US military presence in Japan also garnered a higher degree of support than at any time since 2002, at 60 percent. This figure rose from 50 percent in 2010, which was shortly before the 2011 Fukushima disaster and some of North Korea’s more recent provocations (Kafura, 2017), each of which had the effect of bolstering the relationship.

Japan’s transition from existential threat to indefensible ally in the American public imagination since 1945 has been nothing short of extraordinary—comparable only, perhaps, to Germany’s. Although the similarities between Germany and Japan, in terms of their

historical relationship with the US and otherwise, are too numerous to count, Japan is unrivaled in regards to its cultural impact on the US, especially in recent years. The scale of Japan's contribution to American *consumer culture*—in electronics, automobiles, cuisine, and entertainment—has far outweighed the nominal cost of its protection beneath the American security umbrella. Japan's economic relationship with the US, mostly in the form of exports, has been its chief lifeline in the postwar years, its path out of desolation and into prosperity. For its part, the US has offered Japan its most critical diplomatic relationship and has played a decisive role in domestic political reform within the country (Cooper, 2014, pp. 8-9).

Although Japan represents only a chapter in American's military history, the US is the beginning, middle, and end of Japan's defensive calculus. This has been the great power imbalance that has existed between the countries since 1945. Grounded perhaps in the Buddhist understanding of universal impermanence, the Japanese have been wise to question the stability of the alliance at every turn. Certain historical focal points have shaken the relationship, but it has persevered remarkably well, *especially in times of unexpected crisis involving an external actor or event*. This thesis will examine the US relationship with Japan from 1941 onward and account for the factors of realist geopolitical strategy and public diplomacy, so-called "soft power." I will respond to the following research question: *which factor, hard or soft power, has played the more decisive role in bilateral relations between the US and Japan? Furthermore, how is the future of the alliance therefore likely to unfold?*

This question rests upon the controversial assumption that there is something tangible to be gained from the study of past events for the purpose of contemporary statecraft, what Professors Graham Allison and Niall Ferguson have called "applied history." Building upon the arguments of Ernest May and Richard Neustadt, they have reintroduced the idea that historical relationships provide policy-makers with certain perspectives, clues, and assessments that contribute to superior decision-making. In their view, the foreign policy blunders of recent US administrations of both major parties betray both a disdain for historical insights and a desperate need for them (Allison & Ferguson, 2016). This political culture is typified in President Trump's decision to name his son-in-law, a 37-year-old real estate developer with no experience in foreign policy, as chief US peace envoy between the Israelis and Palestinians. It might also be represented by the president's proud and repetitive use of the phrase "America First" despite its dark history as a rallying cry for Nazi-sympathizers.

Although most foreign policy actors would agree that history plays a role in diplomacy, it has been less rigorously applied in the public sector than other social sciences such as economics or geography. This is likely due to the fact that the public has often viewed history as less *predictable*, as noted by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the beginning of this thesis. Her predecessor Henry Kissinger, a vocal advocate of “applied history,” once wrote, “history is not a cookbook offering pretested recipes. It teaches by analogy, not by maxims.” Kissinger went on to write that “each generation must discover for itself what situations are in fact comparable,” a *civic duty* with no obvious set of instructions (Allison & Ferguson, 2016). The creativity and personal judgement that is therefore necessary to compare historical situations in order to illuminate the potential for conflict or resolution leaves “applied history” open to the criticism that it is *unscientific*, a mere “soft subject” like literary analysis or second-language acquisition. Despite this criticism, the political challenges that societies face today *necessitate* that we build a more institutionalized approach to historical research. As citizens interested in a world that *progresses* over time, we have no choice but to advance the cause of “applied history.” For our leaders, the question of whether or not there is historical precedent for a given action should be a *guiding curiosity* that *actively* informs policy.

The fact that the current president of the United States has demonstrated little interest or even *curiosity* in historical precedent could have very real and visible repercussions in relations with allies and adversaries alike. President Trump’s stated positions on Japan, China, and North Korea have repeatedly shifted back and forth during his presidency. Trump has used Twitter to celebrate the prospect of top-level nuclear talks with North Korea without acknowledging that the North Koreans reneged on the denuclearization promises they made to the US in the 1990s. Because the president’s chaotic manner of governance does not have *precedence* in postwar US - Asia policy, allies like Japan have become increasingly anxious while adversaries such as China have boldly begun to assert their power in new and *unprecedented* ways.

I contend that since foreign relations do not take place in a vacuum, the role that “third parties” play and have played in US-Japan relations has yet to be given full recognition in the current literature. Although Russia and North Korea make occasional appearances in this drama, China is the chief third-party element that has affected and contextualized the US-Japan relationship, since neither Russia nor North Korea have shown the potential to challenge the American-Japanese dominance of the Pacific. Russian foreign policy shows a

far greater preoccupation with accumulating and maintaining power in the Western world— notably in formerly Soviet countries such as Georgia and Ukraine. Although North Korea drew global attention after its 1950 invasion of South Korea and its more recent nuclear provocations, it maintains a destitute economy [Table 7 shows its nominal GNI] entirely dependent on China, the same country that came to its rescue during the Korean War.

China's status as a potential regional hegemon, grounded in its massive human, geographical, and material resources, has served as the most prominent backdrop for US foreign policy in Asia. Since Mao's 1949 victory over the Nationalists, Japan has represented America's counterweight to Chinese power. In times of crisis in the Japanese state vis-à-vis China and its allies, American support for the US-Japan alliance has been at its highest. On the contrary, between 1975 and 1995 or so, when Japan pulled farthest ahead of China in terms of development, the alliance seemed least necessary to American observers in and outside of government. This equating of material wealth with military capability supports the offensive realist perspective of foreign policy, which I will discuss further later on in the thesis. It suggests that as China grows ever more powerful in the years ahead, the importance of the US-Japan alliance will only continue to strengthen.

1.1 – Assessment of Relevant Research

The conceptual grounding of this thesis is John Mearsheimer's theory of offensive realism in comparison with Joseph Nye's theory of soft power. For this purpose, I will make frequent reference to Professor Mearsheimer's 2001 work "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics" and Professor Nye's 1990 *Foreign Policy* article "Soft Power," in which they detail their respective approaches to international relations. I am familiar with their work from my undergraduate studies in political science, and I chose to compare these theories due to their lasting impact on the scholarly debate and the extreme contrast they present against one another. *The Economist* characterized Mearsheimer's work in direct opposition to "the optimistic view of geopolitics that grew up after the cold war's end in 1989." Joseph Nye's work on soft power best represents this "optimistic view" for the purposes of this discussion. As the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs under President Bill Clinton, Nye himself was responsible for guiding the US and Japan out of an era of historic tension, a task for which he deservedly earned high praise. For this reason especially, I found it important to bring his work into the thesis.

The historical background of this paper employs previous scholarship of US-Japan relations. The two compendia I reference the most in the thesis are the Brookings Institution's

“U.S.-Japan Relations in a Changing World” and the Council on Foreign Relations’ [CFR] “The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future.” Both Brookings and the CFR are American research institutions of political science whose works gather the contributions of the most renowned experts in the field of foreign policy. As public policy think tanks, their aim is to promote social science research within the US government. Prominent contributions to this paper include Professor Steven K. Vogel of UC Berkeley [Brookings] and Paul S. Giarra, former Senior Country Director for Japan for the Office of the Secretary of Defense [CFR].

The Brookings Institution describes itself as “devoted to independent, in-depth research that leads to pragmatic and innovative ideas on how to solve problems facing society.” Notably, the organization “does not take positions on issues” (The Brookings Institution, 2016). As such, its analysis of historical developments is typically devoid of any policy prescriptions. Brookings’ compendium “U.S.-Japan Relations in a Changing World,” echoes the non-partisan spirit of its publisher. Although all of the nine contributors are US nationals, several individual chapters received critique and feedback from Japanese scholars prior to publication (Vogel, 2002, p. viii). The project’s sponsorship from the US-Japan Foundation may well have affected the commentary in a pro-alliance direction, but it should be noted that the *failures* of bilateral dialogue receive just as much attention throughout the compendium as more successful binational initiatives.

Each author’s chapter focuses on one aspect of the alliance, although some common themes bind them together. Michael Green from the National Security Council and Keith Nitta of UC Berkeley devote their essays to explaining the asymmetrical balance of power between the US and Japan. Leonard Schoppa of the University of Virginia and Laurie Freeman of UC Santa Barbara discuss how domestic politics and media have framed the alliance in varying positive or negative terms. Lastly, four scholars, William Grimes of Boston University, Adam Posen of the Institute for International Economics, and—jointly—Steven Vogel and John Zysman, both of UC Berkeley, contribute essays on the economic relationship between the US and its chief Pacific ally, detailing the development of trade and technological competition in particular.

In a similar fashion to Brookings, the Council on Foreign Relations prides itself on its ideological independence and “takes no *institutional* positions on matters of policy.” Its Board of Directors includes the centrist CNN commentator Fareed Zakaria, Morgan Stanley CEO James Gorman, as well as former Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. Although its leadership is composed of a fair number of intellectuals of both Democratic and

Republican persuasion, it has earned a reputation as a “globalist,” or “pro-internationalist” think tank. The CFR describes its founding in 1921 as an attempt to remedy the fact that “Americans needed to be better prepared for significant responsibilities and decision-making in world affairs” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). It should therefore come as little surprise that the CFR’s compendium “The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future” concludes that an *even closer* bilateral relationship between the US and Japan is necessary for the furtherance of their individual and common interests.

The essays in the compendium are explicitly divided into four sections, each pertaining to one aspect of the alliance. The first section outlines the geostrategic environment for the US and Japan, focusing primarily on the rise of Chinese regional power in the aftermath of the Cold War. The essays in section two (which include three essays by Paul S. Giarra, mentioned above) discuss the evolution and prospects for Japanese-American military cooperation, again with an emphasis on what Niall Ferguson would call “applied history,” the analysis of historical developments for the purpose of future strategic planning. The third and shortest section of the compendium describes how domestic politics in Japan have shifted over time. Notably, neither essay in this section addresses American attitudes due the alliance’s disproportionately high significance in the Japanese political debate. The fourth and final section, as might be intuited from the Brookings compendium, describes how the shifting economic dynamic between the US, Japan, and China has affected regional security.

Lastly, this thesis employs original social science research conducted on macroeconomic data, mostly from the World Bank. The full extent of the data is visible at the end of the paper, in sections entitled “Figures” and “Tables.” In order to assess the geopolitical situation in East Asia in terms of defensive realism, I needed to gather reliable macroeconomic data as far back as records would allow. In terms of Japanese and Chinese gross national income [GNI] and gross domestic product [GDP], the World Bank data stops at 1960. Reliable figures on population, armed forces, and nuclear arsenal size are also relevant factors at play, but their availability in the public record is rather sporadic. I was only able to obtain Japanese and Chinese armed forces numbers for 1985 [Table 4] and 2015 [Table 7]. North Korean economic data is notoriously difficult to gather given the closed nature of its society, but 2015 GNI per capita estimates from Reuters in combination with the World Bank’s population estimates provided a clear image of the weakness of the North

Korean economy. In terms of Mearsheimer's power calculus, it fails to even appear on the radar [Table 7 shows the relative GNI for China, Japan, and North Korea].

1.2 – Conceptual Approach: Realist Geopolitical Theory v. Soft Power

Much of this paper's historical analysis will be grounded in the concept of offensive realism as outlined by Professor John Mearsheimer in "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics" (2001). This approach to international relations presupposes that all actions between states reflect the imbalance of military power between them. In a long-term historical perspective, war is both the primary mechanism weaker states use to gain power and what stronger states use to maintain it. Aggressive conflict establishes a state's dominion over natural resources, leading to tax income and military investment, which in turn generates the potential for further conquest. *In this respect, economic and military power are fundamentally intertwined and—to some degree—interchangeable.* Ultimately, only a limited number of titanic "great powers" dominate the global stage in any given period. The status of global peace depends upon both the number and relative strength of these actors at any given time (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 12-13).

Three eras described by Mearsheimer pertain to my analysis of the US-Japan bilateral relationship: 1941 to 1945—a time of "unbalanced multipolarity" between several great powers, 1945 to 1990—a period of "balanced bipolarity" between the US and the Soviet Union, and 1990 to today—a transitional era of "monopolar" American hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 356-358). These three periods roughly correspond to the three major stages of US-Japan relations: military conflict, anticommunist partnership, and stable military alliance given the backdrop of an ascendant China. The US occupation of Japan (1945 to 1952) overlaps the first and second stages; I argue in this thesis that American geopolitical strategy shifted suddenly halfway through the occupation in response to communist advances throughout Eurasia.

The stunning growth of the Japanese economy between 1960 and 1991 [shown in nominal GDP in Figure 1] and the persistent trade imbalances between Japan and the US [Figures 2 & 3, again in nominal USD] have at times strained the American public's support for the alliance. From a traditional realist perspective, a country as wealthy as Japan should not require outside protection. Frustrations about Japanese "free riding" have been especially prevalent among US corporate leaders, who have struggled to sell their products and services in Japan due to its labyrinthine business practices. Since the Nixon administration, every American president has attempted to craft his own bilateral regulatory framework with Japan,

with mixed degrees of success. In addition to US military installments, trade has been a central point of contention between the two governments. This was especially apparent between the establishment of the Nixon Doctrine in 1969 and the founding of the World Trade Organization [WTO] in 1995.

Since President Trump entered office in 2017, his *modus operandi* has been characterized by an open disdain for nearly all forms of multilateralism, including the international organizations the US has participated in since WWII. The president's erratic and unpredictable behavior in his first months in office have understandably cast doubt on the US commitment to such institutions. The president's willingness to disregard the postwar system of alliances in favor of judging a country's worth through *personal* friendship or animosity presents a genuine strategic challenge to US allies at the present time. However, geopolitical realism, the power of institutional inertia, and a certain amount of status quo bias all suggest there is little cause for concern in the long-term.

In the year 2018, realist geopolitical theory from the standpoint of military power is especially pertinent to the regional dynamic between China, Japan, and the US. Writing in 2001, Mearsheimer predicted that China's population and economic growth forecasts would portend a multi-polar future for East Asia, such as the one that existed before 1945. What makes the prospect of a wealthy China so worrying for world peace is that the combination of China's size and power would dwarf even the US military capacity in the region and perhaps throughout the world. Mearsheimer wrote that an economically developed China would ensure that the US retained its troops in Japan for the purpose of *containment* and *rebalancing*. He states that confrontations between China and the US-Japan alliance would likely intensify in the years to come (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 400-401).

Since the release of "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics" at the turn of the 21st century, the Chinese economy has indeed expanded dramatically [Figure 1 shows the rise in the PRC's nominal GDP]. China has begun to exert its regional great power status in new and threatening ways, just as Mearsheimer predicted. As wealth and power find a new equilibrium in Northeast Asia, the US strategy in the region has been forced to adapt accordingly. The present situation has entailed a series of "close calls" between China and the US over issues such as Taiwan, the South China Sea, and the North Korean nuclear weapons program. Mearsheimer argues that these contemporary crises provide a solid argument for the continuance of great power politics in the 21st century, in contrast to MIT Professor Stephen Van Evera's claim that the Asian region was "primed for peace" at the end of the Cold War.

Were the region a bastion of order and stability, the hundred thousand US troops in East Asia (at the time of Mearsheimer's writing) would be serving no appreciable purpose. Their presence itself is a testament to America's continued weariness vis-à-vis China and its rebellious ally, North Korea (ibid, p. 377).

In his 1990 *Foreign Policy* article "Soft Power," Professor Joseph Nye discusses what he calls "the changing nature of power in world politics." Gradually throughout the Cold War, the global political environment began to feel the effects of non-state actors in very visible ways. In economics, communications, and technology, globalization altered the traditional, realist model of state power and brought greater focus to individuals, non-governmental organizations [NGOs], trans-national corporations [TNCs], and cultural forces. After all, the Soviet Union collapsed without a single direct military confrontation with the West (Nye, 1990, pp. 153-156).

Although he presents soft power as a novel idea in international politics, he characterizes it as a *supplementary* approach to the conventional, realist understanding of the discipline. In his eyes, it exists on a *separate level* in the hierarchy of state interests. Nye does not argue that states are irrelevant or even less relevant than non-state actors, but that these additional factors play an outsized role in foreign relations given how relatively little attention they receive from the academic literature. He writes that the instruments of power have changed with the times in ways that offensive realism does not account for given the wider variety of tools states now have at their disposal. Due to the costliness of military exertion, economic ties now play a relatively greater role in ties between countries with imbalanced military power (ibid, pp. 156-159).

One of Nye's major disagreements with Mearsheimer is that the former argues that economic and military power are no longer directly interchangeable, referencing Japan as an example:

There is no economic obstacle to Japan's developing a major nuclear or conventional force, but the political cost both at home and in the reaction of other countries would be considerable. Militarization might then reduce rather than increase Japan's ability to reach its ends (ibid, pp. 159-160).

While it is certainly true that Japan has earned a great deal of international soft power for its dovish foreign policy and constitutional commitment to pacifism, its example is fairly particular and difficult to reproduce elsewhere. Although alliances with superpowers have rendered anxieties about sovereignty rather anachronistic for a number of nation-states (such

as Canada and Denmark) few countries outside of Japan have such a strict legal commitment to pacifism, enshrined into their constitution by a conquering power. Even today, few nations have the luxury of placing an especially high premium on outside perception.

Recently, several foreign countries have appealed to Japan's unique appreciation for *soft power* in a quite literal way, using plushy cartoon mascots to aid in international diplomacy. In June of 2013, the Embassy of Israel in Tokyo announced the arrival of "Shaloum-chan," an effortlessly *kawaii* parrot mascot, in order to soften the country's image in the eyes of the Japanese public. In the words of Ronen Medzini, the head of the embassy's press and information corps:

Since we are trying to find an interesting way to introduce Israel to Japan, we decided to use the Japanese pop culture as a platform to introduce the *soft* side or the *real* side of Israel as we see it.

Israel is hardly alone with this approach. The diplomatic missions of Ecuador, Columbia, and the Dominican Republic have launched similar "*yuru-chara*" or "soft character" campaigns in Japan. In addition, both Israel and Finland have launched *anime*-style videos that build upon their new branding efforts (Masangkay, 2013). I argue that such explicit appeals to pop culture are not a sign of the *meaningfulness* of a new style of diplomacy, but rather a recognition of Japan's unique diplomatic predicament. The necessity of a "Shaloum-chan" in the nuclear age is a testament to Japan's inability to deal independently in hard power.

Professor Nye notes in "Soft Power" that although this kind of "hearts and minds" politics is simple to define, it is particularly challenging to *quantify*. Even so, it is simple enough to recognize it when it is slipping away. To use a historical example, the US installed the Shah of Iran with a quick and cheap military campaign in 1953, yet the pace of human events and the spread of global *knowledge* had advanced so much by the 1979 Iranian Revolution that such an action at that time would have been practically unimaginable. The average Iranian's *awareness* of international politics had advanced beyond a point of no return. One only needs to turn to the US campaigns in Vietnam and Iraq to recognize how materially expensive regime change has since become (ibid, p. 162).

As American hard power has gradually waned in relative terms, some forms of its soft power are as prominent as ever given the global dominance of the English language and the sizeable market presence of the Hollywood film industry. Quintessential "American values" of ethnic pluralism, individual liberty, and openness towards the world continue to resonate

with non-Americans across the globe. This reality has been at odds with the popular narrative of US decline, as envisioned through the lens of Mearsheimer's understanding of *realpolitik*. America's strength in achieving what it desires in the world, Nye argues, lies in *both* its military might and its ability to put forward a worthwhile appeal to more universal, liberal aspirations (Nye, 1990, pp. 162-171). Reading his article in 2018, this final point sounds rather anachronistic given the stated "America First" foreign policy objectives of the sitting US president. Wilsonian internationalism appears to be completely absent from the Trump administration's agenda. Only in its aftermath will we understand the full implications of such a posture.

Although Mearsheimer and Nye are in full disagreement about the role of subnational and international pressures and that of soft power, there is a fair degree of unity between them regarding the purpose of the US presence in Asia, something Mearsheimer mentions in "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics." They agree that a power vacuum would envelop East Asia upon a total US force withdrawal given the position the US currently occupies as a regional balancer. "The U.S. presence is a force for stability," Nye is quoted from a 1995 *Foreign Affairs* article, "reducing the need for arms buildups and deterring the rise of hegemonic forces [China]." Both scholars would certainly agree with the fact that economic ties have inextricably linked the US, China, and Japan since the 1970s, but it remains unclear in the soft power understanding of regional politics how and to what degree the multitude of non-state actors will shape East Asian stability in future decades (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 377).

1.3 – Thesis Structure and Argument Overview

One thing is clear in the "hard power versus soft power" interplay between the US and its allies and China. While the battle for wealth and ideas has waged on since the 1970s, it has been the regional security situation that has dominated the headlines and the concerns of the national security apparatus. For all of Nye's persuasive rhetoric on the power of global opinion, in recent decades, China and its ally North Korea have committed heinous human rights violations without any serious pushback from the international community.

Although as liberal-minded individuals we may find it appealing to believe otherwise, for every country the global community has justly "punished" for its transgressions throughout history, just as many if not more have continued their actions unabated due to their superior military capabilities. Popular culture illustrates this point best—in an early episode of the HBO series *Game of Thrones*, Lord Baelish threatens Cersei Lannister by

claiming that “knowledge is power.” He says he could ruin her at any moment given his ability to spread the embarrassing details of her past. She responds by ordering her guards to kill him before reversing the order at the last moment. “*Power is power,*” she says. Much like how a corporate monopoly can afford to engage in practices that deeply upset its own customers without penalty [Comcast, Facebook, Microsoft], for a state with total control of its own security, a positive image is merely a secondary concern.

In this thesis, I will articulate how hard power has played a far more decisive role in US-Japan relations due to the interactions the two countries have had with other actors in the East Asian region, particularly China. I will begin with a long-term assessment of US strategic interests in regards to Japan, Russia, China, and the Koreas from the 1930s through to the present day. I will continue to present an overview of the regional security and economic situation from 1941 to 2018 through the lens of US-Japan relations. I will divide the historical background into the following periods: 1941-1952 [Domination and Occupation], 1952-1991 [Redemption], and 1991-2018 [Stagnation]. At the end of each period, I will answer a chapter research question pertaining to the geopolitics of the era. Each answer will play a role in supporting my overall research conclusion, outlined in the final section.

2.0 – A Long-Term Assessment of US Strategic Interests in East Asia

In the following pages, I will explore the historical development of American strategic interests in its alliance with Japan and detail how these concerns have played into the dynamic with other regional actors. I will focus on Russia, America's Cold War rival; China, the once-and-future potential hegemonic power; and the two Koreas, the highly combustible borderlands between China and Japan. I will answer the following: *to what extent has the US relationship with Japan depended on their respective relationships to third-party actors?* I contend that US strategic interests have always focused on countering America's largest geopolitical rival, even in times of peace. From mid-1945 to 2018, the position has shifted between three Asian nations: first Japan, then the Soviet Union, and then China. US foreign policy has often entailed partnering with others to counterbalance the rival, regardless of who the actors happen to be. Both Madeleine Albright and John Mearsheimer characterize international politics as a game of pool, and the size, position, and alliance of each pool ball is critical to understanding one's own position. As all three factors have shifted over time, so too has US strategy in the region.

2.1 – Japan

Japanese foreign policy and public attitudes towards the United States have undergone a series of shifts throughout the relationship's 165-year history. Japan has transitioned from an isolated, pre-industrial, feudal society in 1850—to an imperialistic, expansionist power by 1940—to a rehabilitated, prosperous and democratic society by 1980. Each transformation took place in part due to Western pressures, in particular from the United States. Since the early 19th century, the US has envisioned the Pacific as the final frontier of its own geographic realm of influence, setting it on course to confront rival powers across the sea.

American relations with Japan date back to the 1850s, a time when US territorial expansion in mainland North America was drawing to a close and Washington sought to extend its reach into the Pacific. US foreign policy placed a strong emphasis on the promotion of free trade, even if it entailed the use of military force. In July of 1853, fifteen years before the Meiji Restoration returned supreme governing powers to the Japanese emperor, US Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived in Edo Bay on behalf of President Millard Fillmore to pursue a diplomatic mission with Japan (Gordon, 2003, p. 49). Eight months later, in March of 1854, the US and Japan granted each other formal recognition through the "Treaty of Peace and Amity" during President Pierce's administration. The US

established its first consulate in 1855, and the president asked businessman Townsend Harris to serve as its consul general (US Department of State, n.d.).

The US and Japanese national governments signed the Harris Treaty, or the “Treaty of Amity and Commerce,” in 1858, opening Japan’s ports to foreign trade for the first time in over two centuries. The Tariff Convention of 1866 lowered Japan’s import tariffs and ended the country’s brief trade surplus. The trade framework Japan had agreed to greatly impacted its ability to regulate its own customs, a privilege it lacked until just before the First World War (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, pp. 347-348). The trade regime limited the country’s ability to protect its nascent industries during its early industrialization and led to the popular belief within Japan that the country was on a course towards foreign domination and humiliation.

The revolutionaries who overthrew the Tokugawa Shogunate in the late 1860s drew their motivation from the sense that the government in Edo had failed in its duty to preserve Japanese national sovereignty. The new rulers sought to overcome a sense of economic and military asymmetry in the face of Western powers such as Britain and the United States. They believed that Japan’s political and geographic fragmentation had prevented it from being able to adequately defend itself and pursue its national interests. Through reforms that would westernize and industrialize the country, they envisioned and realized a Japan that could compete on the global stage against other great powers (Gordon, 2003, pp. 61-62).

By the late 1920s, Japan had industrialized, secured a foothold on several mainland territories [notably Korea], and secured three military victories—against China in 1895, against Russia in 1905, and against the Central Powers in 1918. Even given the backdrop of such impressive national achievements, the ruling government’s poor economic management during the Great Depression fueled an antidemocratic, ultranationalist, and militaristic backlash led by far-right ideologues, disaffected military officials, and opportunistic politicians. Prime Minister Osachi Hamaguchi’s efforts to maintain a national posture of internationalism through an arms control agreement at the 1930 London Naval Conference sparked outrage from the Japanese far-right. Later that year, Hamaguchi survived an assassination attempt by an ultranationalist radical, although Hamaguchi passed away less than a year thereafter. The attack ushered in a period of assassinations and attempted coups that defaced the legacy of Japan’s democratic reforms during the Taisho period between 1912 and 1926 (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 195).

A series of dramatic and unanticipated events beginning in 1931 set Japan on the path to global isolation and conflict that would ultimately entail war with the United States. Japanese field army officers stationed in Manchuria grew concerned that the Chinese nationalists led by Chiang Kai-Shek would advance into the region and take advantage of the chaos within the Japanese government to infringe upon its sovereignty. As a consequence, the officers provoked a confrontation with the Chinese along the South Manchurian Railway in September of 1931. The “Manchurian Incident” drew concern from Prime Minister Wakatsuki in Tokyo as well as the League of Nations and United States, all of whom insisted upon a swift and peaceful resolution. Wakatsuki resigned as a result of internal political pressures, and the succeeding government took a far more jingoistic stance by moving even greater numbers of troops into Manchuria in order to establish a puppet state. The action resulted in a 1933 condemnation by the League of Nations, leading to Japan’s withdrawal from the body. In two short years, Japan had assumed the role of aggressor and drew heightened consternation from the international community (Tipton, 2002, p. 121).

The stiff tariffs rates that the Japanese government introduced on heavy industry in the early 1930s were intended to shield the country from reliance on foreign manufacturing to prepare for a possible war, yet they resulted in much slower economic growth and the very resource shortages that fueled the military’s drive towards expansionism. In 1932, the Imperial Diet raised the tariff on pig iron to 15.2 percent. A year later in 1933, most other dutiable imports saw a tariff rate increase to 21 percent, up from the 15.5 percent rate set in 1910. This resulted in an artificial buildup in heavy industry and a consequential increase in demand for raw mineral resources. By the mid-1930s, the national economy desperately needed raw materials from beyond the Japanese archipelago (Yasuba, 1996, pp. 551-555).

Japan and China experienced an uneasy peace until 1937, when a small skirmish outside Beijing at the Marco Polo Bridge unraveled the truce and precipitated open warfare. The Japanese army won a series of victories in quick succession, taking Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and the capital of Nanjing by year’s end. The Japanese military committed especially heinous crimes against the civilian population during its occupation of Nanjing. Estimates remain inconclusive, yet the historical consensus states that Japanese soldiers murdered between 100 thousand and 300 thousand civilians and military personnel and committed mass rape following the capture of the capital. The international community now recognizes the incident as one of the gravest crimes in human history (Tipton, 2002, p. 122).

Japan's rapid military takeover of China drew enormous resources away from the Japanese mainland, leading to severe material shortages on the domestic front. By 1940, the military comprised 38 percent of Japan's annual consumption of iron and steel.

Consequentially, the relative prices of raw materials imports, such as coal and iron ore, rose 230 percent and 80 percent respectively between 1932 and 1940. The high prices in combination with Tokyo's colonization policy led to a mass exodus of Japanese civilians to both older and newer colonial holdings, especially during the mid-to-late 1930s. A total of 310 thousand Japanese citizens moved from the mainland to an overseas colony between 1935 and 1940 (Yasuba, 1996, pp. 554-556).

This first stage of the Second Sino-Japanese War saw Tokyo battle both Chinese nationalist forces and communist guerillas, yet Japanese military leaders neither anticipated nor desired a war with the United States. They remained unpersuaded that the US would enter a conflict in which it had such little material interest, fearing instead a Soviet intervention on behalf of the Chinese communists. The US Congress and its constituents generally favored abstention from the conflict, although American sympathies towards China grew stronger as the years progressed, due in part to the soft power influence of the China lobby, the pro-Chinese mass media environment ("The Good Earth" won the Pulitzer Prize in 1932 and became a hit film in 1937), and President Roosevelt's own advisors. US Secretary of War Henry Stimson took an especially hardline stance on the Japanese threat to America's global interests, warning Roosevelt that "the only way to treat Japan is not to give her anything" (Tipton, 2002, p. 122).

The Japanese Empire's rapid territorial expansion drew concern from American foreign policy analysts given its direct parallels with contemporaneous victories in Europe on the part of Nazi Germany. Before long, these parallels became diplomatic reality. A series of German military victories between 1939 and 1940 had persuaded the Japanese leadership that the country would be best served by joining forces with fellow far-right, anticommunist powers. It formalized an alliance with Germany and Italy in the Tripartite Pact of September, 1940. To many global observers, the fascist appetite for domination and subjugation appeared utterly insatiable. As soon as 1938, Japan had declared its intention to establish a new order in East Asia to free the region from Western influence. By 1940, this claim expanded to include not only Japanese territory, but other more peripheral nations throughout Southeast Asia—the so-called "Greater East Asia Prosperity Sphere" (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 272). Even though the project's stated goal was the advancement of all Asians, it

was clear to all involved that Japanese culture and interests were to stand superior to the rest (McCormack, 2007, p. 6).

The first concrete step the United States took in opposition to Japanese expansion was an iron and steel embargo after Japan ordered troops into Indo-China in September of 1940, the same month it allied with Hitler and Mussolini. By July of 1941, the US had frozen all war materials exports to Japan, including American oil shipments. The iron, steel, and oil embargos greatly exacerbated Japan's already dire resource shortage and further emboldened proponents of the country's expansionist agenda. The US Secretary of State Condell Hull issued a demand (the "Hull Note") to the Japanese government on November 26, 1941, calling on the country to enact radical changes to scale back its imperialist ambitions. The Japanese government took great offense at the demand. They carried out their first attack on the US less than two weeks later at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in an effort to *disincentivize* a wider conflict (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 272).

From the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 to the implementation of the "Dodge line" reforms of 1949, the United States' primary national security concern with regards to Japan was to defang its aggression through military domination, demilitarization, and eventual democratization. Worries about Japan's militaristic tendencies initially led the US State Department to strongly consider an occupation lasting several decades or more. They had envisioned the Republic of China as America's chief anticommunist ally in East Asia, but Mao's victory against Chiang Kai-shek in 1949 and North Korea's invasion of South Korea a year later shocked the American foreign policy establishment and upended those plans. It became profoundly evident that the US occupation of Japan was not taking place in a vacuum—American interests in the country ultimately depended upon the dynamic with other actors, and with China in particular.

From the 1949 communist victory in China to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the primary function of America's relationship with Japan was to halt the advance of communism in the Asia-Pacific region. Communist expansion in Eastern Europe, China, and Korea contributed to the sense that a chain reaction would ensue, the so-called "domino theory." The new relationship between the US and Japan represented an asymmetrical strategic bargain—American forces remained in Japanese territory, practically indefinitely, both to defend its national sovereignty and ensure its free access to global markets. In exchange, Japan committed to hosting American troops and partnering with the US on a host of diplomatic and security issues. Although the alliance was built upon an uneven balance of

power between the US and Japan, the partnership proved markedly beneficial for both countries over time (Ikenberry & Inoguchi, 2003, pp. 21-22).

After the Cold War came to an end in 1991, the strategic rationale behind the transpacific alliance faltered to a degree. Japan's failure to provide even modest military support during the Gulf War despite its considerable wealth undoubtedly strained the relationship. Its longevity was further cast into doubt as communism retreated globally and American superpower status appeared relatively unchallenged. The events of September 11th, 2001 abruptly ended any academic contemplation on "the end of history" and reminded the Western world of the ongoing threats to the global order. Beijing's aggressive posturing in the East and South China Seas and Pyongyang's nuclear weapons development grew ever more worrisome in the early 2010s, readying the United States for a renewed commitment to its alliance with Japan. The governance of the center-right Liberal Democratic Party from 2012 onwards has ensured even greater Japanese support for the relationship and a stronger willingness to contribute more to ensure its viability in the decades to come (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 1).

2.2 – Russia

Although Russia and Japan fought on opposite sides of WWII, they were not formally at war until the final week of the conflict. The USSR declared war on Japan on August 8, 1945 and took the opportunity to invade and annex four small islands just north of Hokkaido, islands that Russia had ceded to Japan in the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda. The Soviets ethnically cleansed the population of nearly 20 thousand Japanese and deported them to mainland Japan. Although the Japanese government renounced "all right, title and claim to the Kuril Islands" in the 1951 Treaty of San Francisco, the dispute remains unresolved for two reasons: Russia never signed the treaty nor any other agreement formally ending hostilities with Japan. In addition, Japan itself does not recognize the islands in question as belonging to the Kuril Island chain. Although Japan and the Soviet Union restored diplomatic ties in 1956, they failed to agree on a peace deal due to the territorial dispute, which has remained unsolved ever since (BBC, 2003).

The Soviet Union's defeat in the Cold War softened international fears of Russian aggression—perhaps undeservedly so, since history is rife with examples of national humiliation spurring dreams of empire. Indeed, Vladimir Putin's Russia has been far more interventionist in its foreign policy than one might imagine given the country's lackluster economic standing in recent years. In 2008, Moscow invaded the Georgian territories of

Abkhazia and South Ossetia to establish puppet states in the Caucasus Mountains. Six years later in 2014, Russia invaded and annexed the Ukrainian territory of Crimea and has sponsored separatist militias in eastern Ukraine ever since. It is highly unlikely that Russia will settle its territorial dispute with Japan anytime soon due to its current maximalist stance. The discovery of natural resource deposits in the waters surrounding the contested islands further casts a Russo-Japanese territorial settlement into doubt (BBC, 2003).

The current geopolitical climate has positioned Russia in greater opposition to US interests than at any point since the Cold War. President Putin has built a strongman cult of personality in his country, consolidating all political power in the hopes of reasserting Russian greatness. He has boldly flaunted his country's military capacity, even going as far as to depict the nuclear annihilation of the US state of Florida in his national address (Cohen, 2018). Although a confrontation between Japan and Russia is less likely than with China or North Korea, the current atmosphere of international politics does not preclude such an alarming prospect.

2.3 – China

In the decades following Nixon's breakthrough visit to Beijing in 1972, the Chinese economy has thrived. This has been especially apparent in the first two decades of the 21st century, a time when Japanese economic power and US military power have both faced humbling setbacks. China's nominal gross domestic product was roughly a third of Japan's in 2000 [Figure 1], but by 2017, following nearly two decades of stagnation in the Japanese economy, the proportions had reversed (International Monetary Fund, 2017). In its "pivot" to East Asia, the Obama administration sought to use the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement as a mechanism to counterbalance Chinese economic influence and strengthen US ties to Japan (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 2). This initiative faltered, however, after President Trump assumed office in 2017 and announced a US withdrawal from the agreement days later.

The rapid development of the Chinese economy is one of the central historically significant narratives of our time, and in accordance with realist geopolitical theory, an extensive buildup of Chinese military power has ensued. This represents a troubling prospect for US allies in the region and has bolstered support for the American security umbrella. The PRC's actions in the waters to its east have raised alarm among the Japanese and Taiwanese governments, who are fearful of mainland aggression for separate reasons. Japan has long defended the territorial integrity of the uninhabited Senkaku Islands due to the archipelago's

location in strategically and materially valuable waters. For its part, Taiwan maintains a delicate pseudo-independence from Beijing, a status that could quickly change should the mainland feel forced to intervene. For Japan and Taiwan, the idea of a territorially aggressive PRC revives old anxieties harkening back to the world before the US military presence in Asia.

It is important to note that as the other Allied forces celebrated the end of World War II in 1945, the status of the Chinese government remained an open question, just as it had before the Japanese invasion in 1937. In the early years of the American occupation of Japan, the US hoped for and expected a Nationalist victory in the Chinese Civil War, as China was to become America's bulwark against the communist incursion into Asia. Mao Zedong's 1949 victory over the Nationalists fundamentally transformed the American strategic calculus and heightened the significance of the US alliances with Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, which would assume that role instead.

Japan and the PRC established diplomatic relations as early as 1972 and have since developed a highly significant degree of bilateral trade. Japanese industrialists were eager to take advantage of the potential of the Chinese market, and their patience in regards to the profitability of their investments allowed them to outcompete their Western counterparts. Japan's geographic proximity to China provided them with an additional advantage, as did close ties between the mid-sized Japanese firms and larger Japanese trading companies that conducted business offshore. By the early 1980s, a handful of Japanese firms held offices in more than a dozen Chinese cities. These branches gave them a critical early foothold in the Chinese market by providing research opportunities into local business customs and consumer needs (Lin, Vogel, Rozman, & Wan, 2003, pp. 3-4).

Japan's direct investment into the Chinese market established a framework for a more cordial dynamic between the countries as the years progressed. Since 2002, Japan has imported more goods annually from China than from the US (Lin, Vogel, Rozman, & Wan, 2003, p. 3), and in recent years, Sino-Japanese trade has amounted to approximately \$340 billion USD (Allen & Sugg, 2016, p. 4). Despite this fact, the two countries continue to harbor a historic rivalry embedded in tragic memories of war and humiliation. The Japanese government's tepid acknowledgement of its participation in war crimes during the 1937-1938 invasion of China continues to linger unpleasantly in the consciousness of the Chinese public. The Senkaku Islands dispute between China and Japan is the most prominent recent

manifestation of this underlying historical resentment (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 9).

The uninhabited Senkaku Islands fall under Japanese administration but have drawn territorial claims from Beijing and Taipei in part due to their proximity to undersea oil deposits. Beginning in the autumn of 2012, PRC military vessels began to regularly patrol the waters around the islands to assert its jurisdiction over “Chinese territorial waters.” For the first time in 50 years, the Japanese Defense Ministry stated they had observed Chinese surveillance planes in Japanese airspace. The number of military confrontations increased dramatically over the course of the next few months, leading China to declare a new “air defense identification zone” over the Senkaku Islands in November of 2013. The move drew immediate condemnation from both Japan and the US, but the PRC’s unwillingness to enforce its claim by force has stopped the situation from deteriorating any further (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 9).

The level of activity in the islands has created a highly tense and combustible environment that has the potential to escalate into a wider conflict. Article 5 of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty calls upon the US to come to the aid of Japan should a third nation violate Japanese territorial integrity. China has denounced US efforts to interfere in the issue, calling the American regional presence a “relic of the Cold War” (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, pp. 9-10). What this statement fails to acknowledge is that in many respects, the dynamics of the Cold War remain a daily reality for much of East Asia.

Since the 9/11 attacks, Americans across the political spectrum have often lamented a certain “fall from grace” in terms of their country’s status and prestige vis-à-vis China, the global star on the rise. Left-of-center Americans have tended to blame military interventionism while those on the Trumpian right have blamed postwar immigration and trade policies. In a 2015 poll, a plurality of Americans [38 percent] incorrectly believed that China had surpassed the US in terms of economic might, and only half [50 percent] believed the US possessed a stronger military. Conversely, the Japanese had a much more optimistic view of US power, in line with the unofficial global consensus during the Cold War—78 percent believed that American military might outmatched China, and 61 percent believed the US surpassed China in terms of economic power (Kafura, 2017).

The perception of strategic threats to the US and Japan also differed notably in opinion polling, reflecting far greater uncertainty from the Japanese than from the Americans in regards to “countering” the rise of China. A healthy majority of Americans [63 percent]

believe in undertaking cooperation and engagement with China, far greater than one might expect given the intensity of anti-Chinese rhetoric in American politics, particularly from President Trump. While a plurality of Japanese respondents agreed [39 percent], almost as many [37 percent] were not sure or refused to answer the question (Kafura, 2017). The disparity highlights the historical and cultural differences between American and Japanese relations with China. It may also demonstrate the influence of the sizeable Chinese immigrant communities in the US, and—to a lesser extent—Japan.

American military capabilities in Asia remain far superior to those of China, but increased economic leverage has placed Beijing in a powerful position to rearrange the regional order. Every Asian country now has a more robust trading relationship with China than with the United States—often by a substantial margin. The US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP] in 2017 has only accelerated the shift in economic power away from the United States, which has maintained dominance in the arms trade. The split in economic and military support from the two powers has created a class of neutral countries that have attempted to balance their diplomatic actions between the US and China, with varying degrees of success. These include the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand (Fisher & Carlsen, 2018).

Through spearheading its own trading bloc and reinforcing its diplomatic ties, Japan has crafted its own strategy to counterbalance China. It has forged closer trade relationships with fellow signatories of the TPP, including Australia, Malaysia, and Vietnam. In addition, the Japanese government hopes to form greater economic and military bonds with three nations in particular: Australia [a wealthy Anglophone country and its chief energy supplier], India [a promising regional power], and the US [its traditional military ally], the so-called “quad” countries. To implement this strategy, Tokyo has enacted a modest military buildup in recent years, grounded in the reasoning of Chinese and North Korean aggression (Fisher & Carlsen, 2018).

Although many Japanese are now wary of China’s military development, a far greater percentage envision North Korea as a “critical threat” [40 percent according to one survey] (Kafura, 2017). In the eyes of US diplomats and military officials, the North Korean nuclear program provides “ample excuse” for close US-Japanese cooperation on missile defense systems and other military matters. The idea of a destabilizing North Korea justifying a continued US presence and further Japanese military development has contributed to a tense and sometimes bitter relationship between Beijing and Pyongyang (Chanlett-Avery &

Rinehart, 2016, pp. 9-10). This has been especially true since late 2013, when Kim Jong-un ordered the execution of Jang Song-thaek, the most prominent pro-Chinese voice in the North Korean government (Lee, Lee, Hahn, Lew, & Yu, 2017). The need to handle the North Korean “problem” has drawn regional attention away from other matters in recent years, and its ultimate resolution has the potential to alter the geopolitical scene.

2.4 – North Korea

Korean national sovereignty has been undermined throughout history due to its position at the crossroads of several larger regional powers. Much like Poland, it has spent decades in non-existence, occupied and nullified by more powerful neighboring states. Much like Germany, Korea was the site of a Cold War ideological struggle that played itself out through *intranational* partition resulting in separate communist and capitalist states. Yet unlike East Germany, North Korea never collapsed. Its government’s resolve to survive the anti-communist wave has persisted through famine and near total isolation from the global community.

In sharp contrast to China, North Korea has become more of an international pariah with every passing generation for prioritizing military development over the social and economic welfare of its citizens. South Korea and Japan, playing host to many thousands of American troops, would be the most obvious and immediate targets of any potential North Korean aggression. Although the regime in Pyongyang has drawn global condemnation in recent decades due to their nascent nuclear weapons program, North Korea remains a relatively minor geopolitical player outside the Northeast Asian region.

The importance of the Korean Peninsula to US interests stems in part from its history as a “buffer zone” between the rival powers of China and Japan. Through a realist lens, the ongoing conflict between North and South Korea is a stalemated proxy battle for geopolitical domination between China, Japan, and their respective allies—most importantly among them, the United States. *It should be clear to observers of the current situation on the Korean Peninsula that the conflict remains the most painful and lasting legacy of the Cold War.* The apocalyptic rhetoric offered by both sides of the divide has contributed to the sense among US diplomats and military officials that war on the peninsula is an imaginable, near-term possibility. Although China has benefitted from North Korea’s existence as a buffer state, its unpredictability has made it a poor ally, and China would be unlikely to come to its aid in a conflict with the US.

From the perspective of the Japanese public, North Korea represents the most alarming security threat and clearest justification for a close defense relationship with the United States. Between 1977-1983, North Korea organized the kidnappings of more than a dozen Japanese civilians—including several children—ostensibly for the purpose of “intelligence gathering.” North Korean spies abducted unsuspecting individuals as they walked home from school or relaxed on the beach (Fackler, *North Korea Will Investigate Fate of Abducted Japanese*, 2014). Japanese media reported that it was North Korea that had conducted the kidnappings, drawing the Japanese public’s attention to the despotism of the North Korean regime (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 8).

Regional tensions heightened dramatically more than a decade later in 1998 following North Korea’s launch of the Taepodong-1 missile over Japan. The event motivated the Japanese government to cooperate on a missile defense system with the United States. In 2001, the Japanese Coast Guard sank a North Korean spy ship that had entered Japan’s exclusive economic zone (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 8). One year later, the North Korean government formally admitted to having kidnapped Japanese civilians from 1977 to 1983 and agreed to repatriate five of the abductees. Pyongyang claimed that the others had died in ways the Japanese government considered to be either mysterious or contrived, inspiring the ire of much of the Japanese public (Fackler, *Years After Abduction by North Korea, a Reunion*, 2014).

North Korea formally withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] in early 2003 and conducted its first nuclear weapons test in 2006. Since that time, the North Korean nuclear program has advanced much faster than outside analysts had predicted. The pace of development has alarmed all of its neighbors, including China, its nominal ally, whose leaders have expressed concern for regional stability (Allen & Sugg, 2016, p. 5). One complicating factor is that unlike China, North Korea has few economic ties to the outside world. Consequentially, there are few measures besides war that could persuade its leadership to change course.

The historical context in combination with North Korea’s rapid development of missile technology has had the effect of shifting Japanese politics considerably to the right since 2012, in favor of a closer defense relationship with the US. The Japanese government has cooperated extensively with both Washington and Seoul in military exercises and trilateral dialogues given Japan’s strategic importance to any potential US military action on the Korean Peninsula (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, pp. 8-9). The prospect of a nuclear

North Korea has given Tokyo common cause with Seoul, a relationship embittered by historical memory of Japan's colonial past. The two democracies have attempted to overcome such grievances in order to achieve their mutual security goals, but their approach to North Korea has been markedly different at times.

For most of President Trump's tenure, he and Prime Minister Abe have held a more hawkish stance towards Pyongyang than has the South Korean government. In August of 2017, the president stated that the Kim regime would be met with "fire and fury" should it continue to make threats to the United States. In comparison, Seoul's inclination towards dovish diplomacy stems from an obvious geographic reality—the South Korean capital's proximity to North Korea has meant that any confrontation would likely result in several hundred thousand civilian deaths through conventional, non-nuclear artillery. In addition, the economic costs of a war and a reunification of the Korean Peninsula would make German reunification look like a bargain in comparison. Still, President Trump lambasted Seoul's diplomatic measures as "appeasement" as recently as autumn of 2017 (Rich, 2018).

Diplomacy with Pyongyang had been an exclusively South Korean undertaking until March 9th, 2018, when Donald Trump stunned the world by announcing that he had agreed to meet with North Korean President Kim Jong-un. The decision marked a strong contrast with the president's own history of remarks on the subject and sparked panic and confusion in Tokyo. Soon afterward, Abe announced that he had arranged a personal visit to the White House for April, roughly a month before Trump is to meet with Kim. Tokyo is at real risk of being sidelined in its trilateral relationship with Washington and Seoul, just weeks after the US president announced steel and aluminum tariffs applicable to Japanese exports. The sudden and haphazard nature of these statements heightened anxieties about the president's lack of diplomatic tactfulness (Rich, 2018). The Japanese and the South Koreans both have cause for concern, as President Trump has a lengthy track record of agreeing with the last person he spoke with on any given issue (Phillips, 2017)—therefore, a bilateral meeting with Kim poses massive risks to their national interests.

2.5 – South Korea

The fifth actor in this nuclear drama is South Korea, a country that in some respects has run a parallel history with Japan. Both nations have fallen under the protection of the US military since WWII and reflect America's democratic and capitalistic values. They are each poor in natural resources and depend on strong international institutions to safeguard their robust export industries. Even though Japan and South Korea normalized relations over fifty

years ago, the Korean national memory of the 35-year period of Japanese rule has at times impeded Tokyo's efforts towards closer cooperation (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 10).

South Korea's resentment towards Japan stems from the implementation of forced labor and sex slavery during the Japanese occupation of Korea, at which time the peninsula played a decisive role in the production of Japanese war materials. Many South Koreans interpret Japan's postwar apologies as insufficient or disingenuous, especially considering the discrimination that ethnic Koreans continue to experience in modern Japan. The United States has recently attempted modest measures to heal the divide in order to establish a more united front against North Korean aggression, such as through a December 2014 agreement on trilateral intelligence sharing. Despite this effort, the US has continued to act as an intermediary given the political unpopularity in South Korea of cooperation with the Japanese (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 10).

2.6 – Conclusion

American strategic interests in East Asia have transitioned over time as China and Japan have exchanged allegiances and regional power has shifted between them. The US partnered with China (and, briefly, the Soviet Union) to retaliate against the Japanese and end their disruptive practices in the Pacific. America's relative hard power reached an all-time high in the aftermath of WWII as the only major participant in the conflict to emerge wealthier than it had been before. The postwar US presence in Japan was justified on the grounds that Japan had the potential to rearm and again threaten China and the newly liberated countries of Southeast Asia. China's shift in allegiance and its use of force in the Korean War turned the tables on American strategic interests, and Japan assumed a far more sympathetic role as an ally surrounded by hostile states.

My conclusion is as follows, that the quality of the US relationship with Japan is inversely proportional to the amount of offensive realist threat posed by the Japanese. This was most obvious during the war, but as soon as Japan became an ally of the US, its relative weakness in the face of the Soviet Union, China, and North Korea inspired a very tight bond with the United States. As Japan grew quite wealthy from 1975 to 1995, the relationship entered freefall as Washington once again grew worried about a titanic Japanese rival, alliance be damned. Relations were so miserable in the early days after the Cold War that Joseph Nye worried that Japan might assume the role of the Soviet Union as the chief geopolitical enemy of the United States (Nye, 1990, p. 171). The rise of China from 1995

onward as the Japanese economy stagnated may well have saved the US-Japan relationship by allowing the Japanese to again appear weak in the face of an even more formidable rival.

3.0 – Domination and Occupation: 1941 – 1952

In the period of war against Japan and the occupation that followed, the United States foreign policy establishment had the clear objective of shrinking Japanese power and shaping it into a manageable client state that could serve as America's window into Asia. In the section below, I will attempt to answer the following question: *what events inside and outside Japan at this time were most effective in demilitarizing the Japanese state, winning the "hearts and minds" of the Japanese people, and establishing a lasting military bond between the two formal rivals?* Given the degree to which hard power and soft power both played a role in this process, it is especially difficult to separate the two given the lack of reliable economic data available for the time period. However, it is helpful to my argument later on to examine the soft power techniques the US put to work in Japan at this time to win the favor of the Japanese people.

3.1 – Japan as an Existential Threat

The American trade embargo of Japanese iron and steel implemented in September of 1941 was interpreted by the Japanese government as an extremely hostile act, a reasonable understanding given how effective it was at hampering the country's military capabilities. The embargo forced Japan to rely on its own territories for raw materials, exerting severe strain on the national economy. The Pearl Harbor raid on December 7, 1941 and subsequent US entry into the war ushered in a six-month period of substantial Japanese territorial gains. Air superiority allowed Japan to conduct about 50 amphibious raids on British and American troops stationed throughout Southeast Asia and the western Pacific, and its overwhelming success in these attacks stemmed in part from the sparseness and isolation of Allied troops (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 124). In quick succession, Japan conquered British Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Burma and defeated the US naval forces in the Philippines (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 197).

In the months immediately following the US entry into the war, an American victory against the Japanese appeared far from certain. The US had just suffered a surprise attack on domestic soil and anticipated several more. The sense that the Japanese and Germans represented a serious and existential threat to the US and to Western civilization prevailed in Washington as support for non-interventionism collapsed. It was in this spirit that the US government took defensive measures that appear draconian if not morally wicked to modern sensibilities.

On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the US military to suspend the right of *habeas corpus*. The Western Defense Command and Fourth Army in San Francisco subsequently carried out the “Civilian Exclusion Orders” to round up and imprison nearly 120 thousand Japanese people living in the US, *including both Japanese citizens and US citizens of Japanese ancestry*. In this respect, the prison camps differentiated themselves from the internment camps for Germans and Italians, which operated for the sole purpose of interning *citizens* of enemy nations (Horiuchi, 2005).

The US Army Corps of Engineers, the Wartime Civil Control Administration, and the civil administration of the US army carried out the planning and construction of the camps and claimed to have completed them within a month of their authorization, yet many were still under construction by the time the first deportees arrived later in 1942. Most of the camps were built on Native American reservations in the western United States and housed between five thousand and ten thousand people. Each necessitated the construction of extensive facilities for communal life, such that many resembled small towns by the time construction had ended in early 1943. The residents were not permitted to return to their homes until the war ended, at which time the vast majority of camp structures were dismantled (ibid).

The internment of Japanese-Americans was one of several preemptive defense measures the US government took in early 1942 in response to Pearl Harbor and the Japanese military threat. Imperial victories in the Pacific galvanized the Roosevelt administration to prepare for a potential invasion of Hawaii by crafting a scheme to sink its economy. The US began printing parallel “Hawaii bills” and flooded the local economy with them, hoping to devalue it to oblivion should the Japanese invade. To enact this plan, the US government made it illegal for Hawaiians to own more than \$200 in cash and asked them to invest the rest in financial securities. The forfeited, “non-Hawaii” currency was then unceremoniously burned by the federal government (Krauss, 2005). The measure reflected the seriousness of the perceived threat and the determination of the US government to thwart it at all costs.

The tide of war in both Europe and Asia turned in the Allies’ favor by the autumn of 1942 and allowed the US military to focus on its offensive strategy to a greater degree. American forces defeated the Japanese at the Battles of Midway and Guadalcanal between June of 1942 and February of 1943. Most Japanese army troops were bogged down in mainland Asia at the time and could not adequately defend Imperial territories in the Pacific. Restored air dominance allowed American forces to pursue a campaign of 52 amphibious

raids against Japanese targets throughout the war. According to the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, “our series of landing operations were always successful because air domination was always established in the objective area before a landing was attempted.” Concentrating military power on individual islands along the periphery of the Empire allowed the US to systematically deconstruct the trade network that fueled the Japanese military. The Survey reads, “the perimeter defense points became isolated, non-reinforceable garrisons—each subject to individual destruction in detail” (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 124-125).

It became evident by early 1945 that the Japanese lacked the manpower and material resources to sustain such a vast and costly war effort. The American strategy of “island-hopping,” in concert with submarine warfare, had successfully severed the resource flow between Japan and its colonies and brought long-range US aircraft into striking distance of Japanese cities. With victory in the Pacific in sight, the US, Britain, and China issued the Potsdam Declaration in July of 1945, calling for Japan’s unconditional surrender. In a move of great historical consequence, the Japanese leadership remained silent, holding out for better terms later on (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, pp. 197-198).

In the final weeks of the war, the US inflicted heavy bombardment on the Japanese mainland, yet the government in Tokyo maintained its resolve. The Japanese leadership recognized that a land invasion of Japan by US forces would be incredibly costly, albeit certainly plausible given the American military’s material advantage. They hoped that the prospect of such a prolonged invasion with a high casualty count would force the US to accept a compromise peace brokered by the Soviet Union, which in turn would leave Japanese sovereignty intact following the country’s surrender (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 92-93).

US and Soviet actions in August of 1945 upended the Japanese strategic rationale. On the morning of August 6th, the US military detonated an atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. By the time they dropped a second over Nagasaki on August 9th, the Soviet Union had formally declared war on Japan. The Japanese prime minister’s cabinet could not agree on how to proceed and turned to the emperor for his advice. Fearing additional nuclear attacks, Hirohito told his government that it was time for the war to end (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 198). His decision received broad support from Japanese military officials, especially from the army, who feared a quick collapse should an American or Soviet invasion ensue (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 93).

Washington's slow strangulation of Tokyo between 1940 and the end of the war was a classic example of realist strategy. By representing a viable alternative, Japan and Germany did in fact represent an existential threat to the Anglo-American system of free trade and Wilsonian internationalism. The successful pushback against fascist expansion fulfilled this globalist vision and allowed for greater Asian self-determination than had ever been possible before. In this exchange, Japan lost nearly all of its sovereignty as the US and the Soviet Union filled the power vacuum, as they had in Europe. The total collapse of Japanese military power and the country's subsequent absorption under the US military umbrella has meant certain additional costs for both countries not always measurable in monetary terms. Japan's occupation in the years immediately following the war represented a period of great uncertainty and the kind of uneasy transition so characteristic of the transpacific relationship.

3.2 – Demilitarization and Democratization

On August 15th, 1945, Emperor Hirohito delivered his first radio broadcast, announcing through harsh static and ambiguous language that the Japanese had issued their surrender. "The war has not turned in Japan's favor," he stated bluntly. He made reference to the destructive power of the "cruel bombs" the US had detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki just a few days earlier, which relatively few Japanese civilians had been aware of. He prudently intuited that such technology had the potential to lead to "the destruction of all human civilization" and closed his speech by imploring his people to do their best to "keep pace with the progress of the world," to "endure the unendurable" and "bear the unbearable" in the years to come. For some in the high tiers of the Japanese military, this was too much to ask. Roughly 350 military officers killed themselves in the wake of the broadcast, albeit only a small percentage of the six million Japanese men in uniform at war's end (Gordon, 2003, pp. 226-227).

In the shadow of the country's utter devastation, its first, and so far—only—military defeat, most Japanese people came to the realization that they could no longer attain their century-long national project of achieving equal footing with the major powers in the West. The devastation of Japanese industry during the final stages of the war resulted in a trade deficit that lasted for a remarkable two decades, in which time Japan depended heavily on textile raw materials and mineral fuels from overseas (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, pp. 350, 352). Yet much like the situation in postwar Germany, the total physical destruction of Japanese industry and the desperate conditions for everyday people brought about some hope

that the occupying forces would bring about much-needed political and economic reforms (Tipton, 2002, p. 143).

In the final stages of the war, the US armed forces had occupied Japanese military bases throughout the mainland and on Okinawa—a relatively small island several hundred kilometers southwest of the rest of the country. It was on Okinawa that American forces decided to construct their own facilities on land rented from the local inhabitants, a system put in place by the postwar Japanese government (Green & Cronin, 1999, p. 118). The US military presence on Okinawa has remained the most prominent and controversial symbol of American power over Japan, although the US military has since established bases throughout the country.

Under the direction of President Harry Truman, General Douglas MacArthur, then the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers [SCAP], sought to fill the power vacuum left in the wake of the Japanese surrender. In addition to establishing a military foothold, this entailed a wholesale reorganization of Japanese society. MacArthur dissolved the Japanese armed forces on November 30, 1945 and began the process of repatriating nearly seven million Japanese citizens in Korea, Manchuria, Taiwan, as well as elsewhere throughout the sprawling wartime empire. Repatriated Japanese citizens, most of whom had returned to the mainland by 1948, became an instrumental political force on the Japanese right in the decades that followed (Gordon, 2003, pp. 229-230).

One of SCAP's chief priorities was to expel hardline nationalist influences from Japanese public life. The occupying forces disbanded the authoritarian Special Higher Police and purged over 200 thousand public and private sector employees they had deemed responsible for the war effort. SCAP disestablished Shinto as the state religion of Japan in order to neutralize its ideological potency (Gordon, 2003, p. 230), and on New Year's Day, 1946, forced the emperor to publicly admit that he was human and not a god (Jansen, 2000, p. 680). Yet in addition to toppling the autocratic political and social structures of the previous regime, Truman and MacArthur sought to establish *positive* reforms that would reshape Japan in the democratic image of the United States (Gordon, 2003, p. 230).

SCAP under the leadership of General MacArthur was a complex organizational entity composed of about 35 thousand bureaucrats with specialties in government, intelligence, military issues, and economics. The Government Section's chief responsibility was democratic reform in Japan, often envisioned from a rather center-left, New Deal-inspired political viewpoint. The Intelligence Section ensured national stability, particularly

in regard to the threat posed by Japanese communist revolutionaries. The Economic and Scientific Section enacted industrial reforms to revive economic growth and break up the corrupt monopolies characteristic of earlier decades (Jansen, 2000, pp. 678-679).

The secondary goal of SCAP after military disarmament was the introduction of an egalitarian political culture in Japan brought about by flattening the socioeconomic hierarchy and transforming Japanese society for the benefit of women and democratic reformers. MacArthur announced an initial set of political reforms in October of 1945 that guaranteed the Japanese freedom of speech, press, assembly and the right to unionize. He also ordered the Japanese government to extend full political rights and protections to women, who previously had lacked voting rights (Gordon, 2003, p. 230).

The crowning jewel of American democratization efforts in postwar Japan was a full rewrite of Japanese basic law—a new Japanese constitution. A committee consisting of twenty-five US occupation officials within the Government Section of SCAP—none of whom were constitutional lawyers—drafted a new constitution in February of 1946 in the span of seven days. They worked to secure certain *positive*, New Deal-inspired social rights whose scale and scope surpassed even America’s own founding documents (Jansen, 2000, p. 684).

The sole woman on the committee and the individual responsible for enshrining an “equal rights amendment” into the constitution was a 22-year-old Austrian-American interpreter by the name of Beate Sirota. Sirota had lived in Japan for a decade between the ages of five and fifteen, at which time she witnessed the drastic social inequality between Japanese men and women firsthand. Her fluency in Japanese, in addition to five other languages, led to positions in the US government and US Office of War Information between 1941 and 1945. When the war ended, she became an interpreter for General MacArthur, who in February of 1946 appointed her to serve on the constitutional reform committee. After a week of intensive research into comparative constitutional law, Sirota authored two articles of the constitution pertaining to the legal status of Japanese women (Fox, 2013).

The constitution drafted by Sirota and the others in the SCAP committee demoted the emperor from an absolute monarch to a national figurehead [Articles 1-8] and explicitly forbade war [Article 9], stating that native “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained” (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 28). Although SCAP specifically called for such a restrictive measure, its interpretation and reinterpretation throughout the Cold War and beyond has problematized the US-Japan relationship and has

sparked heated debate in Japanese politics ever since, particularly in the current Abe administration.

The postwar constitution also granted new civil liberties to the Japanese people [Articles 10-40]. These liberties included universal suffrage, the right to work and bargain collectively, as well as the freedoms of speech, religion, and assembly (Gordon, 2003, p. 231). Article 14, written by Sirota, stated in part: “all of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin.” Article 24, also by Sirota, granted Japanese women “choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce” as well as other rights in matters of family law. These reforms created a well-grounded legal basis for a far more inclusive and democratic civil society in the country (Fox, 2013).

The Imperial Diet spent several months debating and ratifying the document before its promulgation in November of 1946 and its eventual enactment the following May. The positive social rights promoted in the constitution greatly surprised many in the Japanese elite, some of whom viewed the sweeping nature of the guarantees as falling outside the purview of constitutional law (Gordon, 2003, pp. 230-231). What was also at issue was that much of the ideology and language embedded in the document was of clear foreign origin, yet this had also been the case in the 1890 Meiji constitution. The new constitution’s swift adoption by the Diet reflected both the political pragmatism of Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida as well as his astute realization that the continuation of the Japanese imperial throne depended upon his compliance (Jansen, 2000, pp. 684-686).

MacArthur met with Emperor Hirohito on several occasions during the US occupation, at which time the Emperor exerted tremendous influence on shaping the bilateral relationship that was to follow. He pressed upon MacArthur the importance of a practically permanent US presence in Japan, claiming that the Japanese people did not have the tenacity to defend themselves in a future conflict. “[The] Japanese people’s cultural level is still low,” he told MacArthur, adding they were too inclined to “selfishly concentrating their attention on their rights and not thinking about their duties and obligations.” In counseling SCAP during the occupation, the emperor was at once undermining his own argument that he had been too toothless during the war to prevent the gruesome crimes committed by the Japanese military, and after the enactment of the 1947 constitution, he was likely transgressing the boundaries of his role as a national figurehead (McCormack, 2007, p. 7).

While SCAP busied itself to install a new military and political infrastructure for Japan, the early postwar Japanese government sought to alleviate the desperate economic conditions that had befallen the country. By spring of 1946, millions of citizens faced dire food shortages, and thousands died of hunger due to poor crop yields and an overburdened rations regime. With the average Japanese household spending nearly 70 percent of its income on food, crowds of city-dwellers boarded trains bound for the countryside on a daily basis, where they hoped to sell their personal belongings in exchange for food. In this miserable state of affairs, high rates of alcohol abuse, armed robbery, and a general sense of societal disorder inflicted Japan for many months after the war had ended (Gordon, 2003, pp. 228-229).

The Japanese government understood that the hunger crisis had its origins in a severely skewed and inefficient distribution of land holdings that had dated back decades. One-third of Japanese farmers owned 90 percent of arable land, while the others often held “pitifully small” plots that were fragmented and far apart. In October of 1946, the government purchased all private land holdings at pre-inflation price levels. It then established local commissions consisting of tenants, landlords, and farmers that set new prices and resold the land to eligible buyers. Regulations ensured the plots were no larger than two-and-a-half acres in highly dense and productive areas close to urban markets, although they could be larger elsewhere. They also guaranteed written contracts to tenants and capped rent at one-quarter of the land’s agricultural yield. The reforms resulted in an increase of owner-cultivated holdings from 55.7 percent in 1947 to nearly 89 percent two years later. They greatly contributed to Japan’s food security and political stability in the postwar years (Jansen, 2000, pp. 682-683).

The government’s first attempt at an industrial recovery policy consisted of the provision of “reconstruction subsidies” to major domestic firms in the hopes that they would use the funds to restart production. The plan failed when firms realized that a far more profitable use of the money was the purchase and resale of raw materials on the black market. As a consequence, many functioning factories remained out of commission. The continued scarcity of goods in combination with mounting public debts from the war effort led to years of hyperinflation. One American observer stated that the economic anxiety it brought about loomed over the country “like some immense, brooding presence.” In the four years immediate following the war, Japanese prices rose an astonishing 15 thousand percent (Gordon, 2003, p. 240).

Economic analysts within the Japanese government proposed a new solution in 1947 that took into consideration the fact that a coal shortage was causing a vicious cycle within the wider economy. The meager earnings of the iron and steel industry were keeping demand for coal low, which in turn led to lessened coal extraction and a stagnation in steel production. The answer proposed and enacted by the Ministry of Commerce was to grant steel companies preference when allocating fuel supplies. This allowed the steel industry to feed coal into the rest of the economy, which enabled mining and other industries to recover in earnest (ibid, p. 240).

In spite of these government efforts, the Japanese economy remained rather stagnant into early 1949, and hyperinflation continued unabated. For this reason, SCAP finally decided to provide economic counsel to the Japanese (Gordon, 2003, pp. 240-241). President Truman sent a special advisor to Tokyo by the name of Joseph Dodge, a prominent banker and economist who had played an advisory role in Germany in the immediate aftermath of the war. His recommendations to combat inflation, which became to be known as the “Dodge line,” were stern, forthright, and emphasized minimal intervention on the part of the state. He suggested that Japan shut down its state-financed reconstruction loan scheme, balance the national budget by stripping away price controls and subsidies, and peg the yen to the US dollar at a rate of 360 to 1. The Dodge reforms had mixed results. They achieved the aim of slowing inflation and laid the groundwork for robust international trade based on the competitiveness of Japanese exports. At the same time, the resultant scarcity of capital slowed domestic consumption and led Japan into a severe economic downturn (Jansen, 2000, p. 695).

3.3 – The Red Scare in Asia

The socioeconomic distress in 1949 and the unpopularity of the Dodge reforms led to a historic victory for the Japan Communist Party in elections that year, where it won almost 10 percent of the seats in the National Diet, horrifying the US occupation forces (Jansen, 2000, p. 695). An anticommunist fervor rose in SCAP and the Japanese government due to this and the communist victory in China the same year. Japanese public employees in education and government who identified with the Communist Party or were suspected of doing so were summarily dismissed. The shift in the balance of power within SCAP from New Deal liberalism to right-wing McCarthyism came as a welcome change to Japanese conservatives and proponents of the old guard, who grew increasingly enamored with the American military presence and the political stability that it provided. Conversely, Japanese

intellectuals and leftists became ever more critical of US actions and championed the pacifist and progressive elements of the 1947 constitution as their own. The dynamic has remained a salient theme of Japanese politics ever since (Jansen, 2000, pp. 699-700).

In contrast to Japan, the formerly-Japanese Korean Peninsula had been occupied in the early postwar years by two different Allied powers—the US in the south and the Soviet Union in the north. The balance of geopolitical power between the two Koreas held relatively steady for a five-year period following the war, although the ruling government in the south openly advocated for a reunification by force. The US occupation forces sought to bury the potential for conflict by provisioning the young South Korean state with minimal defensive capabilities, while north of the border, the Soviets provided the North Korean government with their most advanced tanks and field artillery (Hickey, 2011). The resulting power imbalance provided the Soviet-allied North with a prime opportunity to reunify the peninsula.

In June of 1950, the newly-founded state of North Korea invaded its southern neighbor, and many of the American forces stationed in Japan rushed to the South Koreans' defense. In response to the power vacuum this created, General McArthur ordered the Japanese government to establish a "National Police Reserve" composed of 75 thousand men, the first iteration of the Japanese Self Defense Forces (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 295).

In November of the same year, Mao Zedong ordered Chinese troops into Korea upon the realization that the North appeared to be on the brink of defeat. The communist government in Beijing was terrified of the prospect of American troops on the Chinese border and envisioned North Korea as an archetypical buffer state, a status it has maintained ever since. The Chinese intervention almost certainly prevented a Northern defeat and drew the war to an eventual stalemate. In coming to North Korea's defense, the newly founded People's Republic of China undertook and succeeded in its first geopolitical power play. In a microcosm of the realist dynamic to come, the PRC overtook the role of the USSR as America's most formidable military adversary in the Pacific, albeit somewhat unwillingly. Mao sacrificed over 400 thousand Chinese lives to save North Korea, including the life of his own son (Hickey, 2011).

The UN coalition that came to the aid of South Korea used Japan as an important crossroads to carry out the war effort, which bolstered foreign investment and allowed the Dodge reforms to achieve their intended effect. American war procurements totaled roughly two billion dollars and accounted for about 60 percent of Japanese exports between 1951 and

1953. Industrial production rose nearly 70 percent between 1949 and 1951, generating corporate profits for the first time in Japan's postwar history. The double-digit annual rise in Japanese GNP sparked by the Korean War allowed Japanese industry to invest in new facilities and technologies, effectively ending the country's period of economic malaise. Prime Minister Yoshida may have distastefully called the North Korean invasion "a gift of the gods," but there can be little doubt that it played an instrumental role in Japan's postwar economic recovery (Gordon, 2003, p. 241).

The Korean War, which immediately followed the Maoist victory in China, resulted in a galvanization of Japanese politics against communism and against the leftist ideological forces that had gained strength in Japan due to the poor economic conditions in the period immediately after the emperor's surrender. It was in this anticommunist context that American policy objectives in Japan shifted from political reform to economic independence. The US occupying forces became convinced that future industrial productivity stood as Japan's best chance to defend against the communist encroachment and maintain its democracy (Jansen, 2000, pp. 696, 698-699).

In early 1951, months before the Japanese government formally agreed to an end to the US military occupation, Prime Minister Yoshida outlined the "Yoshida Doctrine," which comprised three central convictions of postwar Japanese politics: Japan would maintain its alliance with the United States and other anticommunist nations, it would provide modest funding for its own defense in order to ensure US military backing, and it would refocus its efforts towards economic growth. This final point has since become synonymous with the doctrine. The transfer of defense responsibilities to the United States allowed Yoshida to strike a valuable compromise between hardline advocates of rearmament, pacifists, and those who simply wanted to stop debating issues of defense. The skill Yoshida exhibited in crafting this compromise was substantial given the ideological divisions in Japanese politics at the time (Vogel, 2002, p. 13).

As the Korean War demanded ever greater American military resources and the stability of Japanese society improved, US officials began to discuss an end to the occupation. Other Asian governments in the region pressed for harsh reparations from Japan and security guarantees from the international community. The US consented to defense agreements with Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines to soften their fears of a future Japanese invasion. To hasten negotiations and end the occupation more quickly, the US allowed for several issues to remain unresolved. They allowed Japan and other nations to

negotiate reparations on a bilateral basis, an issue that proved exceptionally complicated given the disputed status of the Chinese government (Gordon, 2003, pp. 241-242). Finally, in September of 1951, American and Japanese representatives signed the Treaty of San Francisco along with the US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty, formally ending the American occupation the following year (Xu, 2014).

3.4 – Conclusion

In seven brief years, the occupation period saw the US strategic calculus shift from filling the power vacuum that remained following Japan's defeat to realigning Japanese interests to conform with American ones. The US was spectacularly successful at achieving both goals, helped along by the pragmatism of the Japanese leadership, the managerial prowess of SCAP, and the blessing in disguise from North Korea. The geopolitical threats posed by Kim, Stalin, and Mao ensured a robust US military presence in East Asia for the foreseeable future. The success of the UN efforts in the Korean War baptized the new alliance in victory and provided a welcome distraction from the Japanese loss of life, and loss of face, in the aftermath of their defeat.

The Roosevelt and Truman administrations faced an enormous task in countering Japanese aggression, neutralizing their armed forces, and bringing Japan back into the liberal, democratic fold. As an institution, SCAP restructured the Japanese economy and society for the better and thereby won the favor of much of the Japanese public, a powerful demonstration of *soft power*. That said, the living conditions for the average Japanese citizen did not improve before 1950 and the actions taken by the US in the Korean War. Chinese and North Korean action to the west of Japan proved *much more consequential* to Japan's recovery than American actions up until that point. Although American soft power was at its height in the postwar years, the tangible benefits of the American presence came only when regional stability was called into question. Similarly, the level of American commitment to its alliance with Japan reached a high at this point, signifying that the US maintained a realist attitude towards its ally as external actors posed the greatest threat.

4.0 – Redemption: 1952 – 1991

The US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty ensured that American troops would remain in Japan for an indefinite period of time in exchange for a formal military alliance, which Japan needed given its new constitutional commitment to pacifism. In light of this circumstance, and uniquely for such an alliance, the US committed to come to Japan's aid in the event of an invasion of its sovereignty, yet the Japanese government had no such commitment to return the favor. Even so, the bargain was highly desirable to both countries. In accordance with the "Yoshida Doctrine," Japan had the freedom to focus its public resources on economic recovery. In exchange for American protection, Japan granted the US the free use of military bases on its territory and contributed monetarily to "host nation support" (Xu, 2014).

The ratification of the security treaty itself was carefully planned to occur *before* the implementation of the peace treaty, lest there exist a window of Japanese independence and neutrality that external actors could take advantage of. Frank Nash, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (a position later held by Joseph Nye), wrote a top-secret memo in February of 1952 expressing his concern that Congress was moving too quickly to ratify the peace treaty component and thus upsetting the Truman administration's plan of two years:

We are concerned about the speed with which the [Japanese Peace] Treaty is going through the Senate and the effect that Senate ratification might have on the negotiation of an administrative agreement in Tokyo... I spoke to Mr. Allison about it and told him that we thought that Mr. Dulles had agreed with General Bradley regarding the necessity of concluding a satisfactory administrative agreement and security treaty *before* the ratification of the peace treaty... I think we should be able to go ahead vigorously with the administrative agreement and we might possibly conclude it in 10 to 14 days. If the Japanese drag their feet—and they might—we will have to hold up on the ratification of the peace treaty (Nash, 1952).

The secretary's words convey the administration's and Japan's own anxieties about the country's transition to independence. The US occupying forces confronted dueling pressures to keep Japan in the US orbit while ensuring its internal stability in a turbulent time.

When the United States formally ended the occupation of Japan in April of 1952, it still held significant military interests in the region. The Korean War remained underway. Communist China, governed by Mao Zedong, had come to the North's aid and forced a

stalemate. The Soviet Union under Stalin, which also shared a border with North Korea, monitored the regional situation with great interest as it began to develop its nuclear and conventional military technology in the years immediately following WWII (Xu, 2014). From the perspective of the US government, communist expansion throughout the world—and particularly in Asia—represented a genuine strategic threat to the new global order, not simply a theoretical one. Consequentially, Washington had no intention of withdrawing its troops from Japanese soil until significant geopolitical changes had taken shape, if ever.

Although the United States began the Cold War with warm relations with Japan, a series of events precipitated a gradual drift apart. The Japanese grew more suspicious of American intentions as the Vietnam War escalated and Japan became an appendage in a questionable and long-lasting military commitment. Japan in turn became less sympathetic in the eyes of the United States as its economy flourished while continuing to rely almost entirely on the US for its national security. The Nixon administration's fiscal and diplomatic actions to devalue the US dollar and usher China into the global community seemed like an affront to the US alliance with Japan, and indeed they were a signal that the relationship was due for restructuring. As the Cold War came to a close, the economic relationship soured further as each successive US administration sought to correct the growing trade imbalance with Japan [as depicted in Figure 2], with minimal success. There are indeed many events that occurred between 1952 and 1991 that led to a gradual deterioration in the relationship, chief among them Japan's surprise economic boom.

4.1 – The Economic Miracle

Although Yoshida's postwar government established the Japan Self-Defense Forces in 1954 and sought to bring back the military in earnest, domestic opposition aligned with the Japanese constitution's ban on warfare kept the Japanese military free from overseas entanglements in the early years of the United States-Japan alliance (Xu, 2014). This allowed the Japanese government to focus primarily on matters of economics. The Japanese materials industry saw a magnificent rebirth in the mid-1950s as global demand rose for durable consumer goods. This development led Japanese society to near-full employment and dramatically minimized wealth inequality within Japan. As average Japanese citizens grew wealthier, they adopted consumption habits akin to middle-class Americans at the time. In tandem with a high household savings rate, this led to further growth for domestic industries and double-digit gains in Japan's gross national product (Tipton, 2002, p. 178).

In spite of Japan's recovering economy, the Chinese and Soviet threats loomed large in the Japanese imagination in the early years of postwar Japanese independence, as South Korea had repelled a communist invasion just a few years earlier. The US military footprint in Japan was substantial, and although this meant that the US would come to Japan's defense in an international conflict, the treaty stipulated that US forces were to be responsible for internal stability as well and did not set a timeline for their withdrawal, much to the anguish of the Japanese leadership. A top-secret memo by Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Walter Robertson to Secretary of State Dulles discussed how the Japanese government sought to revise the mutual security treaty as early as July of 1955, noting the following: "the [new] treaty would be valid for 25 years in order to cope with the Soviet-Communist Chinese alliance which runs until 1980. It would be renewable every five years thereafter" (Robertson, 1955). The assistant secretary's words reflect the Japanese leadership's genuine fear of a communist invasion and the fact that Japan was eager to establish greater national autonomy as soon as 1955.

Luckily for Japan, the years immediately following the US occupation coincided with a gradual splintering of communist power in the Pacific, granting the Japanese a welcome respite from concerns over foreign military threats. Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalinism in 1956 initiated a rift with China that culminated in Mao's historic 1972 meeting with President Richard Nixon. In the near term, the Sino-Soviet split resulted in North Korea's push for political and ideological independence, its leadership knowing full well that its very existence had depended on Soviet and Chinese intervention. Although the North Korean economy saw modest growth immediately following the Korean War, the gradual withdrawal of Soviet and then Chinese economic aid crippled the country's development on a practically permanent basis. For Japan, this had the effect of neutralizing the North Korean military threat for the remainder of the Cold War, although moments of tension *between* the Koreas ensued on occasion throughout the rest of the 20th century (Lee, Lee, Hahn, Lew, & Yu, 2017).

By 1960, Japanese institutions had grown robust enough to afford a greater degree of internal sovereignty. As mentioned above, the original Mutual Security Treaty agreed to in 1951 had contained language that authorized the United States to use military force to maintain internal stability in Japan, a stipulation that neither party had remained comfortable with. In addition, forces on the Japanese political right that had grown frustrated with American-imposed pacifism were clamoring to revise or even eliminate Article 9 (Chanlett-

Avery & Rinehart, 2016). For these reasons, the US and Japan finally acted to revise the treaty. The revision granted Japan responsibility for its internal security but maintained a mandate for the American assertion of regional power through the use of military bases on Japanese soil (Vogel, 2002, p. 28).

The tumultuous debate over the revised security agreement with the United States caused a shift in Japanese domestic politics that felled the conservative Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi and led to the rise of the more moderate Hayato Ikeda in his role. Ikeda decided to shift the national political debate to what has now become the most famous legacy of the Yoshida Doctrine—wealth generation. In 1961, Ikeda drafted an ambitious plan to double Japan's GNP within ten years. The Japanese economy vastly outperformed his agenda and ended up doubling in size in roughly half the time (Vogel, 2002, p. 15). The country increased exports by 18.4 percent annually throughout the 1960s—2.3 times the global average—resulting in a net trade surplus by 1965. Keeping with the economic trends of previous decades, exports drew gradually less from textiles and light industry and gradually more from steel products, machinery, and chemical supplies (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, pp. 350-351). Japan's unexpected economic success resulted in significant political implications for its relationship with the United States, whose leadership began to envision Japan as growing more capable of defending itself.

The Johnson administration's opening to a détente with the Soviet Union in early 1967 drew intense concern from the Japanese leadership, who worried that a thawing of US-Soviet tensions could upset the delicate geopolitical balance and refocus the USSR's efforts on Pacific domination vis-à-vis Japan. In March of that year, President Johnson's National Security Advisor Walt Rostow wrote the following to him in a memo, summarizing Japan's national security dilemma:

Basically, what Japan wants is a Communist China that is not so weak that it is under Soviet dominance and not so strong that it threatens Japan. It wants a Soviet Union not in open conflict with the U.S. but sufficiently preoccupied with the U.S., China, etc., so that it must take Japan seriously and doesn't feel free to lean on it.

Here, Mr. Rostow makes reference to a telegram sent by the US ambassador to Tokyo, Alexis Johnson. The ambassador conveys the message that Japan is so sensitive about its national

security that it has begun to ponder the possibility of the reemergence of a WWII-style dynamic:

[The Japanese] are concerned that relations between the two “super powers,” the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., not “improve” to the extent that we and the Soviets face Japan with *fait accompli* in matters concerning Japanese interests.

Ambassador Johnson’s remarks underscore Japan’s continually heightened sensitivity to matters of regional stability. The fear that US actions undertaken for its own interests could undermine Japanese national security and unravel the alliance was very much at the forefront of the domestic political debate in Japan. This was a major part of the reason that signing onto the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] was such a controversial decision among the Japanese public, despite the country’s history as the sole victim of nuclear warfare (Rostow & Johnson, 1967).

As the US became increasingly engaged in military conflict in Southeast Asia throughout the mid-to-late 1960s, the Japanese grew more acutely aware of the significance of the alliance for US war efforts. The use of US bases in Japan to carry out combat operations during the Vietnam War drew widespread opposition from the Japanese public. Many Japanese civilians worried that the alliance would expose their country to attacks carried out by anti-American forces, especially if the US bases housed a nuclear capacity. In response to these concerns, Japanese PM Eisaku Sato outlined the “Three Non-Nuclear Principles” in late 1967. These committed Japan to neither possess, nor produce, nor introduce nuclear arms, relying instead on the US nuclear umbrella for its deterrence capabilities (Xu, 2014).

In July of 1969, President Nixon outlined a foreign policy doctrine for the United States that reflected the American public’s souring attitudes on overseas military entanglements. The “Nixon Doctrine” or “Guam Doctrine” demanded that America’s East Asian allies take greater responsibility for their own defense, a task Japan could more easily undertake given two decades of solid economic growth. The Japanese government headed by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato implicitly agreed to a modest expansion in its regional security role in exchange for the return of Japanese jurisdiction over Okinawa (Vogel, 2002, pp. 16-17).

Throughout the 1970s, global attention turned towards Japan’s rapid economic ascent. The country had become the second largest economic power in terms of GNP, a feat that few

had predicted following their dramatic defeat in WWII. Japanese institutions were happy to receive credit for the nation's success, even though the historical record grants responsibility to a wide variety of factors. The Vice Minister of the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry highlighted the bureaucratic underpinnings of the "economic miracle" in a statement released in 1970:

The Ministry [MITI] decided to establish in Japan industries which require intensive employment of capital and technology ... industries such as steel, oil refining, petro-chemicals, automobiles, aircraft, industrial machinery of all sorts, and electronics including electronic computers (Tipton, 2002, p. 177).

The statement went on to shroud the national economic efforts in the language of a military campaign:

According to Napoleon and Clausewitz, the secret of a successful strategy is the concentration of fighting power on the main battle grounds; fortunately, owing to *good luck and wisdom spawned by necessity*, Japan has been able to concentrate its scant capital in *strategic* industries (ibid).

These words bring attention to the fact that Japan's economic growth project was a national endeavor on par with a military conflict. The state called upon everyday citizens to work hard [*ganbaru*] in the hope that Japanese society would prosper and remain harmonious (ibid, pp. 177-178). Broadly speaking, this approach succeeded.

Japanese calculated plans for a more robust system of "autonomous defense" were thrown into disarray following a series of disruptive "shocks" by President Nixon. In July of 1971, Nixon announced—without prior consultation with Japan—that he had opened a dialogue with Beijing to establish diplomatic relations and open Chinese markets, taking advantage of the Sino-Soviet split (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, p. 274). Although Japan had conducted low-level trade with China since the 1960s, Nixon's move represented an opportunity for Japanese businesses to establish a proper foothold in the highly promising Chinese market. In August of 1971, again without prior consultation with the Japanese, Nixon ended the gold standard for the US dollar, allowing its value to float freely. This had the effect of raising the relative value of the yen as well as the costs of investing in the Japanese defense industry.

After Nixon's state visit to Beijing in February of 1972, the urgency of a Japanese military buildup became gradually less apparent to both US and Japanese leaders (Vogel, 2002, pp. 18-19). Japan and the People's Republic of China issued a joint communiqué in September of 1972 that established diplomatic relations between the two countries. Six years later in 1978, Japan and China agreed to a "peace and friendship" treaty, further easing tensions between the former rival powers (Kodansha International Ltd., 1999, pp. 276-277).

President Nixon understood well that his actions between 1971 and 1972 had unsettled the Japanese leadership, who had been pressing Washington for concessions on the Okinawa jurisdiction issue for several years. In November of 1972, just days after his reelection, Nixon signed another joint communiqué, this time with Japanese Prime Minister Sato. The agreement transferred administrative control of Okinawa back to the Japanese government for the first time since WWII but kept American military institutions in place. Nixon called the agreement the most significant development in US-Japan relations since the Second World War (Gannon, 2009).

As the US began its military withdrawal from Southeast Asia in the mid-1970s, Japan was forced to reconsider its need to assert its military presence in the East Asian region. This became especially apparent in 1976 after US presidential candidate Jimmy Carter pledged to withdraw American troops from South Korea (Vogel, 2002, p. 19), a promise he failed to keep as president. The Japanese government published its first—and rather dovish—postwar defense strategy outline in 1976, stating the US would assume all responsibilities for anything besides a "small scale, limited invasion." Two years later in 1978, the US and Japan agreed to a concrete framework of military cooperation, the "Guidelines for Defense Cooperation," in order to secure Japan's defensive capabilities in the following decades (Xu, 2014). The compromise guidelines allowed for a degree of military expansion in Japan that had been unimaginable before; the Japanese military would be able to plan and conduct exercises for the first time since WWII. The new framework nevertheless proved distasteful both to pacifist Japanese, who resented the expansion, and isolationist Americans, who believed the guidelines did not go far enough to wean Japan off of US security guarantees (Vogel, 2002, pp. 19-20).

4.2 – Japan as a Competitive Threat

Early in 1979, global oil prices skyrocketed for the second time in six years due to political instability in the Middle East. American consumers grew frustrated with the low gas mileage of American automobiles and gradually turned to more fuel-efficient Japanese

alternatives. When California Governor Ronald Reagan became president in 1981, the US auto industry put the new administration under intense pressure to curb this trend. Reagan was able to persuade the Japanese leadership to impose “voluntary export restraints” on auto and auto parts exports, but this measure simply expedited Japanese car makers’ plans to pursue more of their operations within the US (Cooper, 2014, p. 11).

In response to the frequent criticism since the early 1980s that burdensome regulations had prevented American auto manufacturers from setting up shop in Japan, Tokyo committed to allowing a greater share of American car sales on several occasions. Even though this may have been the case, the percentage of foreign cars on Japanese roads stood at 7 percent as late as 2014—a staggeringly low figure compared to the percentage of foreign cars on US roads (*ibid*). The auto manufacturing imbalance has remained one of the most intractable bilateral issues in recent decades. It has persisted through changes in administration both in Japan and the US, yet individual personalities have played some role in shifting the tone of the discourse.

When Yasuhiro Nakasone became the Japanese Prime Minister in November of 1982, his personal and ideological affinity with President Reagan brought new energy to the transpacific alliance. Nakasone had advocated on behalf of greater military autonomy as Director General of the Ministry of Defense in 1970, yet he gradually became convinced that Japan’s partnership with the US remained critical to his country’s defensive profile in the region. The US and Japanese navies worked in close coordination to establish protocol for sea lane defense in the event of a Soviet attack. This new development gave Japan an active role in America’s anti-Soviet containment strategy for the first time. In 1986, Nakasone agreed to station several American F-16 fighter jets in Misawa, in the north of Japan. The deployment of tactical aircraft so close to Russian airspace sent the message to the Soviets that the US was intent on countering its presence in the Pacific. Japan would remain critical to this objective as long as the Soviet threat persisted (Vogel, 2002, pp. 22-23).

In March of 1985, President Reagan took advantage of his friendship with Nakasone to implement the first multi-sector trade negotiations with Japan that the US had ever proposed, the “Market Oriented Sector-Specific” [MOSS] talks. Japan’s protectionist policies had long troubled American corporate leaders who sought to make investments in the Japanese industries of telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, forestry, and electronics. The MOSS talks concluded favorably for the US and allowed for increased US exports into the Japanese market in each of the four industries involved (Cooper, 2014, p. 16).

In September of 1985, Reagan continued his campaign to boost American exports by tackling the issue of the overvalued US dollar. He arranged a G5 summit at the Plaza Hotel in New York to coordinate currency flows and devalue the dollar in relation to the yen and the deutsche mark. The plan was to persuade Japan and West Germany to allow their currencies to appreciate and thereby boost domestic demand, to which all representatives agreed. The “Plaza Accord” worked a little too well, however. The value of the yen rose 46 percent against the dollar by December of 1986, sending the Japanese economy into a steep recession (International Monetary Fund, 2011, p. 53). The Plaza Accord represented the beginning of the end for Japan’s era of rapid growth, yet the common perception of its economic might lingered in American culture for several years thereafter.

As US companies attained a firmer foothold on Japanese industries in the mid-1980s, Japan’s economic and cultural influence on American life also grew more apparent, beginning a trend that has persisted in various forms ever since. Japanese imports to the US as a percentage of total imports reached its peak in 1986 (Vogel, 2002, p. 42), the same year Toyota opened its first wholly owned US manufacturing facility in Georgetown, Kentucky (Toyota Global, 2012). As Japanese automobiles grew in popularity, so did other Japanese consumer goods. Later in 1986, the Kyoto-based Nintendo Company launched its “Nintendo Entertainment System” to customers across the US and sold 10 million units over the next two years. In 1988, the editor of a toy industry trade journal expressed his amazement to *The New York Times*, using the word “mania” to describe the cultural obsession. “The kids of America are saying ‘This is great, we’ve got to have one,’ the editor said. “Not having a *Nintendo* is like not having a baseball bat” (McGill, 1988). With respect to both hard and soft power, Japan reach a highpoint in the bilateral relationship at this time, a status that did not necessarily please all Americans or Japanese.

By the late 1980s, Japan had assumed greater direct risk in the transpacific alliance than it had since the Korean War, yet its newfound economic clout brought greater pressure to share the financial burden of security and foreign aid (Vogel, 2002, pp. 23-24). On September 2nd, 1987, one New York City real estate developer who would later become President of the United States went so far as to publish three full-page advertisements in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Boston Globe* in which he lamented America’s *national humiliation* at the hands of the Japanese:

“For decades, Japan and other nations have been taking advantage of the United States... unimpeded by the huge costs

of defending themselves (as long as the United States will do it for free), [the Japanese people] have built a strong and vibrant economy with unprecedented surpluses... it's time for us to end our vast deficits by making Japan, and others who can afford it, pay. Our world protection is worth hundreds of billions of dollars to these countries, and their stake in their protection is far greater than ours" (Trump, 1987).

One year later on the Oprah Winfrey show, Mr. Trump was even more explicit about America's supposed losses in the postwar age of trade liberalization:

We let Japan come and dump everything in our markets. It's not free trade. If you go ever to Japan and try to sell something, forget about it, it's almost impossible. They don't have laws against it, they just make it impossible. They come over here they sell their cars, their VCRs, they knock the hell out of our companies" (Alden, 2017).

Mr. Trump's argument that Japan had certain institutional practices that served as barriers to foreign investment rang true to politicians and social scientists in both countries. Shortly into his administration in March of 1989, President George H.W. Bush met with Prime Minister Takeshita and announced the Structural Impediments Initiative [SII], designed to target certain non-tariff practices in Japanese economic life that impeded the entry of foreign competition. The main focal points of the SII were the Japanese practices of disproportionately high savings in relation to investment, a retail distribution system that disadvantaged large chains, laws on land use that kept prices artificially high, and the *keiretsu* business conglomerates that acted like cartels to coordinate lower prices and keep out competition. The SII also sought to address the structural impediments to US export trade to appear balanced, such as its low savings rate, but all actors understood that the chief aim of the project was to address the Japanese side of the trade imbalance (Cooper, 2014, pp. 16-17).

Such pressures from American business and governmental leaders only increased after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 and the US turned its attention to other trouble spots across the globe. Fortunately for those concerned about a withdrawal of US forces from East Asia, and perhaps unfortunately for its proponents, relationships with such deep roots generally do not collapse so quickly. Institutional inertia itself would carry the alliance through its troubled years to come (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 390), although this was far from common knowledge at the time.

The miraculous era of Japanese growth [1949-1989] coincided with parallel growth across the Pacific and in West Germany as well. Market barriers fell throughout the period, and the economic bonds between the US and Japan grew just as prominent as the military alliance. The relative stability of the international order between the Vietnam War and the fall of the Soviet Union allowed for Japanese and American politicians and intellectuals to focus on the economic power dynamic of the bilateral relationship. The era was not characterized by crisis, but rather by an awareness of ever-greater interdependence. More Americans grew unsettled with one-sided trade and defense policies installed when Japan was a poor and powerless nation. The “free-riding” Japanese economy took advantage of gaps in US industry, particularly in the fields of cars and electronics, leading many American *manufacturers* to resent a “Japanese invasion by other means.” Still, economic interdependence brought about a sense of Japanophilia in US *consumer* culture that has continued unabated to this day.

4.3 – Conclusion

As the 1980s drew to a close, most Americans and Japanese continued to believe in the necessity of the alliance due to the common military threat posed by the Soviet Union. Although the US had grown impatient with Japan’s trade policies, the military advantages of the relationship were too great for the Americans to refuse. The Japanese accepted an inverse bargain: they tacitly accepted the presence of a domineering foreign military force on their shores in exchange for an economic environment conducive to their material wellbeing. It remained to be seen whether the deal would hold in the context of a dramatic shift in the international order.

The suspicions that *were* present between the US and Japan grew almost entirely out of economics, and even more so as the decades progressed. Between 1960 and 1970 or so, the Japanese economy was still relatively poor in comparison to the US, and its potential military capacity was roughly on par with China [Tables 1 & 2 show each country’s relative GNI]. As the Japanese export economy became more competitive with the United States, the US government employed greater diplomatic pressure against the Japanese. When the Japanese economy took off between 1975 and 1991, the deterioration of the relationship accelerated. The oil crises and higher demand for fuel-efficient Japanese cars and other technology only exacerbated the decline of industrial America and framed Japan and the ultimate killer of America’s blue-collar livelihoods. While Japanese soft power expanded somewhat through the global dissemination of Japanese goods, the US government sought ever-stricter measures

to confront the Japanese government, most notably through the Plaza Accord of 1985. As the Japanese economy grew so much wealthier than China [Tables 3 & 4 show the growing gap in nominal GNI], Tokyo gradually ran out of excuses for being unable to finance its own defense, a major sticking point for US negotiators.

5.0 – Stagnation: 1991 – 2018

The past three decades of US-Japan relations have seen some of the worst and best moments in the transpacific alliance. The Japanese economy began to show signs of weakening, much to the relief US manufacturers. Trade became far less of a contentious issue as international institutions gradually rendered bilateral trade negotiations obsolete. Japan initially faltered in adapting to the post-Cold War geopolitical environment, fumbling its response to the Gulf War and to heightening tensions on the Korean Peninsula. 1995 was a true turning point in the relationship as the WTO relieved trade pressures between the allies and the Nye Initiative reaffirmed the US commitment to Japan's security. It also marked the point of greatest distance between Japanese and Chinese economic power. It soon became China's turn for an economic miracle, and Japan was left with two decades of stagnation. *Given Japan's doubtlessly weak economic showing in the 21st century opposite China, why has its alliance with the US improved so dramatically since the Cold War ended?* I argue the reemergence of great power politics in East Asia has played the most significant role.

5.1 – The Lost Decade

The final decade of the 20th century represented in many respects the very worst years in Japanese postwar history and have aptly earned the nickname “the lost decade.” Japan's highly inflated stock and land prices during the late 1980s began slipping as early as January of 1990 and proceeded to collapse over the following two-and-a-half years. Bankruptcies and cutbacks to manufacturing investment led the national unemployment rate to staggering new heights and spread doubts among the Japanese public about their government's ability to handle the crisis. Stress, suicide, and death from overwork [*karoshi*] became national epidemics. In light of Japan's economic malaise, toil to the point of physical discomfort became a cultural virtue (Tipton, 2002, pp. 210-211, 214-217).

The new decade also witnessed a dramatic shift in American and Japanese international relations priorities in Asia. When the United States repelled the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991, Japan offered roughly \$13 billion USD in support of the war effort, to which the international community responded with widespread indifference. Under pressure to deliver “real risk” instead of simple “checkbook diplomacy,” the Japanese government introduced a measure to allow for overseas deployment of peacekeeping troops, which the Diet promptly rejected. By the time the government was able to pass a resolution allowing for contained peacekeeping missions in 1992, the Gulf War had long been over. Japan's *soft power* suffered a steep decline as a consequence of their perceived hesitation to deploy troops

in defense of global interests in the first challenge of the post-Cold War era (Vogel, 2002, p. 24)—yet since that time, the Self Defense Forces have taken part in UN peacekeeping missions in Cambodia, Mozambique, East Timor, and the Golan Heights (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 29).

President George H. W. Bush took advantage of Japan's Gulf War loss of face by pressuring the Japanese for greater trade reciprocity during his visit to Tokyo in January of 1992, during which he brought along several senior auto executives from Detroit (Vogel, 2002, p. 25). The negotiations ended up being overshadowed by President Bush himself when he accidentally vomited into the lap of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa during a state dinner, who cradled his head in sympathy until he was well enough to stand on his own. The incident cast a pall over the visit and may have played a part in the president's failure to win reelection later in 1992 (Wines, 1992).

When Bill Clinton assumed the US presidency in 1993, he established his own bilateral trade framework independent of the SII, although he borrowed many of its core elements for its implementation. The new president's "United States-Japan Framework for a New Economic Partnership" established five goals for trade that pertained to sector-specific and general macroeconomic issues in the relationship. It differed from previous attempts by necessitating a biannual top-level meeting to assess its progress through "objective criteria," an insistence of the Clinton administration that caused consternation on the part of the Japanese leadership, who had hoped for trading "guidelines" of a less restrictive nature. Although the initiative reached several of its goals in the first term of the Clinton presidency, the strain it placed on US-Japan relations in a time of high economic anxiety in Japan would not be easily forgotten (Cooper, 2014, p. 17).

The Japanese public took greater interest in the US alliance and other defense issues as tensions heightened in the East Asian region. The collapse of the Soviet Union had isolated and severely impoverished North Korea, forcing its leadership to consider drastic measures to ensure the survival of the governing regime. In 1993, the ailing North Korean leader Kim Il-sung announced his intent to withdraw his country from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. The North Korean state also fired a missile into the Sea of Japan, raising anxieties among the Japanese public (Xu, 2014).

In June of 1994, the US readied sanctions and a blockade on North Korea in response to their nuclear weapons development, and the notion of a second Korean war soon became an imaginable possibility. The failure of the Japanese government to cooperate on a "roles

and missions approach” further disappointed officials in the US military, who recognized that Japanese forces would not be prepared for a US preemptive strike on the North. The Japanese leadership was unable to win support among the public for military and logistical cooperation given North Korea’s lack of actualized aggression (Vogel, 2002, p. 26).

5.2 – The Nye Initiative

The transpacific alliance only saw an upturn in late 1994 and early 1995 through the intervention of Joseph Nye Jr., US Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. The “Nye Initiative” became his personal campaign to rebuild the relationship by reaffirming US security guarantees. He won support for his project from both the US and Japanese governments and was able to establish a bilateral dialogue that resulted in each party acknowledging the continuing significance of the alliance for international security. The lingering tensions of the previous three years greatly subsided after the Pentagon published their East Asian Strategic Report in February of 1995, in which the US military stated their intention to hold roughly 100 thousand troops in the Asia Pacific region “for the foreseeable future” (Vogel, 2002, pp. 24-27).

Economic tensions also settled upon the signing of a June 1995 agreement that allowed for greater freedom and flexibility for US auto manufacturers in the Japanese market, closely avoiding a trade war between the two allies. Japan had filed a complaint through the newly-founded World Trade Organization [WTO] to dispute the Clinton administration’s coercive trade “criteria,” claiming that the Japanese government lacked the authority to intervene so heavily in private sector practices. This marked the first time that Japan had attempted to settle a US trade dispute by means of a third party, but it would not be the last. Just hours before punitive tariffs against Japanese auto parts were to go into effect, the US and Japan agreed to the auto trade reforms. Shortly thereafter, President Clinton retired the administration’s bilateral trade goals (Cooper, 2014, pp. 17-19).

Since 1995, the WTO has become the default mechanism for resolving trade disputes between the US and Japan, and this has greatly diminished the episodic trade tension within the alliance. It has also enabled the disentanglement of defense and trade issues, therefore diminishing Japanese anxieties that the bilateral trade imbalance could factor into the stability of the defense relationship. The establishment of the WTO had the effect of shifting the US-Japan dialogue away from economics and towards military issues, which both parties ultimately favored (Cooper, 2014, pp. 15, 19).

The bilateral security arrangement underwent a tremendous test of resilience in September of 1995 when three US marines stationed in Okinawa abducted and raped a local 12-year-old girl. The resulting outrage led both Washington and Tokyo to publicly reevaluate the terms of the alliance. They established a Special Action Committee on Okinawa to consolidate and reduce the footprint of US bases while maintaining their defensive capability. The US agreed to shut down a total of eleven air bases and reduce its land usage on Okinawa by roughly 20 percent (Vogel, 2002, pp. 7, 27). The measure was necessary to calm public outrage, but the underlying issue of the US footprint on the island has resurfaced on occasion ever since, especially in peacetime when its necessity has been least apparent.

In March of 1996, Chinese actions in the Pacific served to remind the world of the region's lingering instability, as well as to highlight the continued significance of the US-Japan alliance. China's rapid industrialization had emboldened its government to pursue an ambitious agenda of dominance within its self-perceived sphere of influence. At the same time, the PRC leadership had grown concerned that the political situation in Taiwan was causing the island to drift away from the One China Policy. It responded to this development by conducting a series of missile tests close to Taiwan as a warning in anticipation of a possible declaration of independence. The US responded by sailing two aircraft carriers into the Strait of Taiwan to send the signal that the American military would come to the aid of the Taiwanese in the event of a confrontation (Xu, 2014).

One month later, President Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto issued a Joint Security Declaration that offered the Japanese public additional changes to the bilateral arrangement. They agreed to make alterations to the 1978 Defense Guidelines in light of emerging regional tensions pertaining to China and North Korea. The declaration allowed the United States greater use of Japanese military installations in times of crisis (Vogel, 2002, p. 28). It also shifted greater responsibilities to Japan, offering the possibility for military interventions on the part of the Japan Self-Defense Forces [SDF] in "situations in areas surrounding Japan" (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 29). These changes were to be enacted gradually in the years to come, yet the Asian financial crisis in the summer of 1997 cast their implementation into doubt (Vogel, 2002, p. 28).

Japan's "lost decade" came to a disappointing end in several ways. Firstly, Japan's economic misfortunes meant that it would be less able to invest in its own defense as it would have imagined at the start of the 1990s. Secondly, President Clinton visited China for nine days in 1998 in an effort to calm regional tensions following the 1996 confrontation with

Taiwan. His decision not to visit Japan struck an emotional blow to the Japanese leadership who desperately sought assurance that the alliance was not about to unravel (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 392).

The loss of the Soviet threat and the straying of ties that followed were worrisome events in the history of the bilateral relationship. Even so, countering North Korean and Chinese aggression has gradually become its “guiding rationale” in the post-Cold War era. In a time of great anxiety among the Japanese leadership, action on the Korean Peninsula emerged *again* as a kind of *deus ex machina* to reinvigorate US-Japanese ties. A North Korean Taepodong missile launch over Japan in the summer of 1998 brought domestic consensus that Tokyo’s relationship with Washington was incontrovertibly relevant in the post-Cold War strategic environment. The event drew the US and Japanese governments to begin joint research on a ballistic missile defense system for Japan (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 29).

The election of George W. Bush to the US presidency in 2000 was another welcome change to bilateral relations given the new administration’s enthusiastic support for the Nye Initiative. The younger President Bush announced a new trade framework with Japan as several of his predecessors had, but the initiative received relatively less attention due to the administration’s greater focus on issues of national and international security, especially as the years progressed. Launched in June of 2001, the “U.S.-Japan Economic Partnership for Growth,” made several changes to the bilateral trade dialogue, including inviting private sector representatives to meet with subcabinet-level officials and produce an annual report on progress and recommendations for the President and Prime Minister. It established working groups for the reform of regulations, banking practices, the Japanese investment climate, as well as other groups to monitor the progress of sector-specific and cross-sector agreements already in effect (Cooper, 2014, p. 18).

The September 11th attacks and the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars that began during George W. Bush’s first term drew attention away from the trade imbalance and offered Japan new opportunities to demonstrate its commitment to the defense relationship in a meaningful capacity. The Japanese Diet passed legislation allowing for the dispatch of refueling tankers to the Indian Ocean for US operations in Afghanistan. Japan sent 600 SDF soldiers to Iraq in February of 2004 to assist in reconstruction efforts—the first instance in which Japanese troops had served in an active warzone since WWII. SDF troops remained until 2008, when the UN authorization for coalition activities in Iraq had expired. Despite the appearance of

closer cooperation, the second President Bush ultimately disappointed the Japanese leadership on the foreign policy front, as the administration's diplomatic approach to North Korea proved disastrously ineffectual in persuading the regime to de-nuclearize (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, pp. 29-30).

At the start of the 2008 global financial crisis, the Japanese economy already suffered from lackluster domestic consumption and investment that endangered its national budget. As a consequence of such stagnancy on the domestic side, most economic growth stemmed from overseas demand for Japanese goods. As the financial crisis worsened into 2009, exports to the US and Europe fell dramatically, hampering the Japanese economy as a whole. Japan experienced growth rates of -1.1 percent in 2008 and -5.5 percent in 2009, contracting roughly twice as severely as the US economy did in the same two-year period. This was reflected in the fact that the US trade deficit with Japan sunk to its lowest level in nearly two decades [as depicted in Figure 3]. Although the Japanese economy resumed 4.7 percent growth in 2010, external events dragged the financial malaise well into the new decade (Cooper, 2014, pp. 2-3).

The Obama White House's relationship with Tokyo started off somewhat unfavorably but improved over time. As a presidential candidate, Senator Obama pledged to improve relations with China in a so-called "pivot to Asia," and the Japanese leadership worried about what changes this could entail, much like they had during the US *détente* with the USSR and the opening to China. The center-left Democratic Party of Japan [DPJ] came to power in the autumn of 2009 and pressed for a resolution regarding the relocation of the Futenma military base on Okinawa. Negotiations between the DPJ and the US military ended after several months, but domestic anxieties about the diplomatic damage caused by the controversy took a toll on the government's popularity. As has so often been the case historically, it took an outside event to reinvigorate the bilateral relationship once more (Chanlett-Avery & Rinehart, 2016, p. 30).

On March 11th, 2011, a chain reaction of catastrophes unfolded in northeastern Japan. A 9.0-magnitude offshore earthquake caused a tsunami that flooded the coastline of the Fukushima, Miyagi, and Iwate Prefectures. Floodwaters breached the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, leading to three nuclear meltdowns and the release of radioactive materials into the surrounding environment. The events resulted in more than 15 thousand deaths (about five times the casualty count of the 9/11 attacks), the displacement of more

than 470 thousand people, and the highest reconstruction costs for any natural disaster in world history (Hamilton, 2016).

The US military launched Operation Tomodachi (“Operation Friend”) in response, mobilizing 24 thousand service members at a total cost of roughly \$90 million USD. The objective of the American-led campaign was to find survivors in the earthquake’s immediate aftermath and provision aid supplies throughout the recovery effort. American troops helped rescue roughly 20 thousand stranded people and restored operation to the ruined Sendai Airport. As other countries withdrew their aid workers over nuclear radiation concerns, the US redoubled its commitment to ensure the effort’s completion. Japanese security experts and public opinion polls gave Operation Tomodachi high praise. A Pew Research poll conducted in June of 2011 showed 85 percent of Japanese citizens held a favorable view of the United States, representing a substantial improvement from the years immediately prior to 2011 (Johnston, 2012).

The Fukushima nuclear disaster nevertheless had a severely adverse effect on the Japanese national morale in the following years. The national economy underwent a 0.4 contraction in 2011 only to experience a relatively weak recovery thereafter, growing between 1.4 and 1.7 percent in 2012 and 2013, respectively. The Japanese predicament appeared especially dire given that public debts have totaled more than 200 percent of GDP since 2010, the highest of any industrialized country (Cooper, 2014, p. 3).

5.3 – The Post-American Pacific?

When Shinzo Abe assumed the role of Prime Minister for the second time in 2012, he sought to fulfill his campaign promises of revitalizing the stagnant economy and slowing inflation, an economic platform known as “Abenomics.” The prime minister sought to weaken the yen in relation to the US dollar and revitalize bilateral trade, which had grown relatively slowly over the previous two decades. Japan and the US had remained important trading partners, but Japan’s position in terms of total imports to the US had fallen behind Canada, Mexico, and China between 1989 and 2014. The emergence of China as a central figure in global production networks since the 1980s affected Japan just as profoundly as the US—with China becoming Japan’s fastest growing trade partner (Cooper, 2014, pp. 3-5). Abe’s brand of center-right politics has strengthened the US alliance by allowing for more flexibility from the SDF, but his leadership has increased regional tensions with China and the Koreas, who are wary of a resurgent Japan.

In light of China's economic rise and Japan's stagnant export market [Figure 1 shows the course of each country's nominal GDP], Abe decided to enter negotiations in March of 2014 to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP], a free trade agreement between a dozen nations along the Pacific Rim—with the notable exceptions of China and Russia. The agreement was designed to serve several functions, chief among them the liberalization of trade markets and the streamlining of trade practice negotiations. Although Japanese farmers and healthcare employees expressed concern that foreign goods would flood the market and undermine their industries, the proponents of the deal, which included Japanese manufacturers and others on the Japanese center-right, ultimately won the debate (Cooper, 2014, pp. 11-12).

Both the Abe and Obama administrations envisioned the TPP as the 21st century platform for the settlement of US-Japan trade disputes, and as such, it would eventually render bilateral trade negotiations and WTO negotiations obsolete. Before the US would endorse Japan's entry into the trade pact, President Obama expressed his intention to settle three central issues of lingering significance in the trade relationship: Japanese market access for American auto manufacturers, strict Japanese restrictions on US beef, and the monopolistic practices of the state-run Japan Post. Although both parties were able to resolve some issues in parallel bilateral talks, such as beef imports, many of the central compromises regarding liberalized and equalized auto trade were dependent upon each country's respective participation in the trade pact. The fact that both major US presidential candidates in 2016 advocated for an American withdrawal from the TPP—an opinion no doubt informed by the opposition of Rust Belt auto workers in a politically important region—cast doubt on the longevity of the American commitments (Cooper, 2014, pp. 11-13).

Just three days after assuming the US presidency in January of 2017, Donald Trump signed an executive order withdrawing the United States from the TPP. Trump campaigned on the most aggressively protectionist platform in postwar American politics, and his actions as president have reflected a desire to govern accordingly. Professor Eswar Prasad, a trade economist at Cornell University, commented on the decision to the Washington Post:

This abrupt action so early in the Trump administration puts the world on notice that all of America's traditional economic and political alliances are now open to reassessment and renegotiation... This could have an adverse long-run impact on the ability of the U.S. to maintain its influence and leadership in world economic and political affairs (Mui, 2017).

The withdrawal spread the perception that the US was retreating from its global leadership role. Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations (mentioned in the introductory chapter), predicted that the move would “slow U.S. [economic] growth, cost American jobs, & weaken U.S. standing in Asia [and the] world,” adding, “China could well be [the] principal beneficiary” (ibid).

The US withdrawal from the TPP upended the promising “21st century framework” for US-Japan trade negotiations and certainly offered an opening to China for further economic leadership opportunities in the Pacific, but the decision generally reflected the will of the American people. A sizeable percentage of the US voting public had expressed skepticism towards internationalism and globalization, and as the embodiment of these ideas, the TPP proved generally distasteful to both sides of the American political spectrum. Even Hillary Clinton, a spokesperson of sorts for her husband’s free trade-friendly centrist politics, expressed her intention to *renegotiate* the TPP during the 2016 campaign. It is therefore not unlikely that the US would have withdrawn from the deal under any administration that followed President Obama’s (Mui, 2017).

President Trump took sudden and abrupt action on trade policy in early March of 2018 when he announced that the United States would impose a 25 percent tariff on steel and a 10 percent tariff on aluminum imports, nominally for purposes of national security. There are grounds to doubt this stated reasoning, as the US imports only a third of the steel it uses in any given year (Irwin, 2018), and a plurality of imported steel comes from Canada, the United States’ closest and most dependable ally. The president’s political rhetoric suggests that the move was in fact designed to fulfill a campaign promise to return manufacturing jobs to the US. The decision led to the resignation of Gary Cohn, Trump’s chief economic advisor, and sent several US allies into a panic. Japanese Trade Minister Hiroshige Seko expressed his regret at a news conference but did not state any desire to return fire in a trade war, seeking to use the WTO framework instead: “It is extremely regrettable. The measures will trigger confusion in the steel market not only in the United States but in Asia,” he said. Seko also highlighted how Japanese steel exports were “contributing greatly to the U.S. industry and jobs,” particularly in automobile manufacturing (Kyodo, Associated Press, 2018).

While the move was not altogether unexpected given the president’s lengthy track record on protectionism and vilification of Japanese trade policies, the government in Tokyo had deeply hoped that Trump’s personal rapport with Prime Minister Abe would have

shielded Japan from such aggressive or possibly impulsive measures. The president's announcement later in March that he had accepted an invitation to meet with Kim Jong-un—without informing the Japanese government about it first—ended any illusion that Mr. Trump would advocate actively on behalf of Japanese interests. To make matters even worse for the Japanese prime minister, a cronyism scandal that had haunted his administration for a year resurfaced in mid-March upon the Finance Ministry's admission that it had doctored several documents related to the case to remove the name of Mr. Abe's wife. Just the previous week, a ministry official involved in the scandal had committed suicide under suspicious circumstances (Agence France-Presse, Jiji Press, 2018).

Bilateral relations continued to tumble later in March when the Trump administration announced exemptions to the tariffs for six key US allies: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and South Korea. *The omission of Japan from the list made it the top exporter of steel to be subjected to the new tariff.* Japan sells the US roughly \$1.7 billion in steel goods on an annual basis, typically niche and highly-specialized products. The prominent exemptions to the tariff will mean that those still subject to it might face even steeper rates in the future, hitting Japan hardest of all (Tankersley & Ewing, 2018).

The “Trump shocks” of March, 2018 struck two very sensitive nerves in Japanese foreign policy—the North Korean security threat and the US trade relationship. The oversight of Japanese interests on the part of the Trump Administration publicly embarrassed Prime Minister Abe and threw his US strategy into doubt. Abe had hoped that appealing to Trump's ego and vanity would be enough to stave off his anti-Japanese inclinations, but this presumption turned out to be flawed (Reynolds, 2018). During his first few months in office, President Trump has often shifted his political stances towards continuity for the sake of pragmatism, but tariffs have proven to be his most prominent ideological constant. Trump is fundamentally the same man who wrote his famous screed against Japan over three decades ago. This has often been a harsh truth for proponents of the relationship to internalize.

5.4 – Conclusion

Stagnancy in Japan's economy since 1991 has been counterintuitively beneficial to its security relationship with the United States. To most American observers, it has quieted the fears of a behemoth Japanese economy sidelining US industry. China has clearly assumed that role instead, having jumped from half to double the size of Japan's economy in the span of ten years [Tables 5 & 6 show each country's transition in nominal GNI]. Indeed, the economic rise of China and the growing military threat posed by North Korea have cast Japan

in a sympathetic light not dissimilar from its predicament at the end of the US occupation, despite the fact that North Korea does not pose any significant threat in traditional realist terms beyond its nuclear ambitions [Table 7 shows how stunted its nominal GNI has remained]. Having a common security threat in China (or, by extension, North Korea) has been the salve to bilateral woes time and again since WWII, and this pattern has reemerged in the post-Cold War environment.

Although President Trump began his term with a somewhat conciliatory approach to Japan, his diplomatic actions so far in 2018 have betrayed an ambivalence or even disdain for the bilateral relationship. As the political pressure on the president has intensified due to the Mueller investigation and a seemingly never-ending White House shakeup, he has reverted to his most original sense of self, the contrarian economic nationalist he envisioned himself as in the late 1980s. Although Trump himself has not changed much, the world around him has considerably. Japan is once again fearful of its neighbors' assertiveness and is in no economic or political position to pursue a military buildup of its own. This appears to be an optimal time to strengthen ties, yet Trump appears to be shoving Japan out of the bird's nest out of sheer impulse. His personal animosity to the postwar system of defense and trade has brought about deep concern among US allies. Even so, the peculiarity of Donald Trump as a political force suggests that the system will likely persevere through 2020 or 2024, after which time he will be constitutionally obliged to step aside.

6.0 – Thesis Conclusion: The Continuation of Great Power Politics

It would have been academically irresponsible to examine US-Japan relations over the past century without exploring the broader geopolitics in the East Asian region. As a gigantic economy in waiting, China has long fascinated American foreign policy analysts, first as an ally, then as an ideological threat, then finally as an “on again, off again” economic adversary. The history of the region has played itself out in a classically realist fashion, as the US has developed deeper ties with either China or Japan depending on which country appeared to be the underdog at the time. The formalized 1952 alliance with Japan and the stationing of US troops on Japanese soil notwithstanding, the US grew increasingly concerned with Japanese economic growth from the end of the occupation through the 1990s. As Figure 4 demonstrates, the sharp rise in China’s relative economic power [shown in GNI vis-à-vis Japan] and subsequent geopolitical influence returned the alliance to its former self. The relationship recovered upon the emergence of a more powerful adversary, exactly as Mearsheimer had predicted in 2001.

It is certainly true that positive and negative soft power played a role in the alliance’s ups and downs, but these issues had a relatively minor effect *in comparison* to the geopolitical forces at play. In addition, the impact of individual events often proved remarkably short-lived. The Japanese public was openly incensed at various points in the history of the relationship, prominently during the Vietnam War and after America’s rapprochement with China, the Plaza Accords, the 1995 Okinawa incident, and the March 2018 actions taken by President Trump. Still, the Japanese predicament is that geopolitics have limited their options down to *one*, an alliance with the United States of indefinite duration. Soft power dynamics, including anthropomorphic mascots, will continue to play a role in Japanese foreign relations, but countering China will take more concrete steps. The TTP was designed to create an alternative trading block in East Asia, but without the participation of the United States, its *real power* will be greatly diminished.

Both the Brookings Institution and the Council on Foreign Relations’ compendia reach the more-or-less explicit conclusion that the US-Japan alliance has been mutually beneficial to the respective parties and will continue to be so in the future, and with this statement I am in full agreement. Still, the parties must recognize that all things must pass. To plan for a post-American Pacific, Japan is wise to draw closer ties with Australia and India and would be wiser still to establish more of a diplomatic foothold in South Korea. The United States’ military presence in East Asia is unlikely to diminish in the near-term, but

isolationist political trends and increasing public debts have been troublesome developments in Washington.

“*Good luck and wisdom spawned by necessity*” have been two of the driving forces behind the success of the Japanese nation since 1945. The irony embedded in this statement stems from the fact that the Japanese people have been the only victims of nuclear warfare, yet this reality did not impede them from eventually allying with the nation that had defeated them in such a dramatic and horrifying fashion. The occupation period after the war was incredibly formative for Japan’s understanding of itself and its place in the postwar world. Left-wing Japanese admired the US for the liberal democratic values it enshrined in Japan’s postwar constitution, a document that symbolized an unparalleled commitment to pacifist idealism. The right-wing Japanese establishment, headed by Emperor Hirohito, embraced the United States for its military strength. Both for its liberal democratic values and its defensive capabilities, Japan was incredibly *lucky* to rebuild its society under the US umbrella. One needs only to look to North Korea to see what kind of country could have resulted from a Soviet occupation.

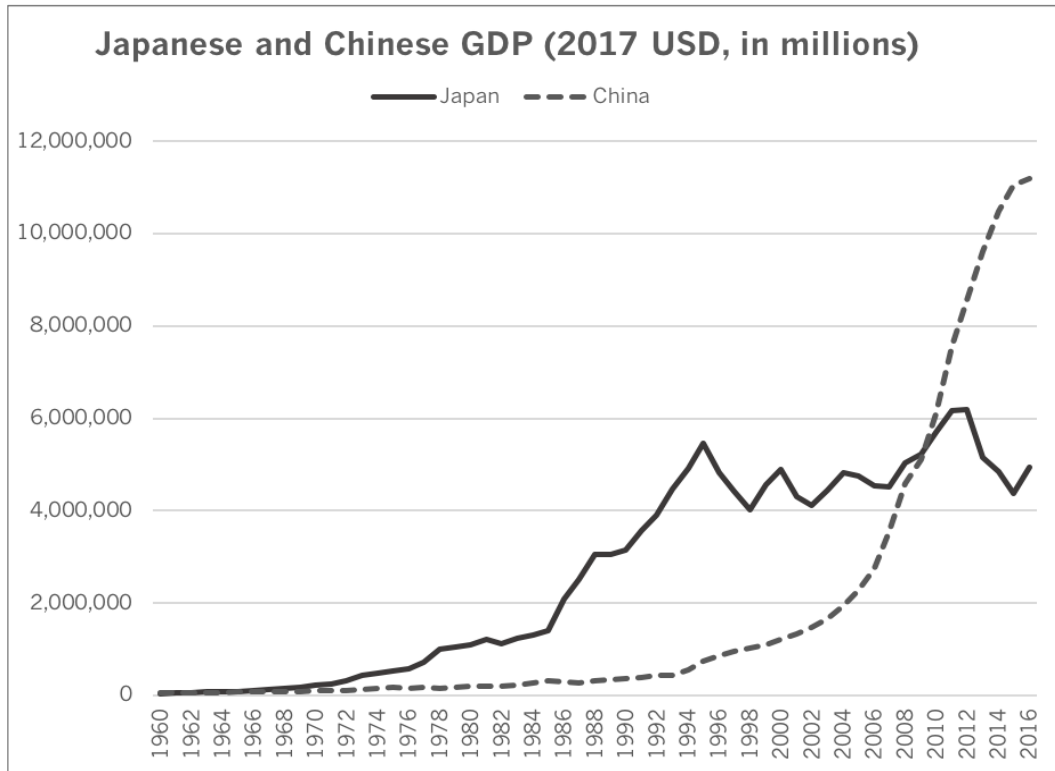
The phrase “wisdom spawned by necessity” [*hitsuyo wa hatsumeji no haha*, literally, “necessity is the mother of invention”] has been a guiding theme in Japanese culture since the Meiji era. Japan’s lack of natural resources or natural allies has spurred an intensive degree of innovation with regard to both economics and defense and has allowed the country to repeatedly turn misfortune on its head. The transpacific alliance is rife with examples of such skillful adaptation. North Korea’s 1950 invasion of South Korea allowed Japan to contribute meaningfully to its partnership with the US for the first time and reinvigorated Japanese industry. The punitive measures against Japanese exports enacted by President Reagan in 1981 persuaded Japanese business leaders to expand operations overseas and allowed them to further entrench themselves into the American market. After the 2011 Fukushima disaster, the tremendous US response effort served to bolster the alliance yet again. A coordinated response to the North Korean nuclear weapons program is set to be another such stimulus to the partnership, yet it remains unclear to what degree the US or South Korea will allow Japan to involve itself in negotiations.

Japan may retain its characteristic adaptability into the future, but fortune has a way of changing hands. For this reason, at every point of turbulence in the alliance, Japan has feared its sudden collapse. Much like the cherry blossoms appear in spring only to vanish shortly thereafter, the Japanese understand that the alliance is but a temporary state of affairs.

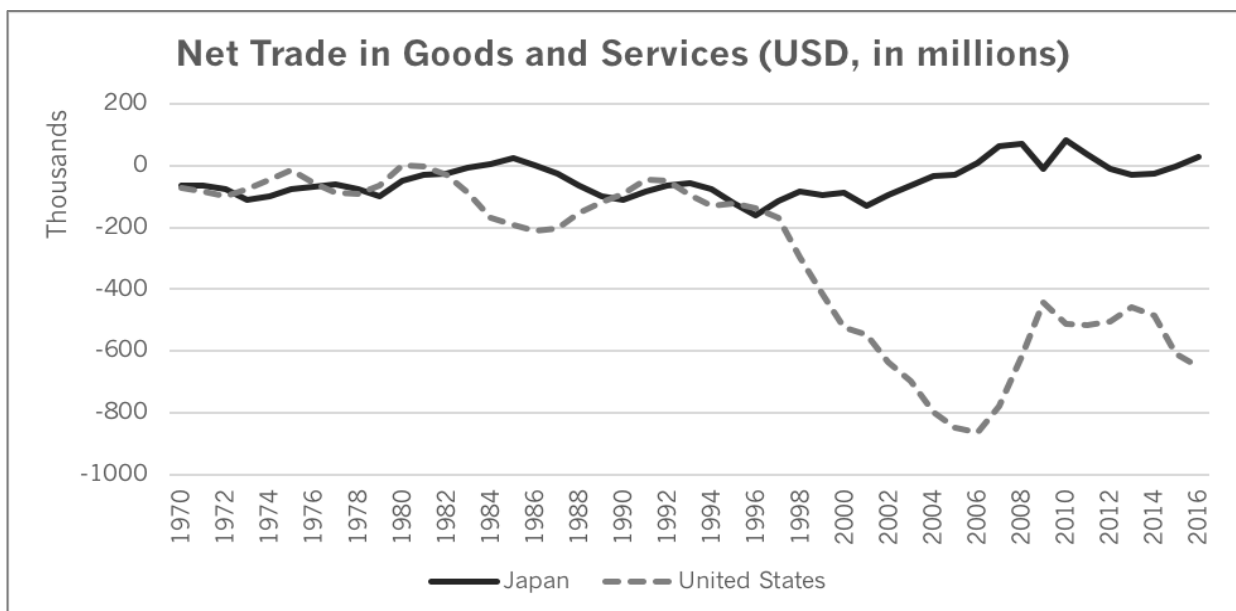
This realization has prompted Japanese leaders on the left and right to ponder the inevitability of a post-American Pacific. Although President Trump is unlikely to be the decisive force that fells this historic partnership, his example may well be an omen of American abdication in Asia. The consequences of such a rebalancing have become apparent in the economic sphere in advance of major military changes. With the exception of the immediate threat of North Korea, China will certainly dominate headlines in future decades as the greatest strategic threat to Japanese sovereignty. The cumulative result will be a re-envisioning of Japanese pacifism and possibly renewed conflict in East Asia.

Figures

1. (The World Bank, 2018)



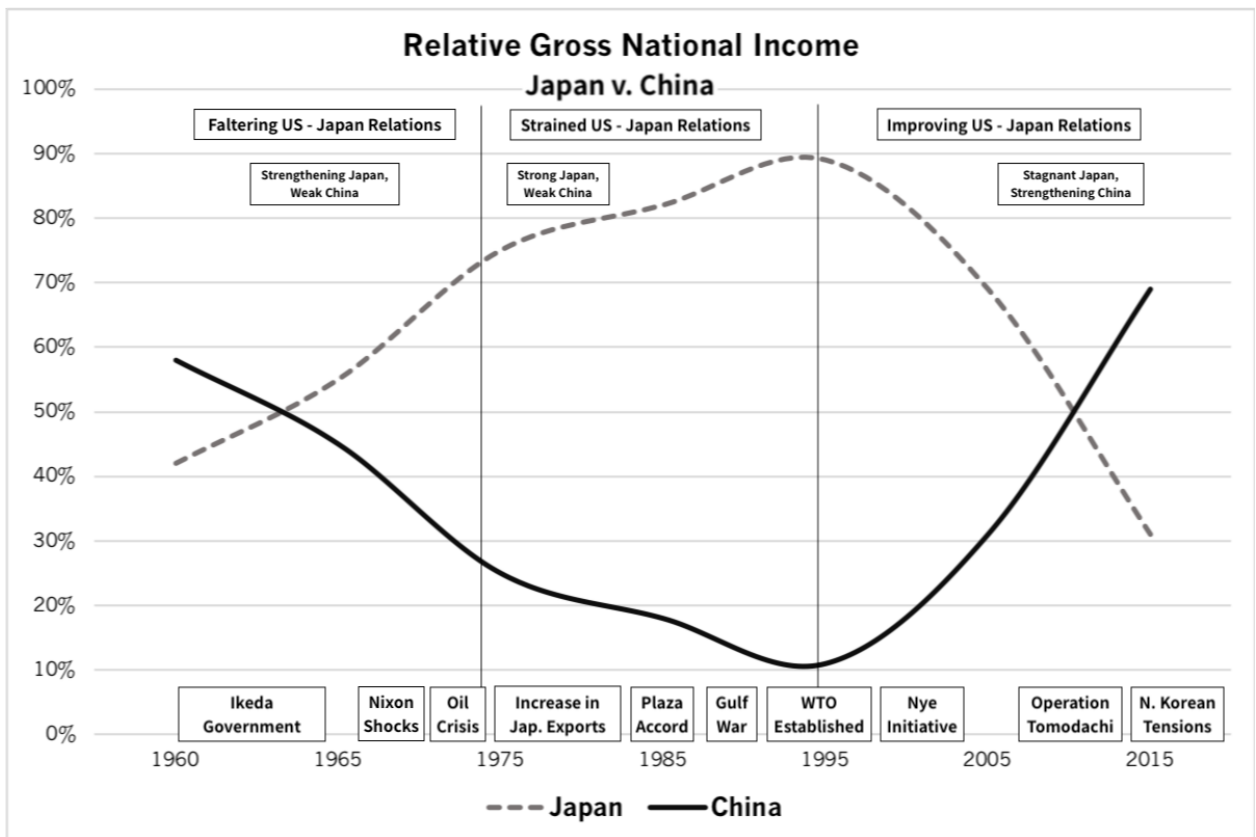
2. (OECD, 2018), nominal figures



3. (United States Census Bureau, 2018), nominal figures



4. (The World Bank, 2018)



Tables

Table 1: (The World Bank, 2018), (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2018)

Balance of Power in Asia, 1960			
	Potential Power		
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population
Japan	\$44.1 billion	42%	93 million
China	\$59.7 billion	58%	667 million

Table 2: (The World Bank, 2018)

Balance of Power in Asia, 1965			
	Potential Power		
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population
Japan	\$87.9 billion	55%	99 million
China	\$71.8 billion	45%	715 million

Table 3: (The World Bank, 2018)

Balance of Power in Asia, 1975			
	Potential Power		
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population
Japan	\$573 billion	75%	112 million
China	\$187 billion	25%	916 million

Table 4: (The World Bank, 2018)

Balance of Power in Asia, 1985				
	Potential Power			Actual Power
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population	Armed Forces Personnel
Japan	\$1.39 trillion	82%	121 million	243,000
China	\$301 billion	18%	1.05 billion	3,900,000

Table 5: (The World Bank, 2018), (RAND Corporation, 2017, pp. 44-45)

Balance of Power in Asia, 1995				
	Potential Power			Actual Power
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population	Nuclear Warheads
Japan	\$5.28 trillion	89%	125 million	0
China	\$650 billion	11%	1.21 billion	99

Table 6: (The World Bank, 2018), (RAND Corporation, 2017, pp. 44-45)

Balance of Power in Asia, 2005				
	Potential Power			Actual Power
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population	Nuclear Warheads
Japan	\$5.18 trillion	69%	128 million	0
China	\$2.3 trillion	31%	1.3 billion	111

Table 7: (The World Bank, 2018), (Kim & Chung, 2017), (RAND Corporation, 2017, pp. 44-45), (ICAN, 2017)

Balance of Power in Asia, 2015					
	Potential Power			Actual Power	
	GNI	Relative GNI	Population	Armed Forces Personnel	Nuclear Warheads
Japan	\$4.93 trillion	31%	127 million	259,800	0
China	\$10.9 trillion	69%	1.37 billion	2,843,000	222 - 270
North Korea	\$33.8 billion	< 1%	25.2 million	1,379,000	10

Images

1. September 27, 1945 – General Douglas MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito [Showa] at their first meeting at the US Embassy in Tokyo. (United States Army, 1945)



2. October 2, 1975 – Emperor Hirohito at a White House state dinner hosted by President Ford. (National Archives, 1975)



3. November 11, 1983 – President Reagan meets with Prime Minister Nakasone. (The George Washington University, 2005)



4. May 27, 2016 – President Obama embraces atomic bombing survivor Shigeaki Mori at the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima. (The Japan Times, 2016)



5. November 6, 2017 – President Trump and Prime Minister Abe feed the koi fish at the royal palace in Tokyo. (Vanity Fair, 2017)



Bibliography

- Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2012). *Why Nations Fail*. New York: Crown Publishing Group.
- Agence France-Presse, Jiji Press. (2018, March 12). *The Moritomo cronyism scandal: Could it hurt Abe?* Retrieved from The Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/03/12/national/politics-diplomacy/moritomo-cronyism-scandal-hurt-abe/#.WqmGwf1FXox>
- Alden, E. (2017, January 16). *The Roots of Trump's Trade Rage*. Retrieved from Politico Magazine: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/01/the-roots-of-trumps-trade-rage-214639>
- Allen, J., & Sugg, B. (2016, July). *The U.S.-Japan Alliance*. Retrieved from The Brookings Institution: <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Paper-2v2.pdf>
- Allison, G., & Ferguson, N. (2016, October). *Applied History Manifesto*. Retrieved from The Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs: <https://www.belfercenter.org/project/applied-history-project#!manifesto>
- BBC. (2003, April 29). *Kuril islands dispute between Russia and Japan*. Retrieved from BBC News: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11664434>
- Bennett, B. (2017, November 5). *Trump and Abe bond in Tokyo over golf, steaks and trucker hats that say 'great again'*. Retrieved from Los Angeles Times: <http://www.latimes.com/politics/washington/la-na-pol-essential-washington-updates-trump-and-abe-bond-in-tokyo-over-golf-1509889051-htmstory.html>
- Chanlett-Avery, E., & Rinehart, I. E. (2016, February 9). *The U.S.-Japan Alliance*. Retrieved from Federation of American Scientists: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>
- Cohen, H. (2018, March 1). *Why does Russia have Florida on its nuclear map?* Retrieved from Miami Herald: <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/article202925334.html>
- Cooper, W. H. (2014, February 18). *U.S.-Japan Economic Relations: Significance, Prospects, and Policy Options*. Retrieved from Federation of American Scientists: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32649.pdf>
- Council on Foreign Relations. (2018). *About CFR*. Retrieved from Council on Foreign Relations: <https://www.cfr.org/about>
- Fackler, M. (2014, May 29). *North Korea Will Investigate Fate of Abducted Japanese*. Retrieved from The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/30/world/asia/north-korea-agrees-to-investigate-fate-of-japanese-abducted-decades-ago.html>
- Fackler, M. (2014, March 16). *Years After Abduction by North Korea, a Reunion*. Retrieved from The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/17/world/asia/parents-of-japanese-woman-kidnapped-by-north-korea-meet-their-granddaughter.html>
- Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2018). *Economic Research: Japan, China*. Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis: <https://research.stlouisfed.org>
- Fisher, M., & Carlsen, A. (2018, March 9). *How China Is Challenging American Dominance in Asia*. Retrieved from The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/09/world/asia/china-us-asia-rivalry.html>
- Fox, M. (2013, January 1). *Beate Gordon, Long-Unsung Heroine of Japanese Women's Rights, Dies at 89*. Retrieved from The New York Times: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/02/world/asia/beate-gordon-feminist-heroine-in-japan-dies-at-89.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

- Gannon, F. (2009, November 19). *11.19.69*. Retrieved from Richard Nixon Foundation: <https://www.nixonfoundation.org/2009/11/11-19-69/>
- Gordon, A. (2003). *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. New York, New York, United States of America: Oxford University Press.
- Green, M. J., & Cronin, P. M. (1999). *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press.
- Hamilton, B. (2016, March 10). *Fukushima 5 years later: 2011 disaster by the numbers*. Retrieved from CBC News: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/5-years-after-fukushima-by-the-numbers-1.3480914>
- Hickey, M. (2011, March 21). *BBC*. Retrieved from The Korean War: An Overview: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/coldwar/korea_hickey_01.shtml
- Horiuchi, L. (2005). *History of the War Relocation Authority (WRA) Sites*. Retrieved from National Japanese American Historical Society: <http://njahs.org/confinementsites/history/>
- ICAN. (2017). *Nuclear arsenals*. Retrieved from International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons: <http://www.icanw.org/the-facts/nuclear-arsenals/>
- Ikenberry, G. J., & Inoguchi, T. (2003). *Reinventing the Alliance: U.S.-Japan Security Partnership in an Era of Change*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- International Monetary Fund. (2011, April). *Tensions from the Two-Speed Recovery: Unemployment, Commodities, and Capital Flows*. Retrieved from International Monetary Fund: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/01/pdf/text.pdf>
- International Monetary Fund. (2017, October). *Report for Selected Countries and Subjects*. Retrieved from International Monetary Fund: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2017/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?pr.x=34&pr.y=13&sy=2017&ey=2017&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=512%2C946%2C914%2C137%2C612%2C546%2C614%2C962%2C311%2C674%2C213%2C676%2C911%2C548%2C193%2C556%2C122%2C678%2C912%2C18>
- Irwin, N. (2018, March 1). *The Real Risks of Trump's Steel and Aluminum Tariffs*. Retrieved from The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/01/upshot/trump-tariff-steel-aluminum-explain.html>
- Jansen, M. B. (2000). *The Making of Modern Japan*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States of America: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Johnston, E. (2012, March 3). *Operation Tomodachi a huge success, but was it a one-off?* Retrieved from The Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/03/03/news/operation-tomodachi-a-huge-success-but-was-it-a-one-off/#.WpsPRjpFWCQ>
- Kafura, C. (2017, February 8). *Public Opinion and the US-Japan Alliance at the Outset of the Trump Administration*. Retrieved from Chicago Council on Global Affairs: https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/sites/default/files/public-opinion-brief-us-japan_170208.pdf
- Kim, C., & Chung, J. (2017, July 21). *North Korea 2016 economic growth at 17-year high despite sanctions - South Korea*. Retrieved from Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-northkorea-economy-gdp/north-korea-2016-economic-growth-at-17-year-high-despite-sanctions-south-korea-idUKKBN1A6083>
- Kodansha International Ltd. (1999). *Japan: Profile of a Nation*. Tokyo, Japan: Kodansha International Ltd.
- Krauss, B. (2005, July 27). *Wartime currency not so rare*. Retrieved from Honolulu Star-Advertiser: <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Jul/27/ln/507270358.html>
- Kyodo, Associated Press. (2018, March 9). *Tokyo's response to Trump tariffs will be 'within the framework of the WTO': Trade minister Hiroshige Seko*. Retrieved from The

- Japan Times: https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/03/09/business/amid-gop-outcry-trump-rolls-big-trade-tariffs-spare-mexico-canada-now/#.Wq197_1FXow
- Lee, C., Lee, J.-h., Hahn, B.-h., Lew, Y.-i., & Yu, W.-i. (2017, September 5). *North Korea*. Retrieved from Encyclopædia Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/place/North-Korea>
- Lin, G., Vogel, E. F., Rozman, G., & Wan, M. (2003, July). *The U.S.–Japan–China Triangle: Who’s the Odd Man Out?* Retrieved from The Wilson Center: https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/asia_rpt113.pdf
- Masangkay, M. (2013, October 18). *Embassies in Japan using mascots as ‘cultural ambassadors’*. Retrieved from The Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/10/18/national/embassies-using-mascots-as-ambassadors/#.WtMnoPckCb8>
- McCormack, G. (2007). *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace*. New York: Verso.
- McGill, D. C. (1988, December 4). *Nintendo Scores Big*. Retrieved from The New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/12/04/business/nintendo-scores-big.html?pagewanted=all>
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Mui, Y. Q. (2017, January 23). *President Trump signs order to withdraw from Trans-Pacific Partnership*. Retrieved from The Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2017/01/23/president-trump-signs-order-to-withdraw-from-transpacific-partnership/?utm_term=.eda6cae35bb7
- Nash, F. C. (1952, February 6). *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, Part 2*. Retrieved from US State Department Office of the Historian: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v14p2/pg_1133
- National Archives. (1975). *Hirohito*. Retrieved from Wikipedia: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ford_and_Emperor1975.jpg
- NATO. (2010, January 14). *Concluding remarks by Madeleine K. Albright, Chair of the Group of Experts at the Third Seminar on NATO’s Strategic Concept*. Retrieved from North Atlantic Treaty Organization: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_60761.htm
- Nye, J. S. (1990). Soft Power. *Foreign Policy*, 153-171.
- OECD. (2018). *Trade in goods and services*. Retrieved from OECD Data: <https://data.oecd.org/trade/trade-in-goods-and-services.htm>
- Persio, S. L. (2017, November 6). Trump Says North Korea's Missiles Can be Shot 'Out of the Sky' if Japan Buys More U.S. Defense Equipment. *Newsweek*.
- Phillips, A. (2017, April 28). *Want to change Trump’s mind on policy? Be the last one who talks to him*. Retrieved from The Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/04/14/want-to-change-trumps-mind-on-policy-be-the-last-one-who-talks-to-him/?utm_term=.ae351b943089
- RAND Corporation. (2017). *China's Evolving Nuclear Deterrent*. Retrieved from RAND Corporation: https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1600/RR1628/RAND_RR1628.pdf
- Reynolds, I. (2018, March 23). *Trump’s twin blows to Japan test limit of Abe’s charm offensive*. Retrieved from The Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/03/23/national/politics-diplomacy/trumps-twin-blows-japan-test-limit-abes-charm-offensive/>
- Rich, M. (2018, March 13). *Japan Fears Being Left Behind by Trump’s Talks With Kim Jong-un*. Retrieved from The New York Times:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/13/world/asia/japan-shinzo-abe-trump-north-korea.html>
- Robertson, W. (1955, July 28). *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957, Japan, Volume XXIII, Part 1*. Retrieved from US Department of State Office of the Historian: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v23p1/pg_79
- Rostow, W., & Johnson, A. (1967, March 1). *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXIX, Part 2, Japan*. Retrieved from US State Department Office of the Historian: <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v29p2/d84>
- Tankersley, J., & Ewing, J. (2018, March 22). *U.S. Exempts Allies From Steel and Aluminum Tariffs*. Retrieved from The New York Times: www.nytimes.com/2018/03/22/business/us-eu-tariffs-steel-aluminum.html
- Taylor, A. (2011, August 21). *World War II: Internment of Japanese Americans*. Retrieved from The Atlantic: <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2011/08/world-war-ii-internment-of-japanese-americans/100132/>
- The Brookings Institution. (2016, January). *Brookings Policies on Independence and Integrity*. Retrieved from The Brookings Institution: <https://www.brookings.edu/about-us/brookings-policies-on-independence-and-integrity/>
- The George Washington University. (2005, December 14). *U.S.-Japan Relations Declassified*. Retrieved from The National Security Archive: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB175/photo02.htm>
- The Japan Times. (2016, May 27). *Full text of Obama's speech in Hiroshima*. Retrieved from The Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/05/27/national/full-text-of-obamas-speech-in-hiroshima/#.WtUEUvckCb8>
- The World Bank. (2018). *GNI, Atlas method (current US\$)*. Retrieved from The World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.ATLS.CD?view=chart>
- The World Bank. (2018). *The World Bank Data: Japan, China*. Retrieved from The World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/Japan>
<https://data.worldbank.org/country/China>
- Tipton, E. K. (2002). *Modern Japan: A social and political history*. New York, New York, United States of America: Routledge.
- Toyota Global. (2012). *Item 3. TMC Expands into North America Independently: TMM, TMMC Established*. Retrieved from Toyota Global: http://www.toyota-global.com/company/history_of_toyota/75years/text/leaping_forward_as_a_global_corporation/chapter1/section3/item3.html
- Trump, D. J. (1987). *There's nothing wrong with America's Foreign Defense Policy that a little backbone can't cure*. Retrieved from The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-stat/graphics/politics/trump-archive/docs/reagan-library-file-on-trump.pdf>
- United States Army. (1945). *Hirohito*. Retrieved from Wikipedia: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Macarthur_hirohito.jpg#/media/File:Macarthur_hirohito.jpg
- United States Census Bureau. (2018). *Trade in Goods with Japan*. Retrieved from United States Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5880.html>
- US Department of State. (n.d.). *A Guide to the United States' History of Recognition, Diplomatic, and Consular Relations, by Country, since 1776: Japan*. Retrieved January 2018, from US Department of State Office of the Historian: <https://history.state.gov/countries/japan>

- Vanity Fair. (2017, November 6). *Donald Trump at the Koi Pond in Japan Was Not Actually the Disaster It Seemed*. Retrieved from Vanity Fair:
<https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2017/11/donald-trump-koi-pond-japan-meme>
- Vogel, S. K. (2002). *U.S.-Japan Relations in a Changing World*. Washington, D.C.:
Brookings Institution Press.
- Wines, M. (1992, January 2). *BUSH IN JAPAN; Bush Collapses at State Dinner With the Japanese*. Retrieved from The New York Times:
<http://www.nytimes.com/1992/01/09/world/bush-in-japan-bush-collapses-at-state-dinner-with-the-japanese.html?pagewanted=all>
- Xu, B. (2014, July 1). *The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance*. Retrieved from Council on Foreign Relations: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-japan-security-alliance>
- Yasuba, Y. (1996). Did Japan Ever Suffer from a Shortage of Natural Resources Before World War II? *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 56, No. 3, 543-560.