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DEMOCRATIC ANTIMILITARISM IN POSTWAR JAPAN:  
INSTITUTIONS AND THE CULTURE OF PEACE

by

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Democratic Antimilitarism in Postwar Japan: Institutions and the Culture of Peace

By BENJAMIN A. PETERS

Dissertation Director:  
Dr. Eric Davis

Since 1947, Japan has maintained its “Peace Constitution” un-amended, a constitution that guarantees “the right to live in peace” (Preamble), outlaws “war as a sovereign right of the nation,” and prohibits the maintenance of “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential” (Article 9). Since its adoption sixty-three years ago, no Japanese citizens have killed or been killed in war. In this work I examine the functioning, maintenance, and interpretation of the Constitution of Japan and establish the critical juncture during which the Japanese public came to embrace the values of democratic antimilitarism and incorporate them into their political collective identity and historical memory. In addition, I identify the analytic structure of contestation over the fate of the constitution in the postwar years, demonstrating the role that Japanese citizens have played in defending the constitution against government officials who advocate its revision.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved children, Noah, Kai, and Sola. May you live in peace all the days of your lives.

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## **Chapter One: The Peace Question in Japanese Postwar Politics**

### *Introduction*

For over sixty years no Japanese citizens have killed or been killed in war. In this study of postwar Japan, I examine the political institutions that helped to transform Japanese political culture from one that was illiberal and authoritarian into one in which people came to embrace democracy and associate it with antimilitarism. In particular, I ask: Why has Japan maintained, for sixty-three years without revision, a constitution that guarantees not just citizen-sovereignty and democratic rights but also the unilateral outlawry of war? Put another way, after decades of governance by a party founded on the aim of revising the constitution, why does Japan still have a constitution that enumerates a “right to live in peace” (Preamble), renounces “war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes”, and vows that “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained” (Article 9)?

In order to answer this over-arching research question, I also ask: How did antimilitarism come to be included in Japan’s postwar constitution and how did it come to be popularly accepted? In other words, by what processes did antimilitarism come to be a defining feature of both Japanese political institutions and Japanese political culture in the postwar period? These questions should not lead one to assume, of course, that constitutional antimilitarism has gone

uncontested.<sup>1</sup> The function of Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan is to limit government officials' war-making powers.<sup>2</sup> The on-going contestation between government officials and civil society over this limitation is one of the defining features of Japanese politics in the postwar years and begs the following questions: What have government officials' attempts to revise the constitution, by parliamentary means, through interpretation, and by projects aimed at affecting Japanese collective political identity and historical memory, reveal about the extent and limits of their power? And what have counter-reactions emanating from both political and civil society demonstrated about Japanese political identity in the postwar period?

It should come as no surprise that the peace question in Japanese postwar politics has been a much-discussed topic. A number of scholars have turned their attention to the origins of Article 9 in particular and the Japanese constitution in general; these include Hellegers, Inoue, Kataoka, Koseki, McNelly, and Schlichtmann to name a few.<sup>3</sup> Others have examined specific aspects of

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<sup>1</sup> While some scholars use the term "constitutional pacifism" to describe the operant legal conditions of the postwar Japanese state, I find this term problematic. Japan's maintenance of an armed national police agency and an armed Self-Defense Force obviously preclude it from being a pacifist state, not to mention the fact that Japan continues to practice capital punishment. The terms "constitutional antimilitarism" or "democratic antimilitarism" better reflect the content of the constitution with its emphasis on citizen sovereignty, democratic rights, and its specific prohibitions against war, the use of force in resolving international disputes, and the maintenance of a military or military potential. The constitution does not preclude the state's right to use violence for other purposes, and so it cannot properly be termed "pacifist".

<sup>2</sup> "The Constitution of Japan", the formal name of Japan's fundamental law in the postwar period, is to be distinguished from "The Constitution of the Empire of Japan" (1889). In this study I interutilize the terms "The Constitution of Japan" and "the Japanese constitution" while I use the term "the Meiji constitution" as synonymous with "The Constitution of the Empire of Japan".

<sup>3</sup> Dale M. Hellegers, *We the Japanese People: World War II and the Origins of the Japanese Constitution, Vol. I and II* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Kyoko Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991); Tetsuya Kataoka, *The Price of a Constitution: The Origins of Japan's Postwar Politics* (New York: Taylor & Francis,

contestation over the fate of constitutional antimilitarism in the postwar years. These include Yamamoto's work on the labor and women's movements for peace in the occupation period and the 1950s and Sasaki-Uemura's and Packard's examinations of the 1959-1960 movement against the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty.<sup>4</sup> Krauss's investigation of the role of student protest in postwar Japan is another work in this vein.<sup>5</sup> Still other scholars have focused on the degree to which Japan has achieved (de/re)militarization. Exemplars here include Hook, Hoyt, Hughes, McCormack, and Sunoo.<sup>6</sup>

The contributions of the present study compliment the aforementioned scholars' work in several ways. First, I provide the first examination of constitutional antimilitarism that traces the development of contestation over its fate from 1945 through to the present, a period of sixty-five years. I achieve this sustained treatment of the conflict employing historical institutional analysis. As I explain in more detail below, using this approach I show how the postwar period has developed through the following phases: a critical juncture, structural

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1991); Shōichi Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, trans. Ray M. Moore (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997); Theodore McNelly, *The Origins of Japan's Democratic Constitution* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000); Klaus Schlichtmann, *Japan in the World: Shidehara Kijuro, Pacifism, and the Abolition of War, Vol. I and II* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-war Japan: The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Routledge, 2004); Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); George R. Packard, *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966).

<sup>5</sup> Ellis S. Krauss, *Japanese Radicals Revisited: Student Protest in Postwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

<sup>6</sup> Glenn D. Hook, *Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Edwin P. Hoyt, *The Militarists: The Rise of Japanese Militarism Since WWII* (New York: Donald I. Fine, Inc., 1985); Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation* (New York: The International Institute for Strategic Studies and Routledge, 2009); Gavan McCormack, *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace* (London: Verso, 2007); Harold Kwoon Sunoo, *Japanese Militarism, Past and Present* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975).

persistence, reaction and counter-reaction, an outcome phase, and the resumption of reaction and counter-reaction. Second, I examine the contested nature of Japanese political collective identity and historical memory in the postwar period, moving the academic discourse in regards to Japan from one centered on competing Japanese nationalisms to one of nationalism(s) versus constitutional patriotism.<sup>7</sup> Finally, I offer the first academic study of the Article Nine Association movement that emerged on the Japanese political scene in 2004. Inspired by nine public intellectuals who formed the inaugural Article Nine Association (A9A) and called on their fellow Japanese citizens to join them in defending Article 9 from revision, citizens formed more than 7,000 autonomous A9A's by 2008. Examining over ninety documents produced by the movement, I offer the first systematic analysis of the movement's organizational structure, activities, rhetoric, and possible effects on Japanese public opinion and political society.

### *The Case*

With the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan abolished feudalism and began its rapid rise to the status of a world power in terms of state administrative capacity, economic development, and military might. However, Japan's Meiji-era slogan of "catching up with the West" meant more than creating modern state

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<sup>7</sup> The term "constitutional patriotism" has been used in reference to the Federal Republic of Germany by Habermas and to the European Union by others, but this is its first application to the Japanese case. See: Jan-Werner Müller, *Constitutional Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Patrizia Nanz, *Constitutional Patriotism Beyond the Nation-State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

apparati and national identity at home; it also meant competing as an imperial power. That failed quest resulted in the state-sanctioned mass murder of 5,964,000 civilians throughout the Asia-Pacific region<sup>8</sup> and the deaths of 2,700,000 Japanese soldiers and civilians during World War II alone.<sup>9</sup> When Japan's experience with total war and authoritarian repression finally came to an end with unconditional surrender on 15 August, 1945, few could have imagined that an overwhelming majority of the Japanese people would soon embrace democracy and renounce the right of the state to use or maintain military force.

Like the other defeated belligerents of World War II, Japan underwent a remarkable transformation in the immediate postwar years. As with Italy and Germany, the Allies' defeat of the wartime regime spurred rapid political change. While the Soviet Union brought East Germany into its orbit, Italy, West Germany, and Japan adopted democratic political arrangements. Japan, however, stood apart from the others in one important regard: not only did it undertake democratic political and social reforms, its "constitutional revolution" premised democracy upon the antimilitarism of Article 9 of the Constitution.<sup>10</sup>

Article 9 is an attempt to secure for the Japanese citizens the right to live in peace by constitutionally outlawing the right of the nation to engage in war or to use force in settling international disputes. Furthermore, Article 9 outlaws the

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<sup>8</sup> R.J. Rummel. *Death by Government*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994, p. 143.

<sup>9</sup> John W. Dower. *War Without Mercy*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

<sup>10</sup> Beers describes a "constitutional revolution" as a "process in which a fundamental shift takes place in constitutional values diffused throughout society by means of law, administrative actions, judicial decisions, and education, both formal and informal." Lawrence W. Beer, "Constitutional Revolution in Japanese Law, Society and Politics," *Modern Asian Studies* 16:1 (1982), p. 33.

maintenance of military force or any war potential. Simply put, it makes all acts of war-preparation and war-making illegal. Article 9 reads:

ARTICLE 9: Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. (2) In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Despite the constitutional prohibitions on war-preparation and war-making, though, the Japanese government has long insisted on the right of the state to use force in “individual self-defense” as guaranteed by the United Nations Charter. Furthermore, since 1954 Japan has maintained “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential” in the form of its Ground-, Maritime-, and Air Self-Defense Forces. Moreover, in 2008 Japan had the seventh highest military expenditure in the world – an amount, in dollar terms, that was more than half of China’s military expenditure and nearly twice as much as South Korea’s for that year.<sup>11</sup> In terms of its technological capabilities, the Japan Self-Defense Force (SDF) has been compared to the armed forces of the United Kingdom (minus the latter’s nuclear arms).<sup>12</sup> In addition, since 1992 the Japanese government has dispatched units of the SDF to Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, El Salvador, the Golan Heights, Nepal, and Iraq. All of these

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<sup>11</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI Yearbook 2009, available online at: <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2009/files/SIPRIYB0905.pdf> [Accessed 10.03.09].

<sup>12</sup> Glenn D. Hook and Gavan McCormack, *Japan’s Contested Constitution*, (NY: Routledge, 2001), p. 14.

deployments have been armed for self-defense but legally limited to non-combat operations. At the time of this writing there is an active SDF dispatch on an open-ended antipiracy operation off the coast of Somalia. To date, such missions have required Diet approval on a case-by-case basis, but the Defense Ministry's 2009 annual report called for the enactment of permanent legislation to permit overseas dispatches of the SDF at any time. The electoral victory of the Democratic Party of Japan in August 2009 makes the future of such legislation uncertain.

The incompatibility between the Japanese constitution and the actions, policies, and intentions of postwar Japanese governments leads to the central question of this investigation: Why has Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan remained unchanged since it came into effect in 1947? Nearly sixty years after the end of the Allied occupation and Japan's return to sovereignty and more than fifty-five years after the establishment of the Japan Self-Defense Forces, why does the constitution still prohibit war, the use of force in international disputes, and the maintenance of war potential, and why do Japanese governments go to great lengths to avoid calling the SDF an army while training and equipping it for modern warfare?<sup>13</sup> The purpose of this dissertation is to answer these questions.

An analysis of "the peace question" in postwar Japanese politics warrants our attention for several reasons. First, Japan's constitution is unique in that it establishes a right to live in peace and secures that right by prohibiting *both* war-

making *and* the maintenance of military forces. This should be of interest to political scientists not only because of the possible role that this institutional arrangement has played in preventing Japanese involvement in armed conflict for over sixty years but also because of its possible applicability to other cases. In other words, we might ask whether and under what circumstances such prohibitions could reduce armed inter-state conflict elsewhere. While decades of interpretation-through-policy making have eroded Article 9's original intent, as mentioned above, it still places significant constraints on Japanese government officials. For example, government officials are still unable to square Japan's right to engage in the "collective self-defense" guaranteed to it as a signatory to the U.N. Charter with Article 9, a fact that has prevented Japanese governments from ordering the SDF into combat overseas - even when there have been calls from within the government and by Japan's closest ally, the U.S., for them to do so.<sup>14</sup>

Second, the Japanese case is of interest because it is an example of a successful transition to democracy.<sup>15</sup> While this transition came, in part, as a

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<sup>13</sup> In a 2003 speech to the Diet, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro argued that the SDF "should be identified as the nation's army." Such statements are highly controversial in Japan. "Article 9, Iraq and Revision of the Japanese Constitution," *Asahi Shimbun*, 3 November, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> A scenario that occurred, as I show in Chapter Four below, during the first U.S.-led war against Iraq.

<sup>15</sup> That Japan is a strong democracy is without question. Competitive, multi-party parliamentary elections have occurred regularly since 1946, control of the government has always changed hands from party-to-party without incident, Japan (24.9) ranks higher on the Gini index of social equality than Sweden (25), Italy (36), the United Kingdom (36), France (32.7), Germany (28.3), and the United States (40.8), and its rating is higher on the United Nation's Human Development Index than the OECD average for every year since 1980. Still, despite specific constitutional guarantees of women's equality (Articles 14 & 24) Japan lags behind the above-mentioned countries on indices measuring women's social outcomes such as the United Nation's Gender

result of defeat in total war and a seven-year-long occupation, it is still remarkable given the extent to which authoritarianism was entrenched in Japanese political institutions and the political culture. From the Japanese case, then, we may learn how political institutions and the political culture changed and the interactive and reinforcing effects that these spheres of political life had on each other in setting Japan on a path of democratic antimilitarism. It may even be argued that the transition to a particular kind of democracy, that is a constitutionally antimilitarist one, has served to protect other democratic rights. For example, since Article 9 prevents the SDF from existing as a military, there is no military law in Japan.<sup>16</sup> The absence of military law precludes the possible usurpation of judicial authority by the military that has occurred in authoritarian regimes, for example Chile and Argentina, but also in democracies like the United States.<sup>17</sup>

Third, as the previous point suggests, Japan is unique not just because of its successful adoption of democracy but also because of the nature of the democracy that developed, namely a democracy premised upon antimilitarism at the levels of both political institutions and political culture. In this dissertation I will marshal evidence to show that Japan is arguably the least militaristic country in the world in terms of its peoples' expressed willingness to fight for their nation.

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Empowerment Measure. United Nations, Human Development Report 2009, [http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/buildtables/rc\\_report.cfm](http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/buildtables/rc_report.cfm) (Viewed on 28 April, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> SDF members accused of crimes have always been tried in civilian courts.

<sup>17</sup> Pereira, for example, shows that the U.S. military's usurpation of judicial authority after 2001 has been greater than the Brazilian military's usurpation of judicial authority during the period of authoritarian military government there during the 1960s and 1970s. Anthony W. Pereira, *Political (In)Justice* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).

Put another way, I argue that the constitution's prohibition on war-making and the government's inability to order citizens to die for the country has affected a change in Japanese political collective identity away from nationalism and toward constitutional patriotism.

As for the uniqueness of Japan's constitution, it is the only one outlawing both war and the military. The two cases most similar to Japan in this regard are Costa Rica and the Philippines. Article 12 of the Constitution of Costa Rica (1948) outlaws the standing army ("the military as a permanent institution"), but it also contains provisions for the organization and use of military force. Furthermore, it makes no prohibition against war. Article 2 of the Constitution of the Philippines (1935, 1973, 1987) does just the opposite; it "renounces war as an instrument of national policy" but provides for a military and notes the duty of citizens to defend the state as required by law. Furthermore, neither of these countries' constitutions establishes a right to live in peace nor do they privilege peace as a fundamental value of the nation. The Constitution of Japan, then, is quite comprehensive both in regards to its recognition of a right to live in peace and in the antimilitarist prohibitions that it enshrines to secure that right. Not only does it "forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation" and forbid "the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes", it also bans the maintenance of "land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential." The study at hand, however, is more than a textual and theoretical analysis of the Constitution of Japan in comparative perspective; it is an examination into the

conditions under which Japan successfully adopted democracy after 1945, how the majority of Japanese came to view antimilitarism as its prerequisite, and how constitutional patriots in political and civil society have prevented the revision of Japan's "Peace Constitution".

Japan experienced two moments of radical change in its modern political history. One resulted in authoritarianism and total war, the other in a democracy premised upon antimilitarism. The first of these radically transformative events was the Meiji Restoration of 1868. It was with the restoration of the emperor as absolute sovereign and effective head of state that Japan undertook the rapid projects of modern state-building and nation-making. The Meiji Constitution of 1889, modeled on the Prussian Constitution, privileged the state over the individual and fixed the emperor as the center of the polity and absolute sovereign. Employing the Meiji Constitution, universal military conscription, and a national school system, governing officials attempted to forge a hegemonic collective identity based on submission to authority and the willingness to sacrifice for the emperor. I will explain the connection between these authoritarian political institutions and the prewar political culture in more detail below, but suffice it to say that the extent to which postwar society embraced democracy was remarkable given the sway of authoritarianism over the prewar polity.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> As I will demonstrate in Chapter One, there was contestation within and between both the state and civil society and tension between democracy and authoritarianism in the pre-1945 period.

Japan, then, is a case of a successful transition to democracy, albeit one precipitated in large part by defeat in total war and a seven-year occupation. By analyzing the Japanese postwar case, therefore, we can learn how a nation that exemplified modern authoritarianism came to embrace democracy and why antimilitarism was, and continues to be, one of its central tenets. More specifically, we can identify in the Japanese postwar case specific institutional decisions and arrangements designed to establish democracy and antimilitarism and then trace their impact on Japanese postwar political culture. In other words, by analyzing the critical juncture during which both the institutional re-founding of Japan occurred and the majority of Japanese people came to accept democratic antimilitarism, we can better understand why the constitution remains unchanged today and why it continues to constrain state-level actors' war-making ability.

Japan's democratic antimilitarism has been the focal point of considerable contestation between and within Japanese political parties and as a point of debate pitting civil society and local governments against the national government. Still, despite more than sixty years of state-level actors' attempts to undermine antimilitarism or jettison it from Japanese democracy altogether, the Japanese public remains loyal to this constitutional tenet. As I show through empirical evidence, public opinion surveys indicate that a majority of Japanese citizens, even a majority of those who are open to constitutional revision, want to retain Article 9. *Never* in the postwar years has a majority of the public favored revising Article 9. Furthermore, the Japanese case is notable in that there is an

exceptionally low willingness to fight or die for the country among the Japanese public. Not only does within-case and cross-national attitudinal survey research of the Japanese public bear this out, there are also striking examples of this even within the SDF. The anthropologist Sabine Frühstück, who conducted years of participant observation in the SDF, quotes a private who told her, “If war broke out, most of us, men or women, would quit.”<sup>19</sup> No doubt such evidence helps us to understand why Japan still maintains Article 9.

### *The Investigation*

In the sixty years since World War II Japan has had relatively peaceful relations with its neighbors in East Asia and with members of the international community. This extended period of peace, remarkable in contrast to the prewar years but also in comparison to Japan’s closest neighbors and allies in the postwar period, is notable for two reasons. First, during the period from August 1945 to the present no Japanese citizen has been killed in war. And second, the Japanese state has not ordered its citizens to engage in warfare against foreign governments or the peoples of other states nor claimed the right to do so.

One may assume that the first of these achievements – the fact that no Japanese citizen has been killed in war – is partly explained by Japan’s security treaty with the U.S., a potential deterrent to prospective aggressors and the legal foundation upon which the U.S. has maintained armed forces in Japan since the

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<sup>19</sup> Sabine Frühstück. *Uneasy Warriors: Gender, Memory, and Popular Culture in the Japanese Army*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007, p. 29.

end of the Allied occupation of Japan in 1952.<sup>20</sup> But while the security agreement with the U.S. might help to explain why no state has attacked Japan in the postwar years, it does not explain why the Japanese state has abstained from participation in warfare during the same period. That is, it does not give us a satisfactory explanation for the fact that the Japanese state has not ordered its citizens to kill the people of other states during this same period. One could argue that there were several opportunities for Japan to do so given both its close alliance with the U.S. and its proximity to major, interstate and intrastate armed conflicts that posed plausible existential threats to its security.

Helping to explain why Japan has not engaged in war is the fact that the Japanese state has no legal right to do so. As noted above, the Constitution of Japan unequivocally outlaws war and military forces. Along with the establishment of popular sovereignty and the acknowledgment and protection of democratic rights, most Japanese people recognize the abolition of war and of the military as prerogatives of the Japanese state as central tenets of their democracy. While the long-dominant Liberal Democratic Party<sup>21</sup> (LDP) and the governments that it headed persisted in interpreting the constitution in ways that allowed for armed “individual self-defense” and, relatively recently, deployment of forces abroad, the clear wording of the constitutional prohibition on war and the military remains unchanged and continue to limit state-level actors’ powers. The

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<sup>20</sup> The U.S. occupied Okinawa until 1972.

<sup>21</sup> The 1955 merger of the conservative Liberal and Democratic Parties resulted in the establishment of the Liberal Democratic Party. Except for an 11-month period spanning 1993 and 1994 and until its resounding defeat in the House of Representatives elections in 2009 (which

remarkable fact that the Japanese constitution has not been amended since its adoption over sixty years ago brings us back to our guiding question: Why is it that the fundamental law of Japan still contains an explicit article that “renounces war as a sovereign right of the nation” and outlaws “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential”?

We must also address the contradiction between the policies and actions of Japanese governments and the letter and spirit of Article 9. As noted, Japan does, in fact, maintain land-, sea-, and air-forces and other war potential. Why is it, then, that Japanese governments have acted counter to the constitution on this fundamental matter? The answer lies, in part, in a long process of revisionist interpretation of the constitution by Japanese government officials. Revisionists in the government have advanced two main lines of argument to re-interpret constitutional antimilitarism. First, they have insisted that Article 9 was never meant as a prohibition against self-defense or the maintenance of arms for that purpose. Rather, state-level actors have argued that Article 9 is only a prohibition on Japan’s use of aggressive and unprovoked force. Proponents of the right to armed self-defense base their rationale on Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which affirms “the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense.” Second, the government has also turned to the U.N. Charter to justify dispatching SDF units abroad. In this case, they have referred to Article 43 of the Charter which calls on members of the United Nations to make available “armed forces,

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followed its loss of the House of Councilors in 2007), the LDP continuously headed the Japanese government and usually held relative dominance in both chambers of the Diet.

assistance, and facilities... for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.” Still, the fact remains that Japanese governments refrain from calling the SDF an army, lest they draw the ire of the public. Furthermore, governments avoided dispatching units abroad until the 1990s - and then only under strictly circumscribed conditions. These restrictions indicate that Japanese governments, while interpreting the constitution in such a way as to permit the maintenance and use of military forces, have also been constrained by the political arrangements of the postwar years, both institutional and social.

One question to answer, then, is how it was that Japanese political institutions and political culture were so radically and rapidly altered in the three years or so immediately following the war. Understanding that relatively short period of change as a critical juncture will help us to understand why the constitution continues to constrain the government and distinguish Japanese political culture as one that is markedly democratic *and* antimilitaristic. The investigation, then, demands analysis of the interactive effects between political institutions and political culture. In the case of postwar Japan, we can say quite decisively when particular institutions were established and became operational. It also requires us to trace the transmission of the ideals enshrined in the constitution, the key institution in question, to the Japanese public and to then show how the public incorporated them into its political collective identity, historical memory, and social, cultural, and political practices, especially as

expressed in times of contestation.

### *Prevailing Explanations*

There are three prevailing hypotheses aimed at explaining Japan's continued maintenance of a constitution that outlaws war and military forces, each of which stems from a separate theoretical starting point. The first and most common hypothesis posits that Japanese governments have complied with the constitution to the extent that they have because there was a material interest in doing so. Proponents of this hypothesis point to the Yoshida Doctrine, the Cold War foreign policy strategy associated with and named for postwar Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. This hypothesis follows from the realist, state-level theory of international relations that posits states as unitary actors embedded in an international system. While there are variations and even inconsistencies in analysts' conceptual understandings of the Yoshida Doctrine,<sup>22</sup> in its simplest iteration, it assumes that the Japanese government made its relationship with the U.S. the keystone of its postwar security policy in order to maximize its investments in economic development and minimize outlays for defense.

The advantage of the Yoshida Doctrine hypothesis is that it helps to explain one set of incentives that informed state-level actors' decisions regarding *de facto* but not *de jure* revision of Article 9. According to this hypothesis, postwar Japanese government officials took a realist stance by relying on the

U.S. for some of its security costs so that they could focus more money on rebuilding Japan economically and technologically after the war. From this standpoint, the formation and maintenance of the SDF, a military force that is not called an army and until relatively recently could not be deployed abroad, is seen as a concession to U.S. demands that Japan contribute to its own defense, while the maintenance of Article 9 is seen as a shield that Japanese officials could wield to deflect U.S. demands that Japan contribute even more to the security alliance. The hypothesis falls short, however, because it does not take into account the constraints that government officials have faced in terms of the Japanese public's valorization of democratic antimilitarism.

Any amendment of the constitution requires passage by two-thirds of each chamber of the National Diet followed by a national referendum in which a majority of voters approve of the amendment. This means that in order to revise Article 9, more than 50 percent of the voting public would have to approve such an amendment. The fact that no public opinion poll in the postwar era has recorded majority approval for the revision of Article 9 shows that Japanese government officials could not have changed it even if they had wanted to do so. Furthermore, as I will show in Chapter Three below, the only time a government has collapsed in the face of a popular uprising was in 1960 when Kishi Nobusuke quickly resigned after pushing through the revised U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. It is safe to say that following that episode, government officials were "domestic

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<sup>22</sup> Kawasaki, Tsuyoshi, "The Yoshida Doctrine: A Conceptual Analysis" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu,

realists” insofar as they recognized that a significant portion of the Japanese public would not accept full re-militarization and that any attempts to revise the constitution would be met with fierce opposition and the likely destabilization of the political system. As I show in Chapter Five, this lesson was lost on LDP-led governments in the first decade of the twenty-first century. When they pushed for direct constitutional revision and further undermined Article 9 through *ad hoc* measures, especially after 2001, they faced the rise of the popular Article Nine Association movement and suffered only their second loss of power since 1955.

A second hypothesis that might explain the continued maintenance of Article 9 is the decisive defeat that Japan experienced at the end of World War II. This hypothesis, posits that the Japanese public’s protective maintenance of Article 9 is an effect of the impact that defeat in total war had on the psyches of individual Japanese. This possible explanation stems from the theory that the transformation of individuals by war led them to possess certain attitudes and to engage in certain behaviors as a result, namely valorization of the war-renouncing constitution and activism to preserve it. An additional aspect of this argument is the claim that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki so clearly revealed the horrific but logical consequences of modern warfare to the Japanese that they subsequently vowed never to engage in war again.

There is some truth to this hypothesis. Total defeat led many Japanese to understand that in addition to imperial Japan’s victims abroad, they were also victims of their government’s militarism. Some expressed remorse for their

complicity in imperial Japan's war-making and vowed to prevent Japan's involvement in future wars. In addition, opponents of remilitarization continue to point to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as symbolic warnings against war. Defeat in total war and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki alone, however, cannot explain the adoption or persistence of democratic antimilitarism as a characteristic of Japanese political culture or the continued maintenance of Article 9. Many states have suffered devastating losses or defeat in total war. Neither the Soviet Union's 24,000,000 casualties in WWII nor Germany's approximately 9,000,000 casualties in WWI and WWII resulted in such pronounced antimilitarism or the adoption of constitutional bans on war or the standing army. Furthermore, because of censorship during and after the occupation, the atomic bombings did not enter the symbolic repertoire of antimilitarists until *after* democratic antimilitarism had already become a prevalent characteristic of Japanese political culture.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, if the direct experiences and memories of war were the cause for Japan's adherence to constitutional antimilitarism, we might expect support for Article 9 to wane with the passing of generations. As I show in several of the substantive chapters, that

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<sup>23</sup> Under the occupation's Press Code, introduced on 18 September 1945, and the Basic Plan for Civil Censorship, authorized on 30 September 1945, mail, telegrams, telephonic messages, film, photographs, newspapers, radio, and books would all fall under the purview of occupation censors. The main goals of these and other measures were the demilitarization and democratization of Japan. As for information about the atomic bombings, "information concerning the conditions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was regarded as disturbing public tranquility" and the transmission of such information both within the country and by Japanese media to foreign audiences was verboten.<sup>5</sup> This censorship lasted for four years, until 1949. Furthermore, no pictures of *hibakusha* (surviving atomic bomb victims) or the obliterated cities were published in Japan until 1952 - *after* the end of the U.S. occupation. Monica Braw. *The Atomic Bomb Suppressed: American Censorship in Occupied Japan* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 39 & 103.

has not been the case, even despite government officials' continued attempts to supplant popular historical memory regarding the war with an "official", revised historical memory.

A third hypothesis that might help to explain why antimilitarism is a central tenet of Japanese democracy centers on the U.S.-led occupation from 1945-1952 and involves an understanding of political culture as an expression of national character. This follows from the theory, largely disregarded by modern scholars of nationalism, that individual political communities, particularly individual nations, are unique in some regard. In this case, the Japanese national character would be assumed to be one with an exaggerated degree of obedience to authority and aversion to social conflict. According to this hypothesis, U.S.-led occupation officials forced Article 9 on Japan and the Japanese people accepted it because respect for authority and avoidance of conflict are essential aspects of Japanese national character. There are several obvious problems with this hypothesis. Although there is a continuing controversy over the authorship of Article 9,<sup>24</sup> the historical record offers little evidence that it was a dictate from MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP).<sup>25</sup> In addition, the aims of the occupation were not consistent from 1945-1952. While SCAP did

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<sup>24</sup> See, for example: Tetsuya Kataoka, *The Price of a Constitution: The Origins of Japan's Postwar Politics* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1991), Theodore McNelly, *The Origins of Japan's Democratic Constitution* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), and Dale M. Hellegers, *We the Japanese People: World War II and the Origins of the Japanese Constitution, Vol. 1 and II* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> Both General MacArthur and then-Prime Minister Kijūrō Shidehara claimed that the latter was the one who conceived of an outlawry of war clause and insisted on its inclusion in the Constitution. Kijūro Shidehara, *Gaikō Gojū-Nen (Fifty Years of Diplomacy)* (1951); Douglas MacArthur. *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 302.

implement a series of programs to propagate the values of democracy *and* antimilitarism in the first two years of the occupation, it began a “reverse course” by 1948 that undermined democratic and antimilitarist gains. In terms of antimilitarism, these moves included the purge of leftists, the rehabilitation of militarists (some of whom were formerly accused or convicted war criminals), and intense U.S. pressure on the Japanese government to re-arm with the outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula in the summer of 1950.

If we were to accept the assumption that the Japanese would obediently comply with authority as a matter of national character, then we would have expected to see an attitudinal “reverse course” on the part of the Japanese public in regard to democracy and antimilitarism once the aims of the occupation moved in that direction. As I will show in Chapter Three below, there is no evidence that that was the case. Likewise, if this portrayal of Japanese national character were correct, we would expect the Japanese people to comply with the revisionist designs of members of the ruling governments after the country regained sovereignty. After all, constitutional revision was a core policy objective of the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party from the time of its formation, and the party governed almost uninterrupted from 1955 until 2009. Not only did the LDP fail in its attempts to forge public consensus in favor of revision, its re-negotiation of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty triggered the most contentious politics of the postwar

years, with more than sixteen million people engaged in protests from 1959-1960.<sup>26</sup>

While the three hypotheses outlined above might seem, on first glance, like promising explanations for Japan's continued maintenance of an antimilitarist constitution more than sixty years after its adoption, I will present evidence that refutes these hypotheses. There must be an explanation of Japanese democratic antimilitarism with more analytical purchase than these. My aim is to show that there is. It is an explanation that accounts for both the transformative effects that postwar political institutions had on the political culture in terms of an orientation to democratic antimilitarism and the ways in which that predominant vein of Japanese postwar political culture provided the conditions necessary for the maintenance of institutional antimilitarism.

### *The Investigative Framework*

The argument advanced in this dissertation rests on the premise that both institutions and culture matter in the study of politics.<sup>27</sup> As for the importance of institutions, I follow the methodological approach advanced and developed by historical institutionalists who study the phenomenon of path dependence or the notion that "what has happened at an earlier point in time will affect the possible

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<sup>26</sup> Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 16.

<sup>27</sup> By "institutions", I mean informal and informal agreements that arrange the distribution of power and responsibilities and that pattern decision-making and behavior. To operationalize "culture", I focus on the ideas, words, and actions that constitute, express, and (re)produce political collective identity, whether shared or contested. This includes the stories people tell themselves about the things that have occurred to them as a people, that is, historical memory.

outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point of time.”<sup>28</sup> As I will explain in the paragraphs that follow, this entails the construction of a theory-guided narrative that a) establishes the approximate temporal limits of the critical juncture that initiated path dependency, b) identifies the actors responsible for the decisions that established the institutional setting while taking into account the power asymmetries between them and the plausible range of choices available at the time, and c) accounts for the ‘inertia’, or persistent outcomes, that followed from the decisions made during the critical juncture, even at moments when there changes in the opportunity structure that allow actors to evaluate whether or not to continue along the same institutional path.

However, I believe there is more to the story of Japanese democratic antimilitarism than institutions alone. While it is necessary to identify the “stickiness” or “inertia” of institutional frameworks (in this case an institutional setting that narrows the range of choices available in terms of war-making and the maintenance of military forces), in order to explain why Japan still retains its constitution in un-amended form, we also need to understand the interplay between these institutions and Japanese political culture. I contend that the cultural turn toward democratic antimilitarism created conditions akin to a positive feedback loop that placed additional, extra-institutional constraints on institutional, state-level actors who might otherwise have tried to force revision or to undermine the spirit and letter of the law more radically than they have. By

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<sup>28</sup> William H. Sewell, Jr., “Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology,” in Terrence J. McDonald, ed., *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan

studying postwar political culture, we can discover: a) how and to what extent the values embodied in the institutions and their meanings were transmitted to the public and incorporated into understandings of political collective identity, b) why the public accepted values that differed so radically from those that prevailed before, and c) what roles the meanings of democracy and antimilitarism have played in the development of and contestation over postwar collective political identity. After the brief discussion on historical institutionalism that immediately follows, I will explain the psycho-social and semiotic approaches to the study of political culture and discuss their merits in answering the questions outlined above.

Starting with the investigative framework of historical institutionalism, we need to determine whether or not the analysis of path-dependent phenomena is appropriate to the Japanese case. Mahoney argues that there are three defining features of path-dependent phenomena, and I argue that all three are present in the case of postwar Japan.<sup>29</sup> First, the fact that the postwar constitution continues to contain both the stated right to live in peace and institutional guarantees to secure that right that markedly constrain the decision making ability of state-level actors indicates something of a causal process that has lasted for over sixty

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Press, 1996), 262-263.

<sup>29</sup> “First, path-dependent analysis involves the study of causal processes that are highly sensitive to events that take place in the early stages of an overall historical sequence [...] Second, in a path-dependent sequence, early historical events are contingent occurrences that cannot be explained on the basis of prior events or ‘initial conditions’ [...] Third, once contingent historical events take place, path-dependent sequences are marked by relatively deterministic causal patterns or what can be thought of as ‘inertia’ – i.e., once processes are set into motion and begin tracking a particular outcome, these processes tend to stay in motion and continue to track this

years and that stands in stark contrast to the institutional arrangements that prevailed during the seventy-seven years prior to 1945. That state-level actors in ruling governments have not succeeded in amending the constitution despite their desire and efforts to do so is a further indication of an outcome resulting from a causal process.

Second, “initial conditions” or prior events cannot explain the path-dependent sequence of Japanese democratic antimilitarism over the last sixty years. Rather, Japan’s continued adherence to constitutional antimilitarism is best explained by the decisions made regarding Japan’s fundamental, political institutional arrangements during a relatively brief critical juncture, one lasting no more than one year in duration. The decision to adopt constitutional, democratic antimilitarism was unpredictable and, as I will show below, could not have been foreseen even six months before the Diet debated and adopted the the new constitution. There is no evidence that the U.S. and its allies or Japanese decision makers had any such designs in mind at the time of Japan’s surrender, and the outcome did not readily follow from the ‘initial conditions’ of the preceding political institutions and political culture, especially insofar as they manifested authoritarianism and militarism.<sup>30</sup>

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outcome.” James Mahoney, “Path Dependence in Historical Sociology,” *Theory and Society* 29:4 Aug., 2000): 510-511.

<sup>30</sup> “In institutional analysis critical junctures are characterized by a situation in which the structural (that is economic, cultural, ideological, organizational) influences on political action are significantly relaxed for a relatively short period, with two main consequences: the range of plausible choices open to powerful political actors expands substantially and the consequences of their decisions for the outcome of interest are potentially much more momentous.” Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, “The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism,” *World Politics* 59:3 (April, 2007): 343.

Third, the decisions made about the content of the constitution, its adoption, and the means of implementing and popularizing it occurred in a very short time span relative to the duration of the political outcomes that followed from them. In other words, it has resulted in sixty years of path dependence in terms of significant and consistent constraints on state-level actors. The existence of the Japan Self-Defense Forces might appear at first glance to undermine these claims, but I will show that there is ambiguity about the purpose of the forces and certainty about the strict limits within which they can function. While it would be difficult to claim that the institutional setting *caused* this state of affairs, we can determine to what extent the institutional setting patterned these ambiguities and limitations.

The case of Japanese democratic antimilitarism, then, meets the the three theoretical criteria of a path-dependent process: 1) evidence of causal processes stemming from the early stages of the historical sequence in question, 2) starting conditions that were contingent and cannot be explained by prior conditions, namely the political institutions and political culture that existed prior to their adoption and 3) a long period of relatively deterministic and identifiable causal patterns of attitudes and behavior. Japan's unrevised constitution and the concomitant institutional framework pertaining to war and the military has long placed discernible constraints on state-level actors, and the origins of this enduring pattern lie at a critical juncture - a relatively short period of time during which actors' choices substantially increased the probability that the desired

outcomes would occur and persist over time.<sup>31</sup> In terms of the historical institutional approach, then, our unit of analysis is constitutional antimilitarism understood as an *institutional setting* that specifically constrains state-level actors' decisions regarding war making and the military.<sup>32</sup>

This is not to say, of course, that the institutional setting that emerged in postwar Japan was inevitable. There was no precedent for an institutional antimilitarism that included constitutional bans on *both* the right to wage war *and* the right to maintain military forces, and there was no indication from the Potsdam Declaration or early Occupation policy that such an institutional arrangement would be adopted. Likewise, we cannot completely rule out the possibility that Japan might have returned to institutional arrangements closer to the prewar status quo than to its postwar antimilitarism. Critical junctures by definition are periods of contingency during which wide-ranging change is possible and the possibility of re-equilibration, or a return to the status quo, is not excluded.<sup>33</sup> In other words, critical junctures are not “over-determined” toward change or a particular linearity. While it may seem unlikely that Japan would have returned to the status quo of prewar political arrangements in terms of militarism,

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<sup>31</sup> Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, “The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism,” *World Politics* 59:3 (April, 2007), 348.

<sup>32</sup> I operationalize constitutional antimilitarism at the level of political society by analyzing the congruence of government officials' behaviors (policy-making) and rhetoric (expressions of values and goals) relative to the prevailing consensus on constitutional interpretation. For example, a prime minister who declares that the SDF should be called an “army” but does not do so himself in official documents challenges constitutional antimilitarism rhetorically while adhering to the official consensus behaviorally. In order to assess constitutional antimilitarism in civil society, I take into account attitudes (public opinion), rhetoric (expressions of values and goals), and public action for or against a particular interpretation of the constitution, especially Article 9.

<sup>33</sup> Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, “The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism,” *World Politics* 59:3 (April, 2007), 352.

the case of interwar Germany suggests at least the possibility of re-equilibration along those lines.

In sum, applying the historical institutionalist approach to the case at hand requires the completion of three tasks. First, I will identify the critical juncture from which path dependency followed. This entails analyzing documentary evidence related to the earliest decisions to establish a new, postwar institutional setting in terms of war and military forces. Because the war ended decisively and the occupation began soon thereafter, it will be relatively easy to determine the onset of the critical juncture.<sup>34</sup> I will also determine when or by what point in time the critical juncture was complete and when the decisions made during that genetic phase did, in fact, result in an institutional setting that patterned subsequent decisions. In addition, I will bracket the period of time during which Japanese and occupation officials transmitted the values enshrined in the constitution and other fundamental institutions to the public as part of the critical juncture.<sup>35</sup>

A second task is to identify the actors, both individuals and organized groups, who took part in decision-making related to the formation of an institutional framework of democratic antimilitarism. Here I turn to the historical record and scholarly research related to the early postwar period. Part of this task requires an analysis of the power asymmetries between the actors involved.

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<sup>34</sup> While occupation planning began well before the war's end, the decision to declare a right to live in peace and to secure that right by outlawing war and military forces was highly contingent. In other words, it was not part of pre-occupation planning and it was not an aim of Japanese decision makers at the time of surrender. Therefore, it would have been very difficult to predict.

<sup>35</sup> In my analysis, the critical juncture involves not just the decisions involved in re-founding Japan institutionally but also the decisions involved in affecting Japanese political culture so that it might reflect the values enshrined in the constitution, namely democratic antimilitarism.

Because the Japanese had agreed to unconditional surrender they were obviously in a diminished position of power relative to General MacArthur and other occupation decision makers. This is an important consideration because it helps us to determine the plausible range of choices available to the different actors involved in the relevant decision-making process. Moreover, it helps us to determine the degree to which the outcomes that emerged were, in fact, contingent.

The third task of the approach is to explain the relative structural persistence that resulted from decisions made during the critical juncture. This requires an examination of events that occurred after the critical juncture and that involved decision-making about the state's ability to wage war or maintain military forces. In the case at hand, the pattern that this persistence follows is best understood from a cultural-sociological perspective. According to Thelen, the cultural-sociological perspective brings to light the cultural scripts or narratives that go into producing and reproducing institutions. These narratives "reflect shared cultural understandings of what is efficient or moral or legitimate or 'modern.'"<sup>36</sup> I will show that in the case of postwar Japan, the persistence of and changes in the institutional setting of democratic antimilitarism are linked to levels of agreement on or contestation over narratives and symbols, particularly those pertaining to political collective identity, including historical memory. Thelen warns that the cultural-sociological approach risks obscuring strategy and conflict

among groups.<sup>37</sup> This need not be the case, though, so long as we take into account the ways that culture both orders political priorities and identities and facilitates collective action as a political resource.<sup>38</sup>

Complimenting the historical institutional analysis of postwar Japanese politics I undertake a study of postwar political culture. The constitution's dual importance as a (re)founding document and the symbol of democracy and antimilitarism for the postwar polity warrants this approach, as does the significance of several other important political symbols that have, at key moments, been condensation points for political contestation over democratic antimilitarism in the postwar period. The roles of Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead and mandatory ceremonies employing the *Hinomaru* flag and the anthem *Kimigayo* ("His Emperor's Reign"), symbols ubiquitous in the imperial era, continue to be central to contestation over Japanese political identity and historical memory in the postwar period. In studying the elements of postwar politics most relevant to the questions at hand, I draw on two methodological approaches to the study of political culture, namely the psycho-social and the semiotic.

Scholars working in the psycho-social school of thought on political culture place analytic focus on political-cultural values and study the ways that they

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<sup>36</sup> Kathleen Thelen, "How Institutions Evolve," Chapter 6 in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 215.

<sup>37</sup> Kathleen Thelen, "How Institutions Evolve," Chapter 6 in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 217.

contribute to the formation and maintenance of political structures and processes.<sup>39</sup> An important aspect of this is the role that socialization processes play in creating and maintaining values and the relationship of those values to political outcomes. Research in this vein typically draws on attitudinal survey research data in which people's attitudes are taken as expressions of the values prevalent in a particular political culture and are linked to particular outcomes, for example levels of democratic political development.

In the present study, I take a psycho-social approach to Japanese postwar political culture in order to analyze the attitudes the Japanese public has held over time in regards to the constitution in particular and democracy and antimilitarism in general. Looking at attitudinal survey research data helps us to establish, for example, the point at which most citizens came to identify with and valorize postwar political institutions, especially the constitution, as well as variations in that identification and valorization over time. Fortunately, there is ample attitudinal data for the entire postwar period. Using this approach, we can also compare Japanese public opinion to that of other countries over time so that we can better understand the particular characteristics of the Japanese case. I analyze data from the World Values Survey in order to make these comparisons.

A second approach to the study of political culture that I employ is that of semiotics. As a general field, semiotics is the study of signs and signification. As

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<sup>38</sup> David D. Laitin. *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change Among the Yoruba*. (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 10.

<sup>39</sup> An early, exemplary work in this vein is: Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963).

applied to the study of political culture in the social sciences, the semiotic approach entails analyses of the symbolic dimensions of politics, often with an eye toward the roles of myth, ritual, symbols, and emotions in politics.<sup>40</sup> Rather than looking for laws that govern human political action, the semiotic approach involves interpretations of the symbolic systems that people create and inhabit and through which they engage in practices aimed at transforming power into authority and at resisting authority.<sup>41</sup> There is a growing body of literature in the discipline concerned with the ways in which discursive and symbolic representations play a role in identity formation and the use of and contestation over power.<sup>42</sup> One means of (re)constructing collective memory to which I pay particular attention is historical memory. Utilizing both discourse and symbols, historical memory is the narrative and symbolic construction of the story of a particular people existing in time. Through narratives of historical memory, whether “official” or counter-hegemonic, people situate themselves relative to an often idealized past, help them to make meaning of the present based on notions

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<sup>40</sup> While there is a common focus on myth and ritual as exemplified by studies like Myron J. Aronoff's *Power and Ritual in the Israel Labor Party* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1992) and Jan Kubik's *The Power of Symbols against the Symbols of Power* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), some scholars have also considered the place of emotion in politics; works along these lines include David I. Kertzer's *Politics and Symbols: The Italian Communist Party and the Fall of Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) and Murray Edelman's *Politics as Symbolic Action* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> Myron J. Aronoff “Political Culture,” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes, eds., (Oxford: Elsevier, 2002), 11640.

<sup>42</sup> For an example of state actors' instrumental use of cultural symbols as a means of expanding the state's power in society, see: Eric Davis, “The Museum and the Politics of Social Control in Modern Iraq”, Chapter 5 in John R. Gillis, ed., *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

of the past, and even help them to imagine the future as an outcome of the past and present.<sup>43</sup>

In terms of the applicability of the semiotic approach to political culture in the case at hand, I aim to use discursive and symbolic analysis in order to better understand how the Japanese public came to make sense of democracy and antimilitarism in the postwar years. Of particular interest is the question of why the public came to accept values that differed so radically from those that prevailed before 1945. In addition, the semiotic approach is germane to discovering what roles the meanings of democracy and antimilitarism have played in the development of and contestation over postwar collective political identity. Much of the contestation has been over the use and legitimacy of symbols – *Hinomaru*, *Kimigayo*, and Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead, and the constitution itself, especially Article 9. Each of these has its place in an overarching symbol system of postwar politics, and by analyzing the meanings around them, we can better understand why Japan still has a constitution that outlaws war and military forces.

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<sup>43</sup> According to Davis, historical memory must be understood first and foremost politically. Political elites use “official” or state-sponsored historical memory to demarcate membership in the political community and to identify and sanction transgressors, to align the perceived interests of members of society with the interests of power holders, to promote the cohesion of elites, to foster feelings of paranoia, xenophobia, and distrust, and to prevent members of society from imagining or developing a viable civil society or more inclusive polity. The ruling elites rivals in political and civil society use counter-hegemonic historical memory to challenge “memories of state”, to disabuse themselves and others of the notion that given conditions that advantage the politic elites are “natural”, “reasonable”, or “inevitable”, and to posit an alternative imagining of the political community and membership in it that critically negates given conditions. Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 4-9.

In sum, my examination of postwar Japan depends on analyses of both political institutions and political culture. The historical institutional approach is useful in developing a systematic analysis of the postwar period in terms of the patterning of contestation temporarily. According to Mahoney, path dependent processes typically follow from antecedent conditions according to the following analytic structure:<sup>44</sup>

critical juncture → structural persistence → reactive sequence → outcome

I identify the antecedent conditions in the pre-surrender regime. These conditions included both the political institutions that developed in the imperial era from 1868 through 1945 and the political culture of the time, particularly the prevailing imaginings of the Japanese national essence, or *kokutai*, under the emperor system (*tennōsei*). Next, I identify the period from 1945 until 1948 as the critical juncture during which the re-founding of Japan's political institutions and political culture occurred. This was followed by a period of structural persistence from 1948 until the termination of the occupation in 1952. A reactive sequence followed from 1952 until 1960. This involved both reactionary measures by government officials and counter-reactionary actions by their opponents in political and civil society centered on the fate of constitutional antimilitarism. Then I identify an outcome phase that lasted from 1960 through 1976, a period during

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<sup>44</sup> James Mahoney, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

which constitutional revisionists made concessions in regard to their interpretation of Article 9. Finally, I identify the resumption of reaction and counter-reaction from 1976 until the present, a phase that has possibly come to an end with the rise of the Article Nine Association movement after 2004 and the fall of the LDP-led government in 2009.

While I structure the analysis temporarily according to the above analytic structure, I also analyze the interplay of institutions and political culture within each period. This involves identifying and critically examining both official projects aimed at affecting Japanese political collective identity for or against particular understandings of constitutional antimilitarism and counter-hegemonic projects emanating from within political and civil society that challenge official discourse and behavior (usually *ad hoc* policy making). In terms of official projects aimed at affecting Japanese political culture, I pay particular attention to public school policies, for example national textbook and curriculum policies and mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies, as well as the rhetoric and practices of government officials aimed at constructing a particular imagining of the Japanese as a national community premised upon adherence to the traditions of obedience to authority and the will to sacrifice.

### *Organization*

Chapter One contains a relatively brief historical account of the institutional arrangements and trends in political culture in the prewar period. I

begin by identifying and analyzing key political institutions from the prewar period. The Charter Oath (1868), the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers (1882), the Meiji Constitution (1889), and the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890) were instrumental in establishing the prewar polity and in delimiting the acceptable parameters of public identity, values, and action up until 1945. Designed to displace the regional loyalties of the previous feudal era, the establishment of both a national standing army manned through universal conscription and a universal education system provided institutions through which the imperial government could promote a common political identity – that of Japanese *nationals*. These apparati of the state, along with rapid industrialization and ever-increasing, close contact with the West, also introduced new notions of popular politics however. As I will show, these changes brought to the fore the tension between the authoritarian aims of the state and the nascent democratic sentiments of the public, especially during the 1920s. In addition to examining the history of prewar political institutions and the possibilities and limitations of democracy, I also focus on cultural expression in politics, particularly in regards to the notion of the *kokutai* or “national essence” of the Japanese. As I will show, the “official” ideological imaginary of Japanese collective identity in the first decades of the twentieth century, the theory of a unique Japanese *kokutai* informed the authoritarian nature of domestic social control as well as the development of militarism and the march to total war.

In Chapter Two, I examine the immediate postwar years as a critical juncture and explain how it was that democratic antimilitarism became codified in constitutional law and other institutional arrangements and how it became accepted by the majority of the Japanese public. Considering the degree to which Japan exhibited authoritarian and militaristic tendencies up to 1945, the relatively quick transition to democracy and, even more so, to antimilitarism in the early postwar period is rather astonishing. In analyzing this transformation I will explain how the decisions were made regarding Japan's new institutions, how those institutions were popularized, and how it was that the Japanese people ultimately accepted them.

In Chapter Three, I first examine the period of structural persistence that occurred from 1948 through 1952, despite the "reverse course" undertaken by occupation officials and conservative Japanese political and business elites. In doing so, I demonstrate the degree to which Japanese civil society already valorized democratic antimilitarism and the degree to which Japanese government officials refrained from challenging the constitutional status quo on their own. Next, I focus on the reactive sequence that occurred from 1952 until 1960 by analyzing government officials' reactions against democratic antimilitarism, especially in terms of policy-making and constitutional interpretation. This period ended in the revision of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in the face of mass protests and the resignation of arch-conservative Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke. I conclude the chapter by identifying and examining the

outcome phase during which successive LDP governments downplayed their party's stated goal of revising the constitution, voluntarily placed restrictions on state-level actors' war-making abilities, and reached consensus on a "minimal military posture". I note, however, the simultaneous intensification of the project to control the content of public school history textbooks and the attempt to legally rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine as a state institution for venerating those who died for the nation in war.

In Chapter Four, I identify the emergence of a new reactive sequence at the end of the 1970s. Triggered by revision-minded government officials' attempts to undermine the consensus on the "minimum military posture" reached as an outcome of the previous phase, the new reactive sequence involved the introduction of new policies meant to further test and erode the still existent constitutional limits on state war-making power. I also examine contestation over the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies at this time and show how revisionists launched a new project to culturally rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine, despite the fact that in 1979 shrine officials interred the spirits of fourteen, executed Class-A war criminals there. In order to assess the efficacy of these revisionist projects, especially insofar as I understand them to be aimed at rekindling the will to sacrifice, I examine evidence from Japanese and cross-case attitudinal research surveys to show the degree to which the Japanese are willing to fight for their country. As I show below, this offers important insights into the nature of Japanese postwar collective identity and identification with

antimilitarism. Finally, I explain the consequences that the end of the Cold War and the first U.S.-led war against Iraq had for the continued viability of democratic antimilitarism in terms of Japanese political institutions and political culture.

In Chapter Five, I identify a second phase of the current reactive sequence. First, I analyze the affects of the Cold War's end on the political party system in Japan and show how the declining influence of the parties of the Left, especially the long-time main opposition Socialists, cleared the way for the re-emergence of parliamentary maneuvers aimed at outright constitutional revision. Second, I trace the attempts of LDP-led governments to advance Japanese militarization in the first decade of the twenty-first century, especially after 2001, and to revise long-standing education policies originally intended to re-enforce the ideals enshrined in the postwar constitution. Third, I identify new "official" projects aimed at affecting the still-predominant culture of democratic antimilitarism. These included Prime Minister Abe's "beautiful country" campaign with its emphasis on patriotism and "love of country" and textbook revision policies aimed at re-writing the historical memory of wartime Japan. Finally, I offer the first scholarly treatment of the Article Nine Association movement. As a counter-reaction to revisionists' attempts to push for outright constitutional amendment, further militarization, and a re-imagining of Japanese political collective identity, nine public intellectuals called on their fellow citizens to organize for the defense of Article 9 and the culture of democratic antimilitarism. Within four years, over 7,000 autonomous A9A's had formed around the country.

I offer a systematic analysis of this movement and the effects that they have had on the Japanese political scene.

I conclude this work with an overview of the project. Retracing the premises established in the substantive chapters, I revisit my argument that the reason the Constitution of Japan remains unchanged after sixty-three years is that the majority of the Japanese public valorizes the rights and principles enshrined in it, especially the “right to live in peace” and Article 9, and have come to understand it as integral to Japanese political collective identity in the postwar years. It informs their general rejection of nationalism and adherence to constitutional patriotism and corroborates the view of historical memory in which the adoption of the Constitution of Japan marked the rebirth of Japan. Finally, I offer my closing reflections on three implications of postwar Japan: the meaning of Japan as an antimilitarist democracy, sacrifice and nationalism, and the role of historical memory in identity formation.

## **Chapter Two: Antecedent Conditions: Political Institutions and Political Culture before 1945**

### *Introduction*

In order to demonstrate and explain the political turn in postwar Japanese politics – especially in terms of the peace question – I center the focus of this chapter on the historical development of Japanese political institutions and political culture prior to 1945. More specifically, I focus on the years from 1868 up to and including the end of hostilities in 1945 or the Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa eras.<sup>1</sup> In the sections that follow, I present an overview of this period of rapid modernization and Westernization. I have three main aims in doing so. First, I examine the development of modern Japanese politics in order to understand the significance and scope of change involved in the transition to democratic antimilitarism after 1945. Put another way, if we think about the political changes in Japan as a natural experiment in which the postwar critical juncture is a kind of “treatment”, then we need to know something about the baseline or starting conditions at the onset of change. This is not to say, though, that modern history of Japan before 1945 is “of one piece”. The seventy-seven years from 1868 until 1945 saw continuous and radical changes in Japanese

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<sup>1</sup> The Meiji era began in 1868 with the overthrow of the 265-year-old Tokugawa Shogunate and the ascension to the throne of Emperor Mutsuhito. It lasted until his death in 1912 when the ascension of his son, Yoshihito, ushered in the Taishō era. Upon Emperor Yoshihito’s death in 1926, his son, Hirohito, became Emperor, thus marking the beginning of the Shōwa era which lasted until Hirohito’s death in 1989. By the “early Shōwa era” I mean the period from 1926-1945.

politics, culture, and society. Also, because Japan was a late developing state, there were many examples of modern political institutions that Japanese decision-makers could learn from and adopt as they tried to “catch up with the West.” Of course, when adapted to Japanese conditions, these political institutions took on new characteristics.

The second aim of this section on political preconditions is to highlight particular institutional developments and to explain the relationship between them and modern Japanese political culture up through 1945 - and beyond in the case of the historical memory of postwar revisionist actors. With one eye on the more technologically advanced competitor states abroad and the other on domestic actors still invested in the feudal arrangements of the previous Tokugawa era (1603-1868), the Meiji government aggressively pursued the twin objectives of state formation (*kokka keisei*) and nation-making (*kokumin keisei*). Not only did leaders of the period create the institutional apparatus of the modern, bureaucratic state, they also used those institutions instrumentally in order to forge a national, collective Japanese identity. In terms of key institutional arrangements of the period, I analyze the Charter Oath (1868),<sup>2</sup> the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers (1882),<sup>3</sup> the Meiji Constitution (1889), and the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890).<sup>4</sup> Of particular interest is the development of universal military conscription and schooling, especially in terms of their relationship to the development of modern Japanese nationalism.

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<sup>2</sup> (五箇条の御誓文 *Gokajō no Goseimon*)

<sup>3</sup> (軍人勅諭 *Gunjin Chokuyu*)

As for the political culture of the prewar era, I engage in a brief treatment of the *kokutai* or “national essence” ideology popularized during the first half of the twentieth century. Public officials and conservative publicists propagated this “official” theory of Japanese collective identity as an idealized political cosmology aimed at cultivating subjects’ obedience to and willingness to sacrifice for the *tennōsei kokka* or “emperor-centered state”. While some Japanese, especially republicans, leftists, and anarchists, rejected the *kokutai* ideology and with it the emperor system, they were in the minority, and the notion that the Japanese constituted an organic community centered on the emperor became the overarching narrative of the Japanese political community, thanks in large part to its propagation through the schools and the military.

My third aim in retracing the history of modern Japan between 1868 and 1945 is to assess the degree to which notions of democracy and antimilitarism had currency among the Japanese people before their formal establishment in the postwar Constitution. A number of scholars have analyzed the Meiji Constitution and other prewar political institutions with the aim of establishing the extent to which they provided a starting point, however limited, for liberalization. What I highlight, on the other hand, is the tension between authoritarianism and democracy in the prewar period, a tension that ultimately resulted in the maelstrom of total war. While democratic sentiments rose in prominence from the late nineteenth century through the mid-1920s, there was never a mass movement for democracy in the prewar years that could truly challenge the state.

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<sup>4</sup> (教育ニ関スル勅語 *Kyōiku ni Kansuru Chokugo*)

Lacking both a democratic tradition and the institutions to properly develop democracy, the onset of domestic political violence and war in the 1930s and 1940s quickly eclipsed the nascent “Taishō democracy” of the early 1920s. As for antimilitarism, there is little if any mention of it as a systematic way of thinking or as a coherent critique of state power in the scholarly literature on the prewar period.<sup>5</sup> The historical record of resistance to state militarism in the period before 1945 shows individual resistance to conscription rather than a principled movement rejecting the right of the state to engage in war or objections to particular forms or powers of war-making.

#### *Development of Imperial Japanese Political Institutions and Political Culture*

The Meiji era, which began with the unification of Japan under a central government and restored emperorship in 1868 and lasted until the death of the Emperor Meiji in 1912, was a period of remarkable and rapid modernization. During this period, Japan achieved political unification under a centralized state, put an end to hereditary social status, established freedom of residence and occupation, took great strides in industrialization, and introduced modern ideological and war-making apparati – namely, universal education for boys and girls and compulsory military conscription for men. By the end of the nineteenth century, Japan established a modern bureaucratic infrastructure and made

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<sup>5</sup> Klaus Schlichtmann offers an analysis of the Japanese ethic of peace, tracing its origins back to the moral and social teachings of Confucius, as transmitted by Chinese and Korean visitors to Japan around the year 285. As for his treatment of prewar antimilitarism, though, his analysis centers mainly on Japan’s diplomatic efforts to solve the problem of war. Klaus Schlichtmann,

remarkable gains in state formation and nation formation.<sup>6</sup> These gains are all the more impressive considering the feudal arrangements of the preceding Tokugawa era (1603-1867).

During the Tokugawa era the shogunate was the main locus of power and ruled through a military government (*bakufu*). The hereditary shogun ruled over regional warlords (*daimyō*), to whom they assigned administrative domains (*han*). Serving the local warlords were loyal samurai who acted as their private military forces and helped them to carry out policing and revenue extraction within the domain. A main concern of the shogunate was the possibility of threats from discontented or ambitious warlords. In order to prevent and neutralize such threats, the shogun implemented a number of measures aimed at disadvantaging possible rivals to power.

One way the shogunate kept warlords in check was by re-assigning them to different territories in order to cut off their popular bases of support, to move them further away from the center of power in Edo (Tokyo), or to position them nearer to warlords more loyal to the shogun for surveillance and buffering purposes. Another method of keeping warlords in check was the alternate attendance system which required them to make regular visits to Edo, to stay there for extended periods of time, and to leave their wives and children behind as hostages upon returning to their domains. Also of note was the closed-country

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*Japan in the World: Shidehara Kijuro, Pacifism, and the Abolition of War, Vol. I* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 14.

<sup>6</sup> See: Kevin M. Doak, "Liberal Nationalism in Imperial Japan: The Dilemma of Nationalism and Internationalism," in *Nationalism and Internationalism in Imperial Japan*, ed. Dick Stegewerns (London: Routledge, 2003), 17-41.

policy (*sakoku*) that the shogunate introduced in the mid-seventeenth century. Spurred in part by an uprising of 30,000 Japanese Christians in 1637, the policy was meant to uproot and prevent any Western influence over Japanese society. By banning foreigners from entering Japan and Japanese from leaving, the shogunate hoped both to prevent warlords from gaining martial or economic advantages through international trade and to prevent popular allegiances to authorities outside of Japan.

While the closed-country policy was conducive to a long period of stability and relative peace, the forced opening of Japan by Western powers in the mid-nineteenth century revealed weaknesses in the shoguns' rule. The fact that the shogun consulted the warlords on foreign policy when threatened by the Western powers indicated that his power was greatly diminished. That there was not a state in the modern sense or a coherent collective identity of nationalism further disadvantaged the shogunate - both domestically and in relation to foreign powers. In addition, there were increasing calls from disaffected warlords and samurai for the emperor to become the locus of political power in order to unite the country and protect it against the threat of outside interference. The slogan that conveyed this aim was "*Sonnō jōi*" or "Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians."

Taking advantage of the shogunate's weaknesses, the U.S. and other Western powers soon forced a series of unequal treaties on Japan. In 1853, U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry forced through the Treaty of Kanagawa, and other

Western powers soon followed with their own demands. Alarmed at the shogunate's weakness in dealing with the foreign threat, the leaders of two domains (Satsuma and Chōshū) that had already grown antagonistic toward the Tokugawa government began plotting the overthrow of the shogunate and the restoration of the emperor as political sovereign. While there is not space here for a full treatment of the restoration movement, suffice it to say that the movement succeeded in 1868 with the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate and the inauguration of the new, imperial government under the Emperor Meiji.<sup>7</sup>

### *The Meiji Restoration*

Given the fractured nature of power and identity at the time of the Meiji Restoration (*Meiji Ishin*) of 1868, two of the main challenges that Japan's new rulers faced were the unification of the country through a central government and the forging of a collective national identity. As mentioned above, the forced opening of Japan by the West played a role in precipitating this project of modernization.<sup>8</sup> Faced with new adversaries that were administratively, technologically, and militarily more advanced, Japanese elites recognized the necessity of catching up with the West, and this became the government's aim, especially since Western states had used their advantages to force unequal treaties on Japan during the last years of the shogunate. The name chosen for

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<sup>7</sup> For a thorough treatment of the events leading up to the Meiji Restoration, see: William G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972).

<sup>8</sup> Richard Sims argues that scholars of Japan in the West have overemphasized the Japanese preoccupation with competitor states at the expense of understanding the domestic challenges

the era, “Meiji”, means “enlightened rule”, and the motto of the times was “*Fukoku kyōhei*” (“Enrich the country, strengthen the military.”)

While there was growing consensus among Meiji elites about the need to unify the country in the face of potential challenges from abroad, for some former warlords and samurai still invested in Tokugawa social arrangements there were fewer incentives to accept the legitimacy of the new government, especially since it undermined their status and privileges. One of the most urgent tasks of the time, then, was “for Meiji leaders to encourage the rest of the population to identify with the nation-state, and in particular to become more willing to make sacrifices for it.”<sup>9</sup> The restoration of imperial rule was one means by which Meiji leaders carried this out. During the Tokugawa era the emperor had symbolic rather than political or military power, but with the restoration of the emperor as the unitary sovereign, the Japanese now had a central locus of authority, one that was also presented as a sacred god-king for whom the state could call on them to sacrifice.

### *The Charter Oath and the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers*

Upon his enthronement in 1868, the Emperor Meiji promulgated the Charter Oath, a precursor to the Meiji Constitution of 1889. The Charter Oath consisted of five clauses. First, it indicated that important matters should be

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the Meiji rulers faced in their drive for modernization. See: Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History since the Meiji Renovation* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> Sandra Wilson, “Rethinking Nation and Nationalism in Japan,” in *Nation and Nationalism in Japan*, ed. Sandra Wilson (London: Routledge, 2002), 5.

discussed publicly and decided through deliberative assemblies. Second, it called for the unification of all of the classes so that the administrative affairs of the state could be executed efficiently. Third, it disestablished occupation by heredity. Fourth, it called on the Japanese to reject the “evil customs of the past” and to follow “the just laws of Nature.” And finally, it announced that knowledge should be pursued “throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundation of imperial rule.” These measures, especially the first three, seemed to bode well for the development of democracy, but as Jansen points out, terms like “deliberative councils” and “public discourse” had previously been used to refer to the cooperation between warlords. He further notes that the second clause did not aim to eliminate classes, only to unite them and that the fourth and fifth implicitly grounded the new polity upon a foundation of Confucian natural rights and imperial rule.<sup>10</sup>

Military conscription followed in 1873, but Japanese peasants were initially suspicious of the system since “the rich could pay their way out of having their sons serve in the army but the fee was too high for [them].”<sup>11</sup> There were other ways out of service, though, and Sims notes that, “popular objections to conscription were so great that 82 percent of twenty-year-olds took advantage of the various means of gaining exemptions in 1876.”<sup>12</sup> It is important to note, though, that their objections were to forced conscription by the new, central

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<sup>10</sup> Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard, 2002), 339.

<sup>11</sup> Mikiso Hane, *Japan, A Short History*, (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000), 96.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History since the Meiji Renovation* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 41.

government and not an expression of antimilitarism. Initial suspicions were understandable given the previous two hundred years of loyalty to local warlords.

The establishment of an army manned through universal conscription underscored the erosion of samurai privileges, and Japan soon had an army of 30,000 soldiers under central government command.<sup>13</sup> This number continued to increase, as did the displeasure of a great many samurai, especially in the Satsuma region of southwestern Japan. Tensions came to a head over a nine-month period in 1877 when tens of thousands of ex-samurai and their recruits launched the Satsuma Rebellion. The government's ability to quell the rebellion consolidated its authority while the rebellion itself reminded central decision-makers that subjects' loyalty to the emperor would be a prerequisite for domestic stability and military success abroad. An institutional embodiment of this imperative for loyalty was the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers issued in 1882.

Delivered from the Emperor to the head of the Imperial Japanese Army, Yamagata Aritomo (1838-1922), the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers outlined the moral code for conscripts, who had to memorize and regularly recite it. While the rescript emphasized virtues such as faithfulness, courtesy, valor, righteousness and simplicity, its core principle was absolute loyalty to the emperor – an imperative of both the law of “Nature” and of the new Japanese nationalism. Indeed, the rescript itself claimed to represent “the ‘Grand Way’ of Heaven and earth and the universal law of humanity,” and Yamagata thought of the new army and the rescript as the vehicles for raising the peasant conscripts to the level of

dignity previously enjoyed by the samurai.<sup>14</sup> Along with the dignity of a samurai, of course, came the imperative of self-sacrifice. The rescript would remain the fundamental guide of martial ethics through 1945.

### *Popular Demands for Reform*

While the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers premised military service on absolute loyalty to the emperor, like the Charter Oath it helped to undermine the feudal social arrangements of the Tokugawa era. And although the Emperor reigned as sovereign, the new institutions of the age were, if only rhetorically, suggestive of a certain egalitarianism. This rhetoric was not lost on some of the more educated members of society. As newspapers, political journals, and translated political theory texts began to multiply in the 1870s, a period known as the “Japanese Enlightenment,” debate increased as to whether Japan should write a Western-style constitution and what form it should take. At the end of the decade, a “People’s Rights movement” was coming to the fore as, “local activists formed nearly two hundred political societies in the cities and countryside” to advocate parliamentary constitutional government, advance various demands, and debate the future role of the emperor.<sup>15</sup> By 1881, the groups had presented the government in Tokyo with more than 250,000 signatures on over one hundred petitions, and an umbrella organization formed to organize preparatory

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<sup>13</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History since the Meiji Renovation*, 32.

<sup>14</sup> Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore De Bary, and Donald Keene, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 194.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 81.

conventions in Tokyo for the establishment of a constitution.<sup>16</sup>

At the same time that calls for popular participation in government and constitutionalism spread, political parties began to form. One of the first to organize was the Public Party of Patriots (*Aikoku-kōtō*) in 1874. As smaller groups advocating popular rights arose, they aligned with the party to create the new Liberal Party (*Jiyūtō*) in 1881. The following year, former Tokugawa officials founded the Progressive Party (*Kaishintō*), which had the backing of an increasingly influential business class. In the course of the decade, new grassroots parties coalesced around the pressing economic concerns of everyday life. These included the Debtors Party and the Poor People's Party.

In the fall of 1881, the leaders of the Meiji government, fearful that the growing popular movement might spin out of control and determined to prove to Western nations that Japan was a civilized equal, "had the emperor announce that a constitution would be written and promulgated by 1890."<sup>17</sup> Popular demands for increased participation and representation were an obvious cause of concern for the Meiji oligarchs (*Genrō*).<sup>18</sup> Not won over to the spreading democratic demands, they saw the inevitable promulgation of a constitution in

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<sup>16</sup> According to Irokawa, private groups drafted sixty-eight proposed constitutions in the Meiji era. Irokawa Daikichi, "Jiyū minken undō to Suzuki Yasuzō," in Suzuki Yasuzō, *Nihon Kenpō kagaku no shokō* (Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1987), 21.

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 84.

<sup>18</sup> The *genrō* were seven senior statesmen (and eventually two replacements) from samurai backgrounds in the former Satsuma and Chōshū domains who helped launch and institutionalize the Meiji Restoration. Several would serve as prime minister, and all of them were cabinet ministers at one time or another. They were key advisors to the emperor and held a strong influence over Japanese politics until the last of them died in 1940. Kornicki describes them as "an oligarchy which combined administrative power with final advisory authority [to the emperor]." R.F. Hackett, "Political Modernization and the Meiji *genrō*," in *Meiji Japan: Political, Economic, and Social History 1868-1912*, ed. Peter F. Kornicki (London: Routledge, 1998), 16.

instrumental terms. The thought of Yamagata Aritomo, one of the leading oligarchs, is representative of their position. His text “Opinion on Constitutional Government” made it clear that “the governed should be brought into the governing process not as natural, innate right but rather as a means of achieving national unity.”<sup>19</sup> Meiji leaders, then, saw democracy, “less as a means for resolving conflict and disagreement and more as a technique for avoiding it. The result is that in Japan a ‘democratic’ decision is defined in principle not simply as majoritarian but as unanimous.”<sup>20</sup>

It would be nearly a decade before the Emperor presented a constitution; in the meantime the government worked to neutralize domestic dissent and ensure the regime’s stability. Strategies included banning petitions, expelling opposition leaders from Tokyo, winning over opponents by offering them government posts, establishing police oversight of political societies, denying teachers and students the right to join opposition groups, requiring official permission for public meetings, prohibiting groups from combining or communicating with each other, and banning local branches of political parties.<sup>21</sup> While the government constructed these obstacles over several years, it codified most of them in the Public Order Preservation Ordinance of 1887. During the same time period, it bolstered its ability to neutralize threats through force.

Between 1880 and 1890, the government added seven new divisions to the army

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<sup>19</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 120.

<sup>20</sup> Abe Hitoshi, Shindou Muneyuki, and Kawato Sadafumi, *The Government and Politics of Japan* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), 204-205.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History since the Meiji Renovation*, 61-62.

and increased the number of local police stations from 1,560 to 12,832.<sup>22</sup>

### *The Meiji Constitution of 1889*

While keeping the domestic opposition at bay, the Meiji government dispatched missions to Europe to study Western constitutions. In the end, the Emperor and oligarchs decided to base the new Japanese constitution on the Prussian model rather than on the French, English, or American models because of the perception that the latter examples left the state too weak relative to society. As a result, the Meiji Constitution, drafted by the Ministry of the Imperial Household and delivered as a gift from the Emperor to his subjects on 11 February 1889, was more a conservative defense of the Japanese *ancien régime* than an opening for liberal democracy. The first paragraph of an Imperial Oath preceding its Preamble read, “We, the Successors to the prosperous Throne of Our Predecessors [...] shall maintain and secure from decline the ancient form of government,” and it continued, making clear the subordinate role of the people, “Our subjects shall thereby be enabled to enjoy a wider range of action in giving Us their support, and that the observance of Our laws shall continue to the remotest ages of time.”<sup>23</sup> This introduction along with Chapter One, Article One of the Constitution, which read, “The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal”<sup>24</sup> put into legal terms

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>23</sup> “The Constitution of the Empire of Japan,” reprinted in Glenn D. Hook and Gavan McCormack, *Japan’s Contested Constitution* (London: Routledge, 2001), 179.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

the notion that imperial rule was not only absolute but also everlasting. The fact that the constitution contained no provisions allowing for its amendment further underscored the notion that the structure and power of the state were eternal.<sup>25</sup>

Substantively, the Meiji Constitution was a justification for continued imperial rule, but it also introduced institutions where political contestation could occur. As for its more democratic provisions, it established a bicameral Diet consisting of the House of Peers and the House of Representatives, the latter of the two elected by adult males who paid enough in taxes to meet the voting threshold, a very small minority of the population.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the constitution stipulated that Diet deliberations had to be public, unless ordered into secret session by the emperor or through a Diet vote. Also, the constitution provided for the House of Representatives to approve the national budget. Provisions like these gave the people, or at least a small percentage of males who paid a tax rate above a certain threshold, an avenue for participation in politics. The constitution did not, however, grant anyone citizenship since Chapter One, Article Four established the Emperor as the only sovereign, thus relegating to the people the status of subjects – the great majority of them without any political status in terms of legitimate channels of contestation. The Meiji Constitution, then, codified authoritarianism while presenting an opening, however small, for representative constitutionalism.

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<sup>25</sup> Harold Kwoon Sunoo, *Japanese Militarism, Past and Present* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975), 15.

<sup>26</sup> Since voting was tied to taxpaying, the size of the electorate decreased considerably during hard times: "Taking 1881 as an index 100, the figure [the number of potential eligible voters] dropped to eighty-four in 1886, sixty-four in 1891 and fifty-nine in 1894." Mikiso Hane, *Japan, A Short History* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000), 95.

The tension between authoritarianism and democracy also resulted from the contradictions between shoring up the institutions of the emperor system while simultaneously trying to catch up with and remain independent from the West. On one hand, the new Meiji regime aimed to ensure its political power and legitimacy at home and abroad. On the other hand, it introduced a series of reforms that were, in many ways, inimical to monarchical absolutism. As for the propagation of the Emperor's political legitimacy, one important step was the use of the Emperor as a symbol of the unified nation. During the entire Tokugawa era, which lasted 260 years, emperors only embarked on imperial excursions (*gyōkuo*) outside of the capital three times. The Meiji emperor, though, made 102 such excursions in the course of his forty-five year reign.<sup>27</sup> The main purpose of these excursions was to familiarize the people of Japan with the emperor and to foster a sense of loyalty on the part of his subjects. In this way, the Meiji Emperor served as the exemplar nationalist, the embodiment of the state and nation for which his imperial subjects might be called to sacrifice their lives at any time.

#### *The Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890 and the Kokutai Ideology*

The symbolic function of the Emperor in establishing the legitimacy of the state and cultivating the will to sacrifice also played a role in education policy. In 1890, the same year that the Meiji Constitution came into effect, the Emperor promulgated the Imperial Rescript on Education. Posted, memorized, and recited

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<sup>27</sup> Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 74.

in all Japanese schools through 1945, this rescript echoed the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers through allusions to the samurai spirit. Like the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers, it situated loyalty and filial piety to the Emperor as the first principles of morality.<sup>28</sup> A mere 315 written characters long, it established the relationship between the Emperor and his subjects as the essence of the nation (*kokutai*), laid out fourteen fundamental virtues, and concluded with a claim that its truth was beyond history.<sup>29</sup> In addition, its daily recitation was a pledge on behalf of students to offer themselves courageously to the state should any emergency arise. Again, like the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers, it premised the security and vitality of the nation on the will to sacrifice.

While the Charter Oath, the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers, the Meiji Constitution, and the Imperial Rescript on Education helped establish the institutional framework of prewar Japan, they also helped in constructing the political cosmology of the times, namely the *kokutai* or “national essence” ideology. I take this ideology as a cipher for official prewar political culture since it was one of the primary ideational frameworks used by the regime to discursively construct and inculcate the values of the Japanese polity. As I will show below, there were also strains of Japanese political culture that opposed this particular construction of Japanese collective identity, but it is safe to say that the *kokutai* ideology was the prevalent political thought of early twentieth century Japan.

Prewar Japanese political institutions and political culture had their roots in

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<sup>28</sup> Yoshimitsu Khan, *Japanese Moral Education Past and Present* (Cranbury, NJ: Associate University Presses, 1997), 69.

the emperor-state system, the touchstone for Japanese national identity and the locus of unconstrained national authority. Prewar state actors from ministry officials to teachers propagated the *kokutai* ideology to promote the view that the Emperor alone was sovereign and that the relationship between sovereign and subject was one in which the latter, an impersonal part, should sacrifice unto the death for the former, the divine embodiment of the whole nation and the source of all authority.

Although the *kokutai* ideology had a textual foundation that preceded the Meiji Restoration of 1868,<sup>30</sup> nationalist propagandists such as Hozumi Yatsuka and Tanaka Chigaku promoted it as a means to establish an organic collective identity premised upon the will to sacrifice for the Emperor. In Hozumi's 1897 text *Kokumin Kyōiku: Aikokushin (National Education: Patriotism)*, he defined *kokutai* according to two propositions:

“(1) that the Japanese state has always been and shall always be reigned over and governed by one unbroken line of emperors of divine origin; and (2) that the Japanese state is a *völkisch*, or ethnic state, and the emperor is the father of all Japanese.”<sup>31</sup>

This imaginary of national collective identity transformed all Japanese into “blood relatives of the same womb” and set up a dichotomy of insiders and outsiders premised on a claim of innate Japanese superiority. After Japan's annexation of

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<sup>29</sup> Yoshimitsu Khan, *Japanese Moral Education Past and Present*, 71.

<sup>30</sup> Brownlee traces the first systematic formulation of *kokutai* to Aizawa Seishisai's 1825 work *Shinron* (New Theses). John S. Brownlee, “Four Stages of the Japanese *Kokutai*” paper presented at JSAC Conference, University of British Columbia, October 2000.

Korea in 1910, Hozumi argued against an assimilation policy since “the relationship between the Japanese Volk and the Korean Volk was inherently a relationship between an ‘inferior ethnic group (*rettō minzoku*)’ and a ‘superior ethnic group (*yūtō minzoku*).”<sup>32</sup>

In *What is Nippon Kokutai*, Tanaka also presented the ideology as the foundation for a Japanese *gemeinschaft* and posited it as an instinctive essence “running through the veins of the race, and [...] never chang[ing] since the days of the gods.”<sup>33</sup> In the logic of *kokutai* nationalism, self-sacrifice in war was the mechanism by which the national essence was (re)generated: “in a national emergency, our patriotic sentiment becomes suddenly more vigorous and when dying on the battlefield we call, ‘Long live the Emperor!’ and gladly meet our end without hesitation. Judging from this fact, you can understand that in the real heart and blood of the people is latent the *Kokutai* sense.”<sup>34</sup>

According to Tanaka, the subjects of Japan literally embodied *kokutai* and activated the national essence by spilling their blood for the Emperor, the divine center of the nation. The text *Kokutai no Hongi* [*Cardinal Principles of the National Essence*], published and distributed by the Bureau of Educational Reform of the Ministry of Education, also reinforced the notion of giving one’s life for the Emperor as an active, creative means by which the nation would advance: “offering our lives for the sake of the Emperor does not mean so-called sacrifice

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<sup>31</sup> Walter A. Skya, *Japan’s Holy War: The Ideology of Radical Shintō Ultrnationalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 56.

<sup>32</sup> Walter A. Skya, *Japan’s Holy War*, 59.

<sup>33</sup> Chigaku Tanaka, *What is Nippon Kokutai*, trans. Kishio Satomi (Tokyo: Shishio Bunko, 1937), 95.

but the casting aside of our little selves to live under his august grace and the enhancing of the genuine life of the people of the state.”<sup>35</sup>

An important element of prewar Japanese political culture, then, was the discourse on the will to sacrifice, the willingness of Japanese to die for the Emperor, to regenerate the nation. While we do not have prewar attitudinal survey data to assess the degree to which the Japanese internalized *kokutai* values in terms of a willingness to die for the nation, proponents of the ideology succeeded in publicizing it through national moral education courses in schools and through the veneration of national shrines such as Yasukuni Shrine, established in 1869 to apotheosize Japanese war dead. The will to sacrifice, then, was a basic premise of a Japan imagined as a sacred nation centered on the emperor. The deification of fallen soldiers from the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) also underscored the *kokutai* identity.

### *Nascent Democracy and its Limits*

As mentioned above, the establishment of a universal, compulsory education system and military conscription were important advances in the modernization of Japan in terms of administrative competence and regime stability. But while the Emperor served as figurehead for both projects – his portrait was displayed in classrooms and he was constitutionally designated as

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<sup>34</sup> Chigaku Tanaka, *What is Nippon Kokutai*, 99.

commander of all armed forces – the development of each institution opened some possibilities for democratic development. Universal, compulsory education resulted in increased literacy and reinforced the new assertion that all Japanese subjects were equal, a very radical break from the Tokogawa era when lineage determined occupation and limited life opportunities. If two building blocks of democracy are a knowledgeable public and a relatively widespread egalitarian political consciousness, then the universalized education system of Meiji Japan, meant to produce a modern absolutist state, set some of the groundwork for democratic projects as well. As Marshall notes,

“Increasing literacy rates made it possible to disseminate ideas about labor unions and other reforms. And the expansion at the secondary and tertiary levels produced a supply of graduates faster than the economy could absorb, creating more demand for reform.”<sup>36</sup>

Marshall also points out that even conservative nationalists, Kita Ikki for example, called for the period of compulsory education to be extended to ten years and for parity in the education of boys and girls.<sup>37</sup> Cutts’ examination of the Japanese school system is further evidence of the tension between democratic and authoritarian impulses; he notes that while the state used schools to inculcate political as well as intellectual norms, it also created a meritocracy since “Meiji leaders made schooling virtually the single gateway for all commoners to the

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<sup>35</sup> Compilation Committee, Bureau of Educational Reform of the Ministry of Education, *Kokutai no Hongi*, trans. John Owen Gauntlett (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), 80.

<sup>36</sup> Byron K. Marshall, *Learning to be Modern: Japanese Political Discourse on Education* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 93.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

power hierarchies of government, industry, academia, and the military.”<sup>38</sup> The effort to catch up with the West through a rationalized education system, then, advanced the power of the state while potentially undermining the *ancien régime* it claimed to preserve.

In addition to its role in state-making and national identity formation, an increasingly rationalized and technologically advanced military served Japan’s extraterritorial expansion. In the short term, Japan’s ability to wage and win war also ensured its autonomy at a time when the Western powers were colonizing other Asian countries. Victorious campaigns such as the First Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War as well as the annexation of Korea (1910) helped establish Japan as a rival, if not an equal, to the Western powers. The victory over Russia, the first defeat of a European power by a non-Western country, provided the Japanese with a particular sense of confidence and increased popular regard for the military.<sup>39</sup>

If economic development and political order are conducive to the development of democracy, then Japan was succeeding at both by the early twentieth century. Rapid industrialization and state-making helped Japan catch up with the West and fulfill the promise of the “rich nation, strong army” slogan. It was with a change of emperors (from Meiji to Taishō) in 1912, the first world war, and the rise of new popular movements (spurred by struggles for new rights by women, farmers, minorities, labor activists, and left political parties), though, that

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<sup>38</sup> Robert L. Cutts, *An Empire of Schools* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 46.

pushed democracy to the fore in the 1920s.

Changing domestic and international conditions contributed to increased democratization during the Taishō era (1912-1926), and the years following the end of World War I saw a brief period during which “two-party politics, responsible party cabinets, extension of civil rights to larger numbers of citizens, and the rise of democratic political philosophies” came to the fore.<sup>40</sup> Still, the fact that the people remained subjects rather than citizens meant that governing elites were able to limit the extent of democratization during the period. There were, however, increasing demands by the masses for more say in the affairs of everyday life.

The 1918 Rice Riots, in which more than one million people participated, coincided with mushrooming domestic conflicts that included labor disputes and tenant uprisings against landlords. Faced with growing demands for political and social democratization, the elites in the two, main political parties of the day (the conservative *Seiyūkai* and slightly less conservative *Kenseikai*) attempted to address social demands while maintaining state power. For example, in 1925 the Diet passed a law establishing universal male suffrage for those aged twenty-five and older, more than quadrupling the electorate.<sup>41</sup> It also repealed prohibitions on labor union activities in place since the adoption of the 1900 Security Police Law (*Chian Keisatsu Hō*). While legal moves like these helped create openings for

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<sup>39</sup> Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State, 1868-1988*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

<sup>40</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle. *The Making of Modern Japan*, 163-64.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

what became known as “Taishō democracy,” lawmakers counterbalanced them with measures like the 1925 Peace Preservation Law (*Chian Ij hō*) which criminalized advocating the abolition of private property and turned dissent into a legal *and* moral issue by outlawing subversion of the national essence (*kokutai*), thus paving the way for the persecution of communists, anarchists, and even some republicans as “thought criminals” (*shisōhan*).

Passage of authoritarian measures such as the Peace Preservation Law was in reaction both to the circulation of communist, socialist, and anarchist ideas as well as acts of *lèse-majesté*. None of these was more shocking to the Japanese political establishment than the Toranomom incident, the attempt on Regent Hirohito’s life by a young anarchist in December 1923. The day after the assassination attempt, the Forty-eighth Imperial Diet session began with the House of Peers meeting in secret for the first time in sixteen years. The main arguments of the meeting were that the government must consider institutional reforms and that it must put measures into place to guard against “dangerous thoughts.”<sup>42</sup> Despite the continuation of authoritarian measures, though, demands for increased democratization were also on the rise, spurred by a nascent civil society.

As to whether or not Japan had a viable civil society during the interwar years, there is some debate. McVeigh, questioning the taken-for-granted assumption that every ‘modernized’ nation-state has a ‘civil society,’ argues that

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<sup>42</sup> Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000), 141-42.

in Japan “rituality and staged formalities take the place of a neutral public space” since sociolinguistic behavior and core values of dependency, empathy, and hierarchy frame human relations in ways that inhibit the self-autonomy, impartiality, and egalitarianism necessary for the flourishing of civil society.<sup>43</sup> He notes that even Japanese scholars of the interwar “Civil Society School” (*shimin shakai-ron*) rejected the idea that civil society existed in Japan since the emperor system (*tennōsei*) precluded democracy and equality. McVeigh also points out that in the Japanese case, both then and now, “civil society is in many respects state-centered and induced.”<sup>44</sup>

Garon also acknowledges that the idea of civil society is problematic in interwar Japan, where it would have been considered not only theoretically untenable, but “inappropriate and illegitimate” by the average Japanese.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, he notes that despite certain authoritarian restrictions on discourse and activities, “journalism and publishing flourished; public debate could be lively; and hundreds of thousands of Japanese belonged to associations that advanced various demands.”<sup>46</sup> Unlike McVeigh’s argument that the state created a civil society for its own purposes, Garon shows that by analyzing a variety of groups (labor, women’s groups, religious associations, etc.) over time, we can see how a nascent Japanese civil society shaped the state and how the state, in turn, shaped the emerging civil society. In particular, he shows how first social elites

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<sup>43</sup> Brian McVeigh, *The Nature of the Japanese State* (London: Routledge, 1998), 44-45.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>45</sup> Sheldon Garon, “From Meiji to Heisei: The State and Civil Society in Japan,” in *The State of Civil Society in Japan*, ed. Frank J. Schwartz and Susan J. Pharr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 43.

and later middle class organizations worked with the state to rationalize society and press their demands while also tempering themselves at times in order to benefit from state support. Likewise, the state encouraged and sometimes discouraged these groups depending on its changing purposes of governance. Key to Garon's analysis is the examination of changing levels of autonomy among voluntary and state-sponsored associations in interwar Japan while also asking what the state could have achieved without them.

The lack of a viable, independent civil society notwithstanding, the Taishō era demonstrated the growing tension between democracy and authoritarianism in the prewar years. As noted above, at the level of national politics two popular parties came to the fore. This indicated a shift in the locus of power away from the old Meiji oligarchs and toward the organs of the civilian bureaucracy, especially the Diet. Several factors contributed to this change including the gradual passing of oligarchs, the unstable health of the Taishō emperor, the continued reconfiguration of social classes with increased industrialization and urbanization, the influence of foreign political theories, and the rise of popular interest groups. Also of importance was the changing international scene.

A significant change in foreign relations resulted from the Washington Conference (1921-22) in which Japan was a signatory to pacts establishing international consultative frameworks and partial disarmament, especially the limitation of the naval arms race. The fact that there were no bellicose external

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

enemies,<sup>47</sup> only rivals pledged to circumscribed competition, meant that there was no declared outside threat around which to rally the people and to keep their demands for reform at least partially in check. This period of promising international cooperation and demobilization, therefore, allowed people to focus their attention on domestic politics, and it strengthened the civilian government relative to the military. In terms of institutional organization, the military and the civilian government existed as discrete branches, each ultimately under the command of the Emperor. The lack of effective institutional checks on military power by the civilian government, therefore, allowed for a rivalry between the two.

By the end of the decade there was increasing concern on the part of the government over flagging enthusiasm for the emperor system. Bix, reciting Kawano Hitoshi's findings, notes that "[D]uring the period from 1922 to 1931, awareness of 'service to the emperor' as a motive for choosing a military career grew progressively weaker."<sup>48</sup> The death of the Taishō emperor, Yoshihito, in 1926 and the enthronement of the Shōwa emperor, Hirohito, however, coincided with an effort on the part of the latter, along with the military, to re-orient Japanese politics toward the emperor system. As for the brief opening for Taishō democracy, Hirohito's ascension "hastened its demise and revived the theocratic ideal of the fusion of religion and politics."<sup>49</sup> The transition also set the stage for a

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<sup>47</sup> The Army and Navy General Staffs continued to consider Bolshevik Russia the greatest potential threat, followed by the United States and China. Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 151.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

shift in influence over politics from the civilian government to the military.

While the foundations of civil society and democratic governance were beginning to emerge during the Taishō era, those advances were cut short by the confluence of international crises and the rise of political violence at home. Global economic depression was one of the main shocks to Japan, with Japanese exports dropping by half between 1929 and 1931.<sup>50</sup> In 1930 alone, the price of silk fell by half, which put a tremendous strain on the peasantry.<sup>51</sup> Coupled with the economic crisis was a crisis in politics. Throughout the 1920s acts of political violence occurred with increasing frequency and with the dawn of the 1930s that violence accelerated as militarists and right-wing ideologues targeted civilian officials for assassination.

In 1930 Prime Minister Hamaguchi Osachi tried to ease the effects of the economic crisis in part by shrinking the armed forces and cutting military salaries, which led to attacks on the Tokyo police headquarters by disgruntled naval and army officers.<sup>52</sup> The following year a member of an ultranationalist secret society (*Aikoku-sha*, the Love of Country Association) shot Hamaguchi and he died soon after, his demise concurrent with the consolidation of power by a military clique within the army that came to be known as the *Tōsei-ha*, or the “Control Faction”. The so-called Manchurian Incident of 18 September 1931 added further pressure on the parliament as the army began retaliatory actions in China independently of the Japanese civilian government and refused to comply with Prime Minister

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<sup>50</sup> Mikiso Hane. *Japan, A Short History*, 138.

<sup>51</sup> Harold Kwoon Sunoo, *Japanese Militarism, Past and Present*, 52.

Wakatsuki Reijiro's pledge to the international community to begin withdrawing troops there.<sup>53</sup> The following month, Wakatsuki became the target of an assassination ring. Though the assassins were not able to carry out their plan, the violence directed toward Hamaguchi and Wakatsuki was part of the broader turn toward political violence. As Skya notes:

“What is truly remarkable about the inter-prewar period of modern Japanese history was the sheer amount of politically, ideologically, and religiously motivated violence and acts of terrorism that plagued the nation. Three serving prime ministers (Hara Takashi [1856-1921], Hamaguchi Osachi [1870-1931], and Inukai Tsuyoshi [1855-1932]) and two former prime ministers (Saitō Makoto [1858-1936] and Takahashi Korekiyo [1854-1936]) were assassinated between 1921 and 1936. Within the same period, Prime Minister Okada Keisuke (1868-1952) had escaped an assassination attempt while he was prime minister, and Suzuki Kantarō (1867-1948), the man who would become Japan's last prime minister in the prewar period, narrowly survived an assassination attempt.”<sup>54</sup>

Taishō democracy, its roots not yet established, slowly gave way to military fanaticism, and the path to total war eroded most of the democratic gains of the 1920s. Political parties increasingly played a superficial role in Japanese politics until their “voluntary” dissolution in 1940. As for the nascent civil society of the 1920s, the state came to exert more and more influence and control over the civil associations that had flourished relatively autonomously before. The *Kempeitai*, or military police, sought out and repressed those who actively opposed the government either in thought or in deed, and the government established a

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>54</sup> Walter A. Skya, *Japan's Holy War*, 229.

system of neighborhood associations comprised of ten households each to surveil the population and coordinate the war effort. Still, despite a push toward authoritarian corporatism, embodied in sacrificial slogans such as ‘Extinguish the self in service to the state’ (*messhi bōkō*), “the wartime regime could not roll back many ongoing developments in society and the public sphere [and] Japanese society in the 1930s was far more diverse and politically literate than it had been at the turn of the century.”<sup>55</sup>

At the same time that Japan advanced militarily and attempted to thwart the emergence of democracy at home, the requirements of total war led to a few new openings for previously excluded minorities such as the ‘untouchable’ *Burakumin*, who were employed to maintain Japan’s industrial strength during mobilization. Total war also led to advances for women’s causes as more women became state workers. As Garon notes,

“Ironically, leaders of the interwar women’s movement became more publicly influential after 1937 than ever before. They sat on mobilization boards and advised officials on improving conditions for women working in munitions factories.”<sup>56</sup>

So even during the most authoritarian period of modern Japanese history, there was still a tension between a society where authoritarianism prevailed and new avenues of participation that, however limited, were inimical to the absolutist values of the *ancien régime*. Furthermore, as Hashikawa has noted, despite the

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<sup>55</sup> Sheldon Garon, “From Meiji to Heisei: The State and Civil Society in Japan,” in *The State of Civil Society in Japan*, 54.

prevailing support for the war, there was some domestic opposition to it, and there were those who still hoped that Japan could eventually develop a viable civil society.<sup>57</sup>

There was also dissent to Japan's military policy, especially against the influence of the *Tōsei-ha*, among a small, informal group of conservative political and upper-class elites.<sup>58</sup> Organized around then-former diplomat and future postwar Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru (1878-1967), this group's main concern was for the preservation of the *kokutai*. The main threat to Japan's security, as they saw it, was a communist revolution. They feared that the *Tōsei-ha* was wittingly or unwittingly preparing the preconditions for the communization of the polity through its moves toward a centrally coordinated war economy and totalitarian social control. According to them, either the *Tōsei-ha* would turn into a communist revolution "from above" or its military miscalculations would result in defeat and an inevitable communist revolution "from below". Their goal was to persuade the military's *Kōdō-ha* ("Imperial Way Faction"), with the emperor's backing, to outflank the *Tōsei-ha*.<sup>59</sup> Failing repeatedly to achieve their ends through persuasion of *Kōdō-ha* leaders, one of their members, former Prime Minister Prince Konoe Fumimaro (1937-39; 1940-41), made a direct appeal to the Emperor on 14 February 1945. His address, known as the Konoe Memorial,

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>57</sup> Hashikawa Bunsō, "The 'Civil Society' Ideal and Wartime Resistance," in *Authority and the Individual in Japan*, ed. J. Victor Koschmann (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978), 128-142.

<sup>58</sup> While this group did not call itself by a particular name, the police dubbed it YOHANSEN, short for "Yoshida Anti-War". John W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878-1954*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 227.

<sup>59</sup> The *Kōdō-ha* itself had tried to overthrow the government in 1936.

aimed to convince the Emperor that revolution was becoming increasingly probable and that the only way to preserve the *kokutai* was through a purge of the *Tōsei-ha* and a resolution of the war with the United States, even if it meant unconditional surrender. Their thinking was that the United States had no overarching interest in dissolving the *kokutai*. Konoe's appeal was made in vain and in mid-April the police arrested several members of the group including Yoshida for their involvement in drafting the statement.<sup>60</sup>

In conclusion, while support for democratic reform never completely died out and while even members of Japan's political and economic elite feared the consequences of total war, few if any Japanese could have imagined democratic antimilitarism as an alternative to the prevailing conditions of the times. It also goes without saying that the ability of the Japanese to wage war in East and Southeast Asia and around the western Pacific rim for a decade-and-a-half depended on more than just the strength of the military; it also required the cooperation of the *zaibatsu*, or monopolistic combines, and other vested interests such as the bureaucracy, wealthy land-owners, and the cooperation of Hirohito and the imperial court.

There is no need to retrace the military history of the Pacific theatre of World War II here. Suffice it to say that as with every other modern industrial state that was a belligerent in the conflict, the Japanese government mobilized its population for war with great efficiency. Of course this included the coordination of agricultural and industrial labor to support the war effort, but it also meant the

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<sup>60</sup> John W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath*, 227-265.

mobilization of young men who were willing to kill and die for their country – however that object of sacrifice may have been imagined: the emperor system, the divine homeland, or the perceived safety of their families and friends.<sup>61</sup>

Japan's experience with total war ended in complete disaster. By the end of the hostilities in 1945, there were upwards of 35,000,000 civilian victims of Japanese aggression in the Asia-Pacific region. Added to that number were the 3,100,000 Japanese soldiers and civilians killed during the fighting.<sup>62</sup> On 26 July 1945 the United States, United Kingdom, and China issued the Potsdam Declaration, which defined the terms for Japan's unconditional surrender. The Japanese government, determined to preserve the emperor system, refused to capitulate. Soon thereafter the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and in a matter of weeks the United States carried out the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On 14 August 1945 the Japanese government accepted the terms of surrender and the following day the Emperor announced to the Japanese people that the war was over.

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<sup>61</sup> Bix notes that there was a slow decline in the rate of respect for the emperor and in the willingness to die for him among military forces through the end of the war. Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 166.

<sup>62</sup> "War Responsibility -- Delving into the Past: More than 3.1 million Japanese died in Showa War," *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), 15 August, 2006.

### **Chapter Three: Japan's Re-founding as Critical Juncture**

I contend that the introduction of democratic antimilitarism, through its establishment in Japan's postwar political institutions and its cultural transmission and acceptance, was so effective during the occupation years that citizens continue to identify it as a definitive norm of Japanese politics nearly sixty-five years later. Evidence of this "effectiveness" is the fact that despite more than fifty years of governance by a conservative party formed with the express aim of revising the Constitution, Japan continues to maintain its democratic, military- and war-renouncing Constitution in its original form. Furthermore, I argue that the changes that the Japanese experienced - the adoption of democratic and antimilitarist political institutions along with concomitant changes in people's attitudes and their imaginings of the political community - had long-lasting effects because of a re-evaluation of Japanese identity and national history in the early postwar years.

Put in more analytic terms, I argue that the establishment and broad popular acceptance of constitutional antimilitarism occurred during a discernible critical juncture occurring in the first few years of the Allied occupation of Japan. It was during those years, from 1945 until roughly 1948, that Japanese political institutions were wholly reformed, a majority of the Japanese public embraced democratic and antimilitarist norms, and a new narrative emerged in which people associated the re-founding of Japan with the onset of "liberated history".

In terms of a temporal sequence of path dependency, the pre-surrender conditions described in the previous chapter can be thought of as the antecedent conditions to this critical juncture. In this chapter I explain the unfolding of the critical juncture in terms of the choices and negotiations that key actors made during the period and the new institutional framework that resulted.

My first task in this chapter is to explain how Occupation officials and key Japanese actors changed the political institutions of the country after the war. This involves recounting the processes by which those actors developed, negotiated, and established Japan's new political institutions, especially the Constitution. The Allied Occupation began just weeks after Japan's unconditional surrender, but it had been years in planning, and its goal was to transform Japan into a demilitarized and democratic country. The achievement of that goal through its institutionalization in fundamental law helps to explain why Japan's transformation was so decisive and why it has been so long-lasting. It is important, however, to identify the role that Japanese actors played in that process. Forging a new, postwar constitution and with it an institutional framework to reinforce and transmit its values amounted to a re-founding of the political community, and while it was largely led by the Occupation, it could not be completed or effectively carried out without the cooperation of the Japanese. As I will explain below, though, American calculation and involvement by Japanese who were resistant to a wholesale reformation of the Japanese polity resulted in a political system with prominent reminders of the pre-surrender era, reminders

that figure into the reactive sequences and debates of the postwar years.

My second task in this chapter is to explain the process by which the popular acceptance of democratic antimilitarism occurred. There are three components to this analysis. First, I explain specific efforts that the Occupation carried out to attitudinally reorient the Japanese away from a collective political identity centered on the *kokutai* ideology and towards one centered on the ideals enshrined in the new constitution. Second, I examine actions carried out by the Japanese government and civic groups to achieve the same ends. Third, I discuss the implementation of the Fundamental Law of Education and explain its significance in transmitting the fundamental values of the re-founded polity to Japanese young people.

The final section of this chapter is an analysis of the critical juncture's significance to postwar debates over Japanese historical memory. Every political community employs historical memory to recount, construct, and negotiate the story of its members across time. The result of Japan's re-evaluation of historical memory had particularly important consequences in terms of collective political identity. I examine the rupture with the past and the re-founding of the Japanese political community as a "trial by fiat" of the old regime, one that resulted in the postwar schism that Gluck has described as being between "traditionalists who wanted to expunge 'occupied history' and those who embraced the 'liberated

history” of democracy and antimilitarism.<sup>1</sup>

## THE INSTITUTIONAL RE-FOUNDING OF POSTWAR JAPAN

The arrival of occupation forces at the end of August 1945 signaled the inevitability of fundamental political and social changes in Japan. The precise nature of those changes, however, was as of yet indeterminate, but the broad purpose of the occupation was to transform Japan from a militaristic and authoritarian polity into a peace-loving democracy. Occupation planners believed that the only way to achieve that goal was to disarm Japan and to purge Japanese political culture of *bushido*, or the warrior ethic of absolute loyalty to and self-sacrifice for one's superior - the Emperor in the case of *kokutai* nationalism. In order to achieve these goals, occupation forces carried out simultaneous strategies of demobilizing and disarming the Japanese, introducing peace and democracy as foundational values of the “new” Japan, and developing an institutional architecture that could sustain a peaceful, democratic Japan once the occupation came to an end. The establishment of institutions and the embrace of values so inimical to those prevailing before the country's surrender were unprecedented in the history of defeated nations. Indeed, they have not been replicated since.

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<sup>1</sup> Carol Gluck, “The Past in the Present,” in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 67.

### *The Emperor*

The loss of the war was a humiliating defeat, especially for a nation led by a “divine” sovereign, but it also ended years of ever-increasing suffering and privation. With the defeat came fears, long propagated by the imperial regime, that the Japanese would suffer vengeful mistreatment at the hands of occupying forces. That these fears did not come to pass greatly relieved the Japanese. Rather than meting out revenge against the Japanese public, the occupation aimed to create the conditions necessary for a critical re-evaluation of the prevailing political arrangements. Some of the first policies carried out were the replacement of the Japanese government’s media control with Occupation censorship, the disbanding of the 4,800-strong Special Higher Police (known as the “Thought Police”), a ban on displaying the *Hinomaru* flag, the release of nearly five hundred political prisoners who had opposed the regime (most of whom were communists), the dismissal of teachers who had promoted militarism,<sup>2</sup> the arrest of thirty-nine war-crimes suspects, and the dissolution of the military. In addition, SCAP (Supreme Commander Allied Powers) announced “five great reforms”: emancipation of women, promotion of labor unions, and democratization of education, the legal system, and the economy.

According to Blix, these early reforms resulted in growing popular criticism

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<sup>2</sup> “By May 1947, when the purge was completed, 120,000 teachers or 22 percent of the entire teaching corps had been removed, most of them choosing the path of voluntary early retirement rather than subjecting themselves to the purge.” Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan’s Militant Teachers: A History of the Left-Wing Teachers Movement* (Honolulu, HI: The University Press of Hawaii, 1973), 55.

of the Japanese government, the Emperor, and the institution of the throne.<sup>3</sup>

Gluck has also pointed this out arguing that through the War Crimes Tribunal in particular the Allies were able to construct for the Japanese public a narrative that presented evidence of a conspiratorial plan for imperial expansion, the wartime leaders (the Emperor excepted) who had carried it out, and the dispensation of justice – namely, the hanging of the conspirators. For most Japanese, “this view of the war suited a country that so much wanted to break with its past.”<sup>4</sup> In an attempt to counteract these notions, the Emperor’s closest advisors began promoting a counter-narrative that de-emphasized the Emperor’s military status, highlighted his responsibility for ending the war, and deflected blame for Japan’s ruin onto military cliques that, they claimed, deceived not only the public but the Emperor himself. Furthermore, they called for national repentance, unity, and the preservation of Japan’s *kokutai*, or political essence.<sup>5</sup> That the occupation was promoting an historical narrative that corroborated some of these points, especially the idea that the Emperor had been deceived by militarist cliques, complicated matters when it came to re-founding the Japanese political institutions and political culture.

Because Japan had been so effective not only at industrialization and governmental modernization but also at military development and because influential US policy makers viewed Japan’s political culture, like Germany’s, as

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<sup>3</sup> Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 552-53.

<sup>4</sup> Carol Gluck, “The Past in the Present,” in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 66.

<sup>5</sup> Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 556-58

one given to authoritarianism and militarism, occupation planners saw the demobilization of Japan's armed forces and the establishment of democratic, civilian government as mutually reinforcing goals. The debates among US planners that began during the war and that continued into the start of the occupation centered on the institutions deemed responsible for Japan's militarism and authoritarian political culture. The earliest discussions on the future treatment of Japan centered on the status of the Emperor.

As both the singular political sovereign under the Meiji Constitution and the embodiment of Japan's prewar *kokutai*, the fate of the Emperor was taken very seriously in planning for the occupation of Japan. Officials in the State Department generally fell into two camps in regard to "the emperor question": one group that believed that abolishing the emperor system was a prerequisite for the liberalization of Japan and another that viewed the Emperor as a convenient instrument that occupation forces could use to help guide Japan toward that same goal. In the end, the Emperor's fate rested with MacArthur, who ultimately calculated, perhaps incorrectly, that the costs of abolishing the emperor system or of trying the Emperor for war crimes would be too great in terms of a possible popular backlash. Instead, he wagered that the Emperor's compliance would help to prevent any popular resistance that might arise to the radical changes taking place.<sup>6</sup>

Having decided to spare the Emperor, SCAP also tried to varnish his image

and preserve a role for him in postwar Japan. Protecting the Emperor, however, did not mean that his status would remain unchanged. Because member states of the Far Eastern Advisory Commission<sup>7</sup> as well as the United States Congress wanted to charge the Emperor with war crimes, MacArthur had to convince them that the Emperor, along with Japan, had been rendered harmless and that it was impossible for him to reclaim his previous place at the center of the Japanese nation. The first maneuver aimed at this transformation was the severing of the links between the state and the Shintō religion. SCAP issued its “Shintō Directive” on 15 December 1945, a proclamation that effectively abolished State Shintō and foreshadowed the constitutional separation of religion from the state.<sup>8</sup> Following soon after the directive, the Emperor issued a rescript on New Year’s day 1946 through which he renounced any claims of divinity.

The second way SCAP limited the Emperor’s power was by stripping him of sovereignty and decoupling the monarchy from the organs of the state. This change was accomplished through the re-founding of Japan’s fundamental law. Article 1 of the postwar constitution states that sovereignty resides in the people and that the Emperor is merely a “symbol of the State and the unity of the people,

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<sup>6</sup> In order to deflect Congressional and US State Department demands that the Emperor be tried for war crimes, MacArthur warned that removal of the Emperor would necessitate a significant increase in occupation troops and that it would prolong the Allies’ presence in Japan.

<sup>7</sup> Although the occupation was initially to be overseen by a Far Eastern Advisory Commission comprised of the United States, Great Britain, China, France, the Philippines, India, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Netherlands, the U.S. made it clear that it would “retain the controlling authority” of occupation governance. George H. Blakeslee, “The Establishment of the Far Eastern Commission,” *International Organization* 5, no. 3 (August 1951): 500.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to forbidding any public financial support of Shinto institutions and banning the “propagation and dissemination of militaristic and ultranationalistic ideology” through Shintoism, the Directive also banned distribution by the government of *The Fundamental Principles of the*

deriving his position from the will of the people”. While the Constitution set aside some ceremonial functions for the Emperor, it expressly forbid any role for the Emperor in governance.

The very preservation of the Emperor, however, provided the space necessary for revision-minded politicians to begin arguing that there had been no change to the Japanese *kokutai*. For example, Yoshida Shigeru, Prime Minister following the spring 1946 election, argued that the newly adopted constitution did not alter the *kokutai* in any way and that the spiritual bond between the Emperor and the Japanese people remained inviolable, as it had since time immemorial. Ashida Hitoshi, chairman of the Constitutional Amendment Committee of the House of Representatives after the spring 1946 election, was one of the most vociferous defenders of the notion that the *kokutai* remained intact. Speaking from the floor of the Diet after passage of the constitution, Ashida asserted that the Emperor “still maintains his authority as the center of the life of the people” and that the Emperor and the sovereign will of the people were unified “coevally with Heaven and Earth, from eternity to eternity”.<sup>9</sup>

As the statements above show, MacArthur’s decision to protect and preserve the Emperor, even while stripping him of formal political authority, unwittingly provided grounds upon which postwar revisionists could challenge “occupied history” and press their claims that the *kokutai* was immutable even in the face of constitutional revision. For those who accepted Japan’s downfall as

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National Structure (*Kokutai no Hongi*) and other Shintō texts. From “The Shintō Directive” reproduced in Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State 1868-1988*, 167-170.

the beginning of “liberated history”, however, the *kokutai* had lost its legitimacy as the fundamental concept of Japanese collective identity. An example of this rejection is the “August Revolution” thesis posited by constitutional scholar Miyazawa Toshiyoshi who pointed out that, “Japan had already in August 1945 renounced the juridical interpretation of *kokutai* by accepting the Potsdam Declaration, which demanded Japan’s adherence to the universal principle of democracy”. Moreover, according to Miyazawa, the 1947 Constitution’s establishment of popular sovereignty “signified by definition the pure and simple negation of the juridical *kokutai*.”<sup>10</sup> Since this was nearly impossible for the revisionists to refute, they promoted the idea that the *kokutai* remained legitimate in its moral sense.

The fact of the matter, though, was that the Emperor remained a prominent public figure of great importance because of MacArthur’s decision to spare him from prosecution. Because MacArthur decided to exempt the Emperor and all members of the imperial family from the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), the Emperor was more or less indebted to MacArthur and cooperated with the occupation. Some commentators have even suggested that the inclusion of Article 9 in the Constitution was a *quid pro quo* for maintaining the imperial institution and shielding it from prosecution.<sup>11</sup> Whether or not that

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<sup>9</sup> Ashida Hitoshi quoted in John W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath*, 326.

<sup>10</sup> Yoichi Higuchi, “The Constitution and the Emperor System: Is Revisionism Alive?,” *Law & Contemporary Problems* 53, no. 1 (1990): 56.

<sup>11</sup> For example, Theodore H. McNelly, “‘Induced Revolution’: The Policy and Process of Constitutional Reform in Occupied Japan,” in *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*, ed. R.E. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu (Honolulu, HI:University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 81; Stephen S. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Shōwa Japan* (NY: Routledge, 1992), 150.

was the case, the promulgation of an antimilitarist constitution made it easier for MacArthur to assuage his critics on his handling of the Emperor.

### *Constitutional Antimilitarism*

On 10 October 1945 Prince Konoe Fumimaro visited MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo.<sup>12</sup> Appointed to the Cabinet following Japan's surrender, Konoe was then Deputy Prime Minister under Prime Minister Higashikuni Naruhiko (an uncle of the Emperor Shōwa) whose Cabinet had just stepped down a few days before the meeting took place. Although Konoe and MacArthur had met the previous month, it was at this particular meeting that Konoe inquired of MacArthur whether the latter had "any ideas or suggestions regarding the organization of the Japanese Government and the composition of the Diet."<sup>13</sup> MacArthur answered in the affirmative saying that it was necessary to revise the constitution. This was the first indication to the Japanese that such a change would occur. The following day, the new prime minister, Shidehara Kijūrō, visited MacArthur. Prior to the visit, however, Shidehara secured an understanding that MacArthur would not discuss constitutional revision during their meeting. This was part of a strategy on the part of Shidehara to control the terms of constitutional revision and, as Koseki argues, wrest control of the process from Konoe who, as a prince, represented the interests of the Privy Seal (Imperial

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<sup>12</sup> Konoe Fumimaro served as Prime Minister of Japan from 4 June 1937 through 5 January 1939 and from 22 July 1940 through 18 October 1941 when he was succeeded by Tōjō Hideki.

<sup>13</sup> Konoe Fumimaro quoted in Shōichi Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, trans. Ray M. Moore (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 9.

Household Agency).<sup>14</sup>

On 13 October, Shidehara established a Committee to Study Constitutional Problems (*Kempō Mondai Chōsa Inkai*, hereafter referred to as the Matsumoto committee) chaired by State Minister and former law professor Matsumoto Jōji, and within a matter of days Japanese newspapers were reporting on both the real possibility of constitutional revision and the struggle between the Privy Seal and the Cabinet to guide the process. In a public statement released on 1 November, MacArthur repudiated Konoe for his continued involvement in the process since the decision to revise the constitution had occurred after Konoe had officially left office. The following week, Konoe faced U.S. interrogation over his involvement in the Japanese decision to invade China in 1937.<sup>15</sup> Although Konoe penned an outline draft of a revised constitution and presented it to the Emperor, his revisions did little to alter the substance of the Meiji Constitution. MacArthur's November order abolishing the Privy Seal and the announcement of a war crimes investigation aimed at Konoe hastened his political demise, and he committed suicide in December.

At the same time that the official Matsumoto committee and Konoe were drafting their revisions, political parties and private groups were drawing up their own draft constitutions. The newly reconvened Japan Communist Party was the first to publicize their aims regarding constitutional revisions, publishing an outline on 11 November. The JCP did not produce an actual draft constitution, though,

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<sup>14</sup> Shōichi Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, 11.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

until June 1946. The conservative Japan Liberal Party, the successor to the prewar *Seiyūkai*, released a draft in January 1946, and the Socialist Party publicized its own draft the following month, as did the conservative Progressive Party. Three private groups, the Constitutional Research Association (*Kempō Kenkyū-kai*), the Constitution Discussion Society (*Kempō Kondan-kai*), and the Japanese Federation of Lawyers (*Dai-Nihon Bengoshi-kai Rengō-kai*), also released draft constitutions in the winter of 1945-1946.<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that while all of these drafts ranged from those nearly identical to the Meiji Constitution to those more in line with the constitution that the Diet would eventually adopt, none of them called for a renunciation of the nation's sovereign right to wage war or the abolition of military forces. Responsibility for that unique feature lies with Shidehara. It was during a 24 January visit to MacArthur that Shidehara proposed that any new constitution include a no-war clause and a prohibition against the maintenance of military forces.<sup>17</sup>

MacArthur took a fairly hands-off approach to the Matsumoto committee's work on constitutional revision until the *Mainichi Shimbun* leaked a copy of its draft constitution in their 1 February edition. Seeing that the draft was not significantly different than the Meiji Constitution, MacArthur instructed Brigadier General Courtney Whitney, chief of the Government Section, to draw up a draft constitution based on three principles: limited monarchy, renunciation of war, and

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<sup>16</sup> Kyoko Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 12.

<sup>17</sup> Kataoka argues that Shidehara proposed constitutional antimilitarism as a gambit designed to protect the Emperor from calls for war crimes prosecutions and to ensure that the monarchy

abolition of feudalism.<sup>18</sup> The Japanese government formerly presented the Matsumoto draft to the Americans on 8 February, and Whitney presented the American draft to members of the Japanese committee on 13 February, much to their surprise. Although the American draft seemed radical to the Japanese government, the Government Section had written its version in accordance with “popular sentiment as manifested in the daily press and GS interviews with Japanese politicians and academics.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, the Japanese public was ahead of its government on the necessity of complete revision, including the necessity of constitutional antimilitarism.<sup>20</sup> To make their case more compelling, Whitney told the committee members that accepting constitutional reform along the lines of what the Americans were proposing was the only way that they could ensure that the Emperor would be retained.<sup>21</sup>

The central decision makers on the Matsumoto committee were Matsumoto, Shidehara, Yoshida Shigeru (then Foreign Minister), and Ashida Hitoshi (then Minister of Health and Welfare). They were among the handful of men on the Japanese side who negotiated with occupation decision-makers and who had the

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would continue to have a role in Japanese politics, if only symbolic. Tetsuya Kataoka, *The Price of a Constitution* (NY: Crane Russak, 1991), 36.

<sup>18</sup> Kyoko Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 16.

<sup>19</sup> Dale M. Hellegers, *We, the Japanese People: World War II and the Origins of the Japanese Constitution, Vol. II* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 520.

<sup>20</sup> On 15 October 1945 the *Mainichi Shimbun* ran a United Press wire story detailing the amount and kinds of personal letters that MacArthur was receiving from the Japanese public. The article noted that of a sample of 100 letters written to MacArthur, 28 fell under the rubric of “antimilitarism” and 7 expressed “support for the rapid democratization of Japan”. As Sodei notes, MacArthur received an estimated 500,000 letters during the occupation, and “occupation authorities not only read them but also prepared English summaries of all of the letters, and complete translations were made of the most important letters.” Rinjiro Sodei, *Dear General MacArthur: Letters from the Japanese during the American Occupation*, trans. Shizue Matsuda (NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 7-9.

most say on the content of any future constitution. After a follow-up conversation with MacArthur, Shidehara reported back to the committee that the two tenets that he thought would have to be included in any final draft were the one noting the symbolic nature of the Emperor and the one abolishing war and military forces. To my knowledge, there is no evidence that Shidehara told them at the time that it was he who had suggested constitutional antimilitarism in the first place, though both he and MacArthur would testify later that the idea originated with Shidehara.

As for the Americans most closely involved in constitutional revision, the three most important decision-makers were MacArthur, General Whitney, and Lieutenant Colonel Charles Kades. It was the last of these three, Kades, who guided the project through to the end. At one point he forced some members of the Matsumoto committee to carry out an all-night discussion session with translators and Government Section staff by locking them all in a room together at GHQ on the night of 4 March.<sup>22</sup> The pressuring tactic worked, and the Japanese government released a final draft on 6 March.

On 10 April 1946 the Japanese voted for a new Diet in their first postwar election. The election was notable for several reasons, not the least of which was the fact that the new parliament would be responsible for debating and adopting a new constitution. Also of note was the inclusion of women, both as electors and

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<sup>21</sup> Dale M. Hellegers, *We, the Japanese People*, 528.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 542.

candidates.<sup>23</sup> Another point worth mentioning is that all candidates had to meet with the approval of GHQ so as to make sure that those who served in or were complicit with the imperial government would not continue in or return to power. This was part of a broader process of purging and prosecuting those responsible for the actions of the wartime regime.

According to official U.S. government records, the occupation carried out the systematic removal of those it labeled “ultranationalists” in three phases. During the first phase, carried out in early 1946, the occupation removed and excluded more than 1,000 political candidates and incumbents. This included preliminary and follow-up screenings for all candidates in the spring Diet election. The second phase, which took place in the lead-up to the April national elections, targeted officials at the prefectural and local levels. In this phase, the occupation removed or barred 7,000 people from office. In the final phase of the purge, beginning in late 1947, the occupation removed 600 people from positions in “preeminent private financial, commercial and industrial enterprises” and 200 people from the fields of mass media and public information.<sup>24</sup> The purges would continue and expand, however, and Kataoka reports that eventually the

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<sup>23</sup> “Contrary to predictions, large numbers of female voters – 66 per cent of those eligible, or some 14 million – turned out at the polls (79 per cent of eligible males also cast a ballot)... a total of 39 out of 79 female candidates were voted into office... [including] a former prostitute.” Eiji Takemae, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and its Legacy*, trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann (NY: Continuum, 2002), 265.

<sup>24</sup> Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Government Section, *Political Reorientation of Japan: September 1945 to September 1948, Vol. I* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1970), 9.

occupation purged more than 210,000 people.<sup>25</sup>

The election of the new Diet on 10 April 1946 resulted in a block of conservative lawmakers from the Liberal Party forming a coalition with smaller parties to force Shidehara's resignation as prime minister. The head of the Liberal Party, Yoshida Shigeru, became the new prime minister and it was under his watch that parliamentary debate on the constitution took place. While some features of the "MacArthur draft" were changed significantly, for example MacArthur suggested a unicameral legislature whereas the final version maintained a bicameral one, the renunciation of war and military force remained, although in amended form.

Perhaps no other article of the proposed constitution caused as much debate as Article 9. Once the Matsumoto committee revealed their draft on 6 March, members of the Privy Council began discussing its implications. The general interpretation from those quarters was that it was a good signal of Japan's peaceful intentions and that it left room for the right to self-defense and a coast guard or even military forces to keep the public peace. In an attempt to clarify that interpretation, Ashida, the newly elected chairman of the House of Representative's Constitutional Amendment Committee, changed the wording of the article before final passage by adding the phrase, "in order to achieve the purpose of the preceding paragraph" at the start of the second paragraph proscribing military forces. His aim, he would later argue, was to qualify the first

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<sup>25</sup> Kataoka lists the categories and numbers of those purged as: Military (167,035), Political (34,892), Ultranationalist (3,438), Business (1,898), Bureaucratic (1,809), and Information media

paragraph, "... the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes" such that it would not exclude the right to self-defense.

The Yoshida Cabinet, however, noted that even if the constitution did not explicitly rule out Japan's right to self-defense, it clearly made the execution of such a right impossible since the constitution banned the maintenance of military forces. In a document prepared for the House of Representatives, the government's position was stated thus:

"The provision concerning the renunciation of war does not directly deny the right of self-defense, but since it does not recognize Japan's right to maintain any military forces or the right of the country to engage in war, in actual fact Japan cannot undertake a real war as an exercise of its right of self-defense."<sup>26</sup>

During a plenary session question-and-answer period in the House of Representatives, Prime Minister Yoshida further warned against pressing the claim that Japan had the right to self-defense, stating:

"I think that the very recognition of such a thing (for a State to wage war in legitimate self-defense) is harmful. (applause) It is a notable fact that most modern wars have been waged in the name of self-defense of States. It seems to me, therefore, that the recognition of the right of self-defense provides the cause for starting war."<sup>27</sup>

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(1,216). Tetsuya Kataoka, *The Price of a Constitution*, 67.

<sup>26</sup> Satō Tatsuo, "Nihonkoku kenpō seiritsushi – 'MacArthur sōan' kara 'Nihonkoku kenpō' made," *Jurist* 24, no. 108 (June 15, 1956): 40.

<sup>27</sup> Yoshida Shigeru quoted in: Shōichi Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, 193.

Yoshida followed up on this view in the House of Councilors in 1950 saying, “If we hold somewhere in the back of our minds the idea of protecting ourselves by armaments, or the idea of protecting ourselves by force of arms in case of war, then we ourselves will impede the security of Japan.”<sup>28</sup> Despite Yoshida’s clarifications and warnings, revisionists began debating Article 9’s interpretation from the start. Eventually, Yoshida, too, would come to argue that Article 9 was not an obstacle to the right to self-defense. As I detail in the chapter that follows, with the termination of the occupation conservative lawmakers would call for revision of the constitution, especially Article 9, thus triggering a reactive sequence that would last almost a decade.

Despite the immediate and on-going debate over the meaning of Article 9 in the Diet and the efforts of state-level actors to rewrite the constitution *in toto*, Japan’s fundamental law remains unchanged. Article 96 of the constitution lays out the terms by which the constitution can be amended; it requires two-thirds votes of all members (*not* two-thirds of *quorum*) in each House of the Diet followed by a national referendum in which a majority of all votes cast are for amendment. It may seem that the first of those two conditions would be difficult enough to achieve. Indeed, the conservative LDP, founded upon a platform that called for constitutional revision, has never held two-thirds of the seats in either House in the post-occupation period.<sup>29</sup> More telling is the fact that no public

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<sup>28</sup> Yoshida Shigeru quoted in: John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat* (NY: W.W. Norton, 1999), 398.

<sup>29</sup> The LDP formed in 1955 through the merger of the conservative Liberal and Democratic Parties. After its establishment, the highest percentage of seats that it captured in any national election was 63% (20 November 1960 House of Representatives election), a percentage that was

opinion poll in the postwar period has shown majority support for revision of Article 9.

## POPULAR ACCEPTANCE OF DEMOCRATIC ANTIMILITARISM

Passage of a constitution containing an explicit renunciation of war as a sovereign right of the nation and a ban on military forces and armaments was a radical departure from the militaristic nationalism that prevailed in Shōwa Japan up until 1945. Codifying the values of antimilitarism in the constitution of an occupied country, however, may seem like an easy task compared to changing the political culture of a country, especially when it comes to forging a new collective political identity. The results of a *Mainichi Shimbun* poll taken in May 1946, however, indicated that the great majority of the Japanese public (85 percent) approved of the new constitution and that most (almost 70 percent) approved of article 9 from the start.<sup>30</sup> Still, for the occupation to succeed in re-founding the Japanese polity on the values of democratic antimilitarism it had to ensure that the Japanese public did not just approve of the constitution but that it would actually maintain and defend it. Here I analyze three factors that helped make such a transformation possible: occupation censorship and propaganda, the cooperation of the Japanese government, and the reform of education policy.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, one of the first acts of the occupation

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not equaled again until Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro led the party to a landslide victory in the 11 September 2005 House of Representatives election.

<sup>30</sup> Setsuko Norimoto Tsuneoka, "Pacifism and some Misconceptions about the Japanese Constitution," in *The Japanese Constitution*, ed. Tsuneoka, *et al* (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobō, 1993), 126.

was to supplant the imperial government's censorship and propaganda apparatus with its own. In order to purge public discourse of the old imperial values, the occupation's Civil Censorship Detachment Section censored all Japanese publications, films, and broadcasts, forbidding all public communications that fell under impermissible categories like Defense of War Propaganda, Divine Descent Nation Propaganda, Militaristic Propaganda, Nationalistic Propaganda, and Justification or Defense of War Criminals.<sup>31</sup> The purpose of such categorical prohibitions was to prevent those sympathetic to the old regime and its values from undermining Japan's re-founding as a peaceful democracy. These policies were in effect from September 1945 through September 1949, though some censorship continued through the end of the occupation.

In addition to censorship, the occupation also carried out a number of measures to publicize the virtues of the new political order and to sway public opinion in favor of supporting them. The Civil Information and Education Section (CI&E) carried out the educative activities aimed at introducing and popularizing these new values. Procedurally, CI&E accomplished its objectives by conducting surveys of political organizations, holding conferences with Japanese scholars of politics, promoting the nongovernmental League for Political Education for Democracy, and meeting regularly with representatives of political, agricultural, labor, cultural, radio, magazine, and press groups to discuss the promotion of peace and democracy and to provide them with printed materials for distribution. The broad themes promoted through these interactions included national

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<sup>31</sup> John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 411.

government, local self-government, rights and duties of the people, the purge of “the authority and influence of those who have deceived and misled the people of Japan”, and political parties.<sup>32</sup> The occupation also informed the public through news and entertainment radio programs, weekly press conferences for the purpose of disseminating information regarding political education, magazines, public exhibits, a series of posters on “What the Constitution Means to Me”, movies and live dramas, the distribution to libraries of materials that furthered the occupation’s aims, newspaper articles, and the organization of public discussion groups.<sup>33</sup>

The occupation and the Japanese government also provided advice and assistance to a number of groups, both popular and semi-official, that were engaged in political education. These included the Society for the Popularization of the New Constitution, the League of Women Voters, the League of Political Education for Democracy, the Civil Liberties Union, and the Family Law Democratization League. The activities of just one of these groups, the Society for the Popularization of the New Constitution, is representative of the kinds of activities carried out. The Society’s program included organizing lectures and forums for training purposes around the country and producing and releasing posters and slides related to the constitution. In addition, the Society sponsored two films about the constitution, one of which became very popular.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Government Section, *Political Reorientation of Japan: September 1945 to September 1948, Vol. I*, 364-370.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

A second factor contributing to popular acceptance of Japan's new constitution and values was the cooperation of Japanese officials and leading public figures. Some Japanese leaders embraced the new constitution while others who opposed key aspects of it were willing to go along with the changes for the time being. These conservative critics aimed eventually to re-write the constitution, but cooperated in the hopes that there would be a quick end to the occupation and return of Japanese sovereignty.

Cooperating with SCAP's efforts to educate the Japanese public on the new constitution, the government issued 20 million copies (one for each household in Japan) of a pocket-sized booklet titled *New Constitution, Bright Life* (*Atarashii Kempō, Akarui Seikatsu*). The booklet contained the full text of the Constitution of Japan, a thirteen-page explanation of its meaning, and a brief preface written by Ashida. Reinforcing the notion that a radical break with the past had occurred, the introduction referred to 3 May 1947, the day the constitution came into effect, as "the birthday of a new Japan", and in the preface, Ashida wrote, "The old Japan has been cast in the shadows, a new Japan has been born."<sup>35</sup> The rhetoric about a "new Japan" was becoming commonplace along with the popular slogans, "Construct a nation of peace" (*Heiwa kokka kensetsu*) and "Construct a democratic nation" (*Minshushugi kokka kensetsu*). According to Sodei, during the first years of the occupation these slogans were "written out in schoolroom calligraphy lessons and discussed in

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<sup>35</sup> John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 402.

local and community forums that involved virtually every sector of society.”<sup>36</sup>

There is evidence, then, that transmission of and popular familiarity with the ideas contained in the new constitution was relatively extensive soon after its adoption. The results of a national survey conducted in the summer of 1947 corroborate this claim; it indicated that 59.3 percent of respondents reported that they had read the new constitution just two months after it had gone into effect.<sup>37</sup>

As Dower notes, eventually even some high officials who had fiercely opposed the new constitution came to accept it and made voluntary efforts to popularize it. One example is Kanamori Tokujirō, a former imperial government spokesman, who took the initiative to write a children’s book to help popularize the constitution. Published two years after the constitution came into effect, Kanamori’s text was titled *The Story of the Constitution for Boys and Girls* (*Shōnen to Shōjō no tame no Kempō no Ohanashi*), and it highlighted the new constitutional ideals of peace, popular sovereignty, and fundamental human rights.<sup>38</sup> Works like *New Constitution*, *Bright Life* and *The Story of the Constitution for Boys and Girls* reinforced the legitimacy of Japan’s new fundamental law along with the new political order and helped create a narrative of Japan’s re-founding along democratic and antimilitarist lines.

Representative of public leaders who promoted the idea that a “new Japan” would replace the the previous regime *in toto* was Shigeru Nambara, the

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<sup>36</sup> Rinjirō Sodei, *Dear General MacArthur: Letters from the Japanese during the American Occupation*, xv.

<sup>37</sup> Jiji News Agency; August 1947 in Allan B. Cole and Naomichi Nakanishi, eds. *Japanese Opinion Polls with Socio-Political Significance 1947-1957 Vol. 1: Political Support and Preference* (Medford, MA: The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 1959).

first president of Tokyo University after the war. Nambara was a vocal proponent of education reform and of the new constitution, especially its provisions for antimilitarism and freedom of religion. Addressing the students of Tokyo University, Japan's most elite academic institution, on 11 February 1946, Nambara noted that Japan had staked its chances for success in the war on its "fundamental spirit", or *kokutai*, only to be defeated. With the "disintegration" of Japan's fundamental spirit, he told the assembled student body, there was no use rebuilding the country upon its past foundation, stating:

"[O]ur history does not lie in the past but in the future. That is, we must create our own new history. We must count today, not as the year of two thousand and several hundreds, but as the first year of a new era, and make a fresh start."<sup>39</sup>

The phrase "two thousand and several hundreds" of years was a reference to the duration of time that had supposedly passed since the enthronement of the first emperor. Nambara's speech, titled "Creation of a New Japanese Civilization", was an exhortation to the most capable and no doubt most privileged college students to accept that the previous notion of Japan's "fundamental spirit" was an empty promise and that the prior belief in a nation of mythic origins was defunct. Representative of other leaders, Nambara saw in the collapse of the *ancien régime* the opportunity to re-found Japan, and he identified education as one of the main ways to achieve that goal. As he told the students that day, in pursuit of

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<sup>38</sup> John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 403.

<sup>39</sup> Shigeru Nambara, "Creation of a New Japanese Civilization," *Ethics* 56, no. 4 (July 1946): 294.

“the resurrection and new birth of the nation [...] young students should take the lead.”<sup>40</sup>

A third factor in the transformation of Japanese political culture toward occupation aims, especially the promotion of democracy and antimilitarism, was the reform of the education system. As noted earlier, Japan began constructing a national education system in the last decades of the nineteenth century and quickly achieved a system of compulsory universal education that met the needs of modernization. As a result of the war, that system was thrown into disarray. At the beginning of the occupation there were “18,000,000 students idle, 4,000 schools destroyed, and only 20 percent of the necessary textbooks available.”<sup>41</sup> One of the most important tasks that the occupation had to oversee, then, was the re-establishment of an effective education system, one oriented toward the new values rather than to those of the Imperial Rescript on Education. Of the three factors mentioned here, education reform was arguably the most important and perhaps one of the longest lasting in its observable effects on Japanese politics and society. In fact, even today many of the debates over collective political identity and historical memory center on education policy.

Even before a new legal framework for national education could be drawn up and implemented, the Ministry of Education released its blueprint for the new educational system in a May 1946 book called *New Educational Guidance* (Shin

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<sup>40</sup> Shigeru Nambara, “Creation of a New Japanese Civilization,”: 295.

<sup>41</sup> Robert King Hall, *Education for a New Japan* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1949), 2; quoted in Edward R. Beauchamp, “The Development of Japanese Educational Policy, 1945-85”, *History of Education Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (Autumn 1987): 302.

*Kyōiku Shishin*). The text privileged the establishment of “a democratic peaceful nation of culture” as the ultimate goal of the education system and provided a detailed discussion of the “Fundamental Problems in Constructing a New Japan” along those lines.<sup>42</sup> Publication of *New Educational Guidance* followed less than a year after the initial purge of teachers who were imperial loyalists and was a second step in the re-orientation of the school system. The next task was to create the legal framework of the new Japan, one that would help to bring the values contained in the constitution into practice.

Once the Diet amended and adopted the constitution, it passed several laws in 1947 that served to reinforce the occupation goals of demilitarization and democratization. Perhaps the most significant of these laws was the Fundamental Law of Education (*Kyōiku Kihonhō*). The Fundamental Law of Education (FLE) established the legal framework through which all education policies were to be interpreted and carried out, and its influence was so great that it became known as the “The Education Constitution” (*Kyōiku Kenpō*). An obvious repudiation of the prewar Imperial Rescript of Education, the FLE emphasized the primacy of Japan’s new values, replacing subservient prewar subjects with sovereign individuals working for peace:

“Education shall aim at the full development of the personality, striving for the rearing of the people, sound in mind and body, who shall love truth and justice, esteem individual value, respect labor and have a deep sense of responsibility, and be imbued with the independent spirit, as builders of a peaceful state and society.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> John Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 248.

In accordance with its aims, the FLE became the basis for peace education in postwar Japan, and as Hayes notes, the majority of educators (both teachers in primary and secondary schools and academics at the university level) have been ardent in their support for the provisions for democracy and antimilitarism as outlined by the FLE and the constitution.<sup>44</sup> In fact, decades of teacher activism in support of the FLE as well as popular identification with its aims explains why the law went unchanged for nearly sixty years.<sup>45</sup> Revisionists on the right, however, contended from the start that it undermined traditional morality, and they criticized the notable absence of provisions for nurturing ‘love of country’ in young hearts and minds.<sup>46</sup> Along with the question of constitutional revision, the debate over the Fundamental Law of Education came to define the long struggle between revisionist politicians and the Ministry of Education on one side and educators, especially the Japan Teachers Union (*Nihon Kyōshokuin Kumiai* or “*Nikkyoso*”), on the other.<sup>47</sup>

If one aim of the occupation’s postwar education policy was to ensure that the values of democracy and antimilitarism were instilled in Japanese students, another was to democratize the education system by breaking up the power of

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<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Education, *Kyōiku Kihonhō* (Fundamental Law of Education), Article 1.

<sup>44</sup> Louis D. Hayes, *Introduction to Japanese Politics* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 41.

<sup>45</sup> The Fundamental Law of Education remained unchanged until 22 December, 2006 when the Diet revised it, retracting the phrase “the realization of the ideals laid forth in the constitution depend on the education of the people” and adding rhetoric on the importance of tradition, history, and love of country, among other changes.

<sup>46</sup> Robert W. Aspinall, “The Rise and Fall of Nikkyōso,” in *The Left in the Shaping of Japanese Democracy*, ed. Rikki Kersten and David Williams (NY: Routledge, 2006), 76.

<sup>47</sup> Formed in 1947, the JTU has been a consistent institutional proponent of the rights and values established by the postwar constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education. It has supported the popular election of local boards of education and school autonomy and opposed textbook

the centralized Ministry of Education and dispersing power to local communities. In 1948, the Diet passed the Board of Education Law which was meant to fulfill this aim. With its passage, citizens would be able, for the first time, to elect the members of their local boards of education. The law was to be phased in over several years, starting with the election of prefectural boards of education and eventually applying to all local board of education elections. The first time prefectural board of education elections were held more than a third of new members were members of the Japan Teachers Union (JTU) or their endorsed candidates. This frustrated conservatives in the Diet who had opposed the democratization of education from the start. Thus began a debate between occupation officials and conservatives in the government over the process by which local board of education elections should be held and what administrative units boards should represent. As a consequence, the first school board elections at the local level were not held until *after* the occupation ended in 1952. Four years later, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party abolished the Board of Education Law in the Diet, part of its efforts to undermine the major reforms of the occupation era and a key event in the first reactive sequence to occur in the postwar years, which I describe in the chapter that follows.

### *Historical Memory*

In addition to the institutional reorientation of Japan during the early years of

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revisionism and the re-introduction of mandatory ceremonies centered on the *Hinomaru* flag and the *Kimigayo* anthem.

the occupation, there was also a reorientation in terms of Japanese collective political identity and historical memory. That the defeat in war and onset of the occupation marked the beginning of a “new Japan” was a notion widely held by the Japanese during the critical juncture from 1945-1949.<sup>48</sup> As Dower put it, “The cult of the new was omnipresent. In the publishing world alone, well over one hundred magazines that appeared during the first three years after the war used the ideograph for ‘new’ in their name.”<sup>49</sup> Historical memory, however, is not something that can be made from scratch. For even the dawn of the “New Japan” began in the historical context of the old order. As Connerton has pointed out, “all beginnings contain an element of recollection.”<sup>50</sup> This was certainly true of postwar Japan as evidenced by the preservation of a place for the Emperor in the new constitution.

The Japanese Diet that adopted the new constitution was popularly elected in the spring of 1946, but it was technically imperial. In other words, it convened and passed the new constitution as a body legally operating under and according to the Meiji Constitution. Although the new constitution superseded the constitution of 1889, the Diet passed it as an amendment to the former fundamental law. The fact that the new constitution still had a place for the Emperor, if only as a symbol, was a telling recollection of the past. Article 1 of the new constitution preserved the Emperor as “a symbol of the State and the unity

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<sup>48</sup> Note the reference to “a new Japan [being] born” in Ashida’s preface to *New Constitution, Bright Life* and the charge to construct a “new Japan” in *New Educational Guidance*, both of which are mentioned above.

<sup>49</sup> John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 170.

<sup>50</sup> Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 6.

of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power” and Article 2 established that “the Throne shall be dynastic and succeeded to in accordance with the Imperial House Law passed by the Diet”. These provisions established popular sovereignty and the prerogative of the Diet in legislating succession. Still, the notion of a dynastic throne representing the unity of the people carried reminders of the *ancien régime*. This is not to say, however, that the new constitution did not make a radical break with the past, one that even put pre-1945 Japan on trial.

Connerton termed the execution of Louis XIV at the beginning of the French Revolution “the trial by fiat of a successor regime” and noted that undertaking such a trial “is like the construction of a wall, unmistakable and permanent, between the new beginnings and the old tyranny. To pass judgement on the practices of the old regime is the constitutive act of the new order.”<sup>51</sup> Applying Connerton’s notion to the Japanese case, we can read the 1946 Constitution of Japan as a trial by fiat of the previous regime. To be sure, the Emperor remained as a recollection of the pre-surrender political order and escaped investigation and prosecution for war crimes, but adoption of the new constitution can be understood as judgement passed on the very system that had been legitimized by imperial rule, a trial by fiat through the constitution of the new order. In establishing the new constitutional order of “liberated history”, the occupation and the Diet revoked the Emperor’s sovereignty and subjected matters of the throne to laws passed by the popularly elected Diet. In addition, the constitution negated

all of the Emperor's "powers related to the government". Taken together, these conditions for the Emperor's preservation as a symbol of Japan were also the symbolic verdict of the trial by fiat.<sup>52</sup>

I argue that Article 9 can also be thought of in Connerton's terms - as a "trial by fiat" and "a wall, unmistakable and permanent, between the new beginnings and the old tyranny". Here, too, the constitution was an historical judgement, this time of nationalism and militarism. Article 9's renunciation of "war as a sovereign right of the nation" and its prohibition against maintaining "land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential" was meant as a wall against the tyranny of war and the return of a nationalistic regime premised upon the imperative for self-sacrifice. Reading even further into the significance of the constitution as a verdict rendered against the tyranny of war, we can interpret Article 9 as a trial by fiat against war in general; in this sense, Article 9 stands as a judgement against all nations that wage war. Through Article 9, the re-founded Japanese polity judged and condemned all nations that employ "the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes."

Connerton also notes that such trials act as a "revocation of a ruling principle" and the repudiation "not only [of] an institution but the political theology

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<sup>51</sup> Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 7.

<sup>52</sup> Gluck, who has described the occupation's attention to Japanese history as "an invasion of one country's national history by another", points out the "ironic inconsistency" of including the emperor in the postwar settlement. Even though the new constitution transformed his sovereignty into symbolism, the emperor remained a potent reminder of and connection to the prewar period, and along with the War Crimes Tribunal and the constitution became the focus of the postwar debates between traditionalists who wanted to expunge "occupied history" and those who embraced the "liberated history" of democracy and antimilitarism. Carol Gluck, "The Past in the

that legitimated that institution.”<sup>53</sup> In Japan before August 1945 that political theology was the *kokutai* system in particular and the political theology called “dying for the nation” in general. Article 9 rendered this political theology inoperable in both its particular and general forms. These claims may seem like fanciful interpretation, but as I will show in chapter five, there is significant evidence that the Japanese continue to venerate Article 9 as a hedge against the tyranny of war and that the overwhelming majority of Japanese reject the imperative of self-sacrifice that is a basic assumption of nationalism.<sup>54</sup>

As one of the verdicts of the trial by fiat of the previous regime, Article 9 acts as a constant recollection of the tyranny of war and the violence that is inherent, if often latent, in nationalism. Advocates of Article 9 consider it not only a renunciation of war but also a renunciation of the past regime. In addition, there is a common belief among many Japanese that Article 9 is an apology for the violence of the past, violence that imperial Japan visited on the countries of Asia and the western Pacific. They warn that its revocation would not only remove the hedge against militarism but that it would also be a *de facto* renunciation of Japan’s apology to past victims of Japanese militarism.

As a result of the dismantling of the old emperor system and with Japan’s

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Present,” in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 66-67.

<sup>53</sup> Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 8.

<sup>54</sup> Benedict Anderson, among others, recognizes the will to sacrifice as a core component of nationalism. According to him, it is “useful to begin a consideration of the cultural roots of nationalism with death” and “the mystery of regeneration”. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 10-11. For more on the constitution of nations and other communities through sacrifice see: Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle, *Blood Sacrifice and the*

adoption of a democratic “peace constitution” and its promotion in Japanese schools and the broader society, collective political identity underwent a significant shift in the postwar years. The particularities of the *kokutai* system notwithstanding, in the years before 1945 Japan exhibited the general hallmarks of modern nationalism: imaginings of ancient origins, belief in the community’s providential destiny, and the transformation of sacrificial fatality into national preservation. Japan’s surrender in August 1945 laid rest to claims that the Japanese had a providential destiny in establishing a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, and the Emperor’s renunciation of his divinity on 1 January 1946 dispelled the notion that the nation’s ancient origins were rooted in imperial blood lines going back to the sun goddess Amaterasu. Finally, the re-founding of the Japanese polity on the renunciation of the nation’s sovereign right to war made voluntaristic self-sacrifice unnecessary and all but eliminated the right of or opportunity for state actors to order Japanese citizens to engage in blood sacrifice (i.e. their own) in order to preserve the nation.

I argue that the new political order and the trial by fiat set the ground for the development not of a reformed nationalism but rather the development of constitutional patriotism. Postwar constitutional patriotism enshrined citizen sovereignty, human rights, democracy, and antimilitarism as the quintessential elements of the Japanese political community, thereby signifying what it meant to be Japanese. For Japanese constitutional patriots, Japan’s surrender marks the

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*Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

beginning of ‘liberated history’ and adoption of the 1946 constitution symbolizes the re-founding of the political community. This is not to say that the problem of history and collective identity has been settled in Japanese politics, for a sizable minority of Japanese held on to the goal of reversing the postwar settlement and reviving *kokutai* nationalism. Indeed, it is this schism between constitutional patriots and revisionist nationalists that informs much of the contestation in postwar Japanese politics as I show in the chapter that follows. The fact that the constitution in general and Article 9 in particular remain un-amended is strong evidence that Japanese collective identity and historical memory regarding the postwar re-founding have reinforced a path dependent process for which there is still evidence today.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have argued that the re-founding of Japan as a polity premised upon democracy and antimilitarism took place in the years immediately after the Japanese surrender, roughly between the fall of 1945 and 1949. It was during this time that American and Japanese officials constructed new political arrangements, arrangements that, in the case of the constitution, remain unchanged even today. And as I will show in the chapter that follows, even though the occupation undertook a “reverse course” in the late 1940s and Japan re-armed soon after it regained sovereignty, the constitution and popular valorization of it have continued to limit the degrees of freedom that state-level

actors would need to maneuver militarily.

The purpose of this chapter was to establish the critical juncture during which democratic antimilitarism came to the fore as a prevailing norm of the postwar Japanese political community. As I have shown, in addition to the re-founding of the polity through fundamental law, occupation policies and key actors from the Japanese government and public undertook several strategies to promote and popularize the constitution in the first years after the war. This included several years of censorship of information and media that might be construed as militaristic on the part of the occupation forces. In addition, it involved developing and implementing programs and materials meant to familiarize the Japanese public with the constitution and the provisions enshrined in it. These activities were carried out by occupation, government, and public officials as I have demonstrated above.

Despite the fact that both the 1947 Constitution of Japan and the 1889 Constitution of the Empire of Japan came from above (from the Meiji Emperor in the first case and from General MacArthur and the Allied Occupation in the second), they are, of course, qualitatively different in that the postwar constitution de-sanctified the emperor and elevated the Japanese people from the status of subjects to that of sovereign citizens. Revisionists, however, have rejected key elements of the 1947 constitution, especially the status of the emperor and Article 9. Some of those revisionists even rejected the constitution *in toto*, claiming that the Japanese people had little say in its formulation. Smith argues, however, that

“the Japanese people, through their own actions, demonstrated both understanding and support of the spirit of reforms”<sup>55</sup> after the war.

As I have shown above, one way that the Japanese government fostered understanding and support for the values of the new regime was through the reformation of the Japanese education system. Although the war, especially its final phase in early 1945 had disrupted public education in Japan, the half-century old universal education system was a ready-made channel for dissemination of Japan’s new constitutional values. The Fundamental Law of Education, also known as Japan’s “Education Constitution” echoed the values of the “Peace Constitution” and introduced students to the idea of sovereign citizens building a peaceful nation. That the majority of educators embraced that goal and, as I will show in the coming chapter, did their part to promote peace education for decades after the occupation only reinforced the attitudinal reorientation of Japan to democratic antimilitarism.

In addition, defeat in war and occupation by foreign forces offered an opening through which many Japanese came to re-evaluate historical memory and collective political identity. As Gluck has put it:

“Between 1945 and 1947, the Japanese (and the Americans) actively and in many cases consciously addressed the task of reconceiving recent Japanese history. Three tenets were established almost immediately: first, that history could begin as if anew, just as Japan could be, as it was said, ‘reborn’; second, that the war was the subject of a heroic narrative in which

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<sup>55</sup> Beverly Smith, “Democracy Derailed: Citizen Movements in Historical Perspective,” in *Democracy in Contemporary Japan*, ed. Gavin McCormack and Yoshio Sugimoto (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1986), 158.

villains and victims were clearly identifiable and, once identified, would enable the Japanese to put the past behind them; third, that Japan's modernity had gone badly awry but could now be set right. Severed history, radical discontinuity, a new beginning – such were the fictions of *sengo* [the postwar period] that emerged from cataclysmic war.<sup>56</sup>

In addition to this epic narrative of new beginnings, the constitution and especially Article 9 served as a trial by fiat of the pre-surrender past. Not only was a verdict rendered against the emperor in the form of a renunciation of his sovereignty and political powers, but the constitution also stripped the Japanese nation of the sovereign right to wage war and possibly the imperative for self-sacrifice along with it. As Connerton has noted, however, within every new regime is some recollection of the past, and this has certainly been the case in postwar Japan.

The fact that the Emperor was spared from prosecution on war crimes charges and formally, if only symbolically, preserved in the new constitution led revisionists to deny that the *kokutai* had been disestablished and gave them hope that they could restore him as head of state through constitutional revision, a goal that persists in some circles to this day. During the occupation, revisionists were biding their time for the return of Japanese sovereignty so that they could carry out a thoroughgoing amendment of the 1947 Constitution - if not of the whole constitution than at least of the articles relating to the Emperor and the powers of war and military maintenance. During those critical years, however, constitutional patriotism began developing as a new collective political identity in

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<sup>56</sup> Carol Gluck, "The Past in the Present," in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon

Japan, and antimilitarism in general and the outlawry of war and the standing army in particular came to be accepted through education and social learning as “the only game in town.” As Kawai put it at the end of the occupation, “for six years the United States [...] had a freer hand to experiment with Japan than any other country in Asia, or indeed in the entire world.”<sup>57</sup>

As I will show in the chapter that follows, the critical juncture that I have described here was followed by a short period of structural persistence during which Japan’s new institutional norms were reinforced - despite the occupations initiation of a “reverse course” - and then an intense reactive sequence from 1952, the end of the occupation, through 1960.

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(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 70.

<sup>57</sup> Kuzō Kawai, “American Influence on Japanese Thinking,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 278 (1951): 23.

## **Chapter Four: The First Reactive Phase, 1949-1976**

In the previous chapter I argued that the years 1945-1949 were a critical juncture during which Occupation and Japanese officials re-founded the Japanese polity. Supplanting the Meiji Constitution with the 1947 Constitution of Japan, the institutional architects of the “new Japan” stripped the emperor of his sovereignty and located it with the Japanese people, rescinded the sovereign right of the nation to go to war or to maintain military potential, and enshrined human rights as fundamental law. To promote these new political arrangements to the public, SCAP censored any information that could be construed as sympathetic to the pre-surrender regime and, along with Japanese officials and public leaders, promoted the new Constitution through public meetings and the mass media. In addition, a supporting legal framework was developed that included the Fundamental Law of Education, the legal standard according to which all education policy was to comply. I argued that these changes helped to forge a new collective political identity in Japan, one that is better described as Constitutional patriotism than as nationalism and one in which the majority of Japanese came to conceive of the 1945 surrender as the dawn of “liberated history” and a “new Japan.”

In this chapter, I marshal evidence to show that the 1945-1949 period was, indeed, a critical juncture that patterned Japanese politics path dependently. It is my contention that this path dependent process is especially evident in

regard to democratic antimilitarism, which helps to explain why Article 9 of the Constitution has never been amended. Put another way, the adoption of democratic antimilitarism as basic law and its broad, popular acceptance informed and constrained government officials' decision-making regarding the state's war-making potential.

James Mahoney has argued that path dependent processes typically unfold according to the following chronology: critical juncture → structural persistence → reactive sequence → outcome.<sup>1</sup> As for the case of path dependence in Japanese postwar politics, in this chapter I argue that the critical juncture was followed by a brief period of structural persistence lasting from 1949 until the end of the Allied Occupation in 1952. In the analysis presented here, the “structure” in question is the institutional framework of constitutional antimilitarism. I investigate the degree to which this framework persisted in the earliest period after its establishment. Key questions related to this analysis are: What accounted for the maintenance of those institutional arrangements even as the Occupation's focus shifted from promoting democracy and antimilitarism in Japan to incorporating Japan into the emerging U.S. Cold War security framework as a reliable anticommunist ally? And how did Occupation policies given this re-orientation set the stage for the intense reactive sequence that followed once Japan regained its sovereignty in 1952? I address these questions in the first section of this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> James Mahoney, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

In the second section of the chapter I analyze the effort by conservative revisionists to consolidate their control of the state and their attempts to revise Japan's postwar political institutions, especially in regard to policing and war-making but also in regard to education policy during the period from 1952-1960. Key aspects of their program during this time were the recuperation of pre-surrender police powers, rearmament through the establishment of the Self-Defense Forces in 1954, the establishment of the Cabinet-level Commission on the Constitution, education reforms, and the re-negotiation of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1959-1960. Politically, the most pronounced consequence of revisionist maneuvers during the period was the intense contestation between state and civil society actors over the continued legitimacy of democratic antimilitarism.

In analyzing the reactive sequence described in the preceding paragraph, I seek to answer the following questions: What strategies did revisionists employ in their attempts to "settle accounts" with the left and to undo "occupied history"? What do those strategies reveal about the importance that revisionist, state-level actors placed not only on revising Japan's political institutions but also on affecting collective political identity and historical memory? And what did the nature and scope of civil society opposition to revision indicate about the changes in Japanese political culture that occurred during the critical juncture?

As I will show in the third section of the chapter, when the reactive sequence ended in 1960 with the forced revision of the U.S.-Japan Security

Treaty in the face of unprecedented popular opposition -- an estimated sixteen million Japanese engaged in protests -- and the resultant fall of the Kishi government, it was followed by an “outcome phase” that lasted from 1960 through the late 1970s. What distinguished this period from the previous one was the effort of successive LDP governments to turn their focus away from direct Constitutional revision and toward other goals, such as economic development. This did not mean, however, that revisionists gave up on their goal of undoing postwar political arrangements. Rather than focusing their efforts on the revision of political institutions, though, they aimed their efforts at Japanese historical memory and identity, especially through their consolidation of control over public school textbooks and their attempt to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead as a state institution. Here I ask what these efforts indicated about revisionists’ notions of Japanese identity and the nature of the political community. The current of democratic antimilitarism still ran through Japanese civil society during this time, and with popular dissent centered on the U.S. war on Vietnam and the consequences of the U.S.-Japan security framework, LDP governments in the 1970s attempted to signal their commitment to the limited re-interpretation of Article 9 that they had succeeded in establishing during the reactive sequence.

### *Structural Persistence*

As I demonstrated in chapter three, by 1949 Japan’s political institutions

had been re-founded and the public widely accepted a new political identity centered on citizen sovereignty, antimilitarism, and human rights. The early years of the Occupation also provided an opening for civil society groups to form. Among the most influential of these groups in the postwar years were labor unions, and they became a major force in the political struggles of the first reactive phase of the postwar period. Granted the right to organize in the workplace, practice collective bargaining, and strike, Japanese workers quickly formed new labor unions to take the place of those controlled by the state during the war years, and by mid-1948 more than half of nonagricultural workers were unionized.<sup>2</sup> The growth of the union movement occurred along with the rapid increase in membership in the Socialist and Communist parties, and linkages formed between the parties and labor.<sup>3</sup> In addition, organized labor and the emerging peace movement established an alliance. In 1949, for example, Japan's first major peace gathering was held in Tokyo. Drawing 1,200 participants including a contingent of union members, those gathered issued several statements that "called on the public to oppose fascism, warmongers and a military alliance with the U.S., and promote pacifist culture, education and peacetime industry."<sup>4</sup>

During the period of structural persistence, which I argue lasted from the

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<sup>2</sup> "By the end of 1945, unions claimed some 380,000 members. A month later, over one million workers had been added to this number. The number of organized workers rose to around 5.6 million by the end of 1946 and peaked at some 6.7 million..." John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 256-57.

<sup>3</sup> In less than a year after Japan's defeat, the resurgent and legally established Communist Party had cultivated relationships with over two-thirds of organized labor. *Ibid.*, 256.

end of the 1940s through the termination of the Allied Occupation in 1952, official advocacy of constitutional revision remained *verboden*, but the onset of the Cold War did lead to a reactionary shift in Occupation policy - a shift that set the stage for the reactive sequence that would follow with Japan's return to sovereignty. This shift or "reverse course" triggered by the opening of the Cold War played out in Occupation policy as a move away from promoting democracy and antimilitarism and toward establishing Japan as a reliable anti-communist ally. This change of course involved the conservative revision of labor laws, a sweeping "red purge" aimed at civil society and the state, and marketization of the Japanese economy along liberal rather than social lines.

One important consequence of the revised labor laws was the revocation of teachers' rights to strike, bargain collectively, and participate in any political activities other than voting. Restrictions on these rights, suggested by MacArthur and implemented by Prime Minister Ashida, were aimed at undermining the strength of leftists and at creating a teaching profession compliant with centralized Ministry of Education authority. The move greatly antagonized the major teachers unions, especially the JTU which represented the majority of teachers and supported the Socialists in the Diet. Because the early postwar years were a time of economic depression for Japan, the teachers had relied on their new labor rights to organize for better wages. In addition, they had strongly endorsed the Occupation's original, democratic goals of decentralization and

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<sup>4</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-war Japan: The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Routledge, 2004), 40.

increased school autonomy, identifying them as safeguards against a return to authoritarianism and militarism.

Some teachers were, indeed, conduits for leftist politics in the classroom, but there was also a prominent movement among teachers to incorporate peace education into the curriculum - “the first educational reform after World War II, in which political parties were not involved.”<sup>5</sup> Teachers used peace education to teach students about both the new rights granted to them by the Constitution and the constitutional limitations on the state, especially in regard to war-making. In addition, peace education helped to inculcate and re-enforce the values of the “new” Japanese polity.

Under cover of SCAP’s reorientation toward anti-communism, the Japanese government targeted these democratic and antimilitarist aims and simultaneously began calling for a return of key facets of the prewar education system, especially the resumption of centralized administrative control of schools and boards of education along with the reintroduction of moral education training (*shūshin*). The purpose of such maneuvers was to re-assert state hegemony over national education policy not only in terms of organizational authority but also in terms of the power to define postwar values and identity.

In addition to revision of labor laws, the marketization of the economy and the “red purge” aimed to create the conditions for a conservative hegemony over the economy, society, and politics. In 1949, the Occupation introduced the Dodge

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<sup>5</sup> Akira Yamaima, “Revision of the Fundamental Law of Education and Peace Education in Hiroshima Prefecture,” *Hiroshima Research News* 9, no. 2 (November 2006): 1.

Plan, a program designed by American banker Joseph Dodge to “rehabilitate” Japan financially. A precursor to the “structural readjustment” model of neo-liberal foreign intervention, the means of this rehabilitation included measures such as slashing public subsidies, “rationalizing” government employment (resulting in the dismissal of 258,543 public servants), and slashing social spending in the national budget (the government cut education spending from 8.1 percent to 6.3 percent in the first year).<sup>6</sup> The following year, 1950, the Occupation and government officials turned a blind eye toward businesses and industries that fired Communists and their sympathizers following the outbreak of the Korean War.<sup>7</sup>

Once war broke out on the Korean peninsula in June 1950, the Occupation and the Japanese government joined together in making the red purge official policy. Under MacArthur’s recommendation, the Japanese government purged 41 JCP leaders from public life (including 24 members of the Central committee) by the end of the month.<sup>8</sup> In addition to bans on JCP newspapers and publications, SCAP ordered the firing of 1,010 teachers, many of whom were prefectural and local leaders of the JTU.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, 6,000 teachers who had been purged for their support of the wartime regime in 1946 and 1947 were

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<sup>6</sup> Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan’s Militant Teachers*, 85-85.

<sup>7</sup> Communists and suspected fellow travelers were fired by private railways and banks as well as in such industries as press and radio, motion-picture, petroleum, shipbuilding, iron and steel, automobile, printing and publishing, chemical, electrical, food, and textiles. Rodger Swearingen and Paul Langer, *Red Flag in Japan: International Communism in Action 1919-1951* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 242.

<sup>8</sup> John K. Emmerson, “The Japanese Communist Party after Fifty Years”, *Asian Survey* 12, no. 7 (July 1972): 564-579.

<sup>9</sup> Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan’s Militant Teachers*, 91.

“depurged” and returned to teaching.<sup>10</sup> As a result of the purge, a total of 20,997 people lost their jobs in government and industry.<sup>11</sup> The JCP, targeted by the purge and under pressure from the Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) for having taken a gradualist approach to Japanese politics, initiated a guerrilla warfare strategy in 1950 and many of its remaining leaders disappeared into the countryside or abroad.<sup>12</sup> The result in terms of electoral politics was an immediate decline in the number of Communists in the Diet. After winning 35 seats in the January 1949 House of Representatives election, the JCP did not pick up double digit gains in either House again until December 1969, and in two elections during the early 1950s they failed to win any seats.<sup>13</sup>

The Yoshida government welcomed the reverse course and used it as an opportunity to launch plans “to recentralize the police, reassert [...] control of local government, and revive the efficiency of the *zaibatsu* [banking and industry conglomerates], which the Occupation now encouraged after abandoning earlier efforts to break them up.”<sup>14</sup> Despite these bold moves on the right under cover of the reverse course, there was no viable action taken by revisionists to push for direct changes to the Constitution. Such a move would have been particularly embarrassing to MacArthur and the U.S., and the numbers for a supermajority amendment vote were lacking in the Diet. Still, the reverse course provided

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>11</sup> Hans Baerwald, *The Purge of Japanese Leaders under the Occupation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 77.

<sup>12</sup> Rodger Swearingen and Paul Langer, *Red Flag in Japan*.

<sup>13</sup> In the October 1952 House of Representatives election and the April 1953 House of Councillors election the JCP failed to win any seats. Those were the only two elections (out of 45 elections held through 2009) in the postwar period in which they won no seats.

conservatives, almost all of whom would openly advocate for constitutional revision after the end of the Occupation, the chance to push for hegemony over education, the economy, and electoral politics.

The reverse course, then, began changing the balance of power between revisionists in the government who were biding their time for the return of Japanese sovereignty and with it the opportunity to revise the Constitution and the majority of the public who had embraced the Peace Constitution. While the reverse course changed the political opportunity structure for opposing forces vying to set a post-Occupation agenda, for the time being the Constitution, including Article 9, remained in a period of structural persistence. There were already hints, however, of revisionist momentum toward a push to scrap or change the Constitution.

In his New Year's message in 1950 MacArthur suggested for the first time that Japan should have the right to self-defense. SCAP further set the stage for the reactive sequence of the post-Occupation period by coupling the red purge with a simultaneous de-purge of 20,000 military men who SCAP had previously purged from public life.<sup>15</sup> These former officials, some of whom were accused war criminals, were released from prison and allowed to return to public life. In addition, just two weeks after North Korean troops attacked the South across the 38th Parallel, MacArthur ordered the Japanese government to establish a paramilitary National Police Reserve of 75,000 men and to increase the Maritime

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<sup>14</sup> Stephen S. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Shōwa Japan*, 155.

<sup>15</sup> Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan's Militant Teachers*, 101.

Safety Agency force by 8,000 men.<sup>16</sup> The Japanese government complied and proceeded to recruit 800 former imperial military officers who had just been de-purged to become officers in the new paramilitary forces.<sup>17</sup>

Former militarists who had been de-purged and rehabilitated along with some conservative lawmakers took the Korean War and the establishment of the paramilitary force as an opportunity to push for total rearmament. Some even requested that MacArthur send Japanese combat brigades to Korea. For example, Kodama Yoshio, a right-wing leader rehabilitated after serving three years in prison as an accused “Class A” war criminal, wrote a personal letter to MacArthur in July 1950 noting his expertise in warfare against other “orientals” and suggesting that arrangements be made for Japanese to fight under American command in Korea.<sup>18</sup> Koichi Seko, a member of the House of Representatives of the Diet, also wrote to MacArthur that month, warning him of the threat of communist insurgency in Japan, urging him to allow for the establishment of a one-million-strong Japanese “Volunteer Defense Force”, and reminding MacArthur of “the many Japanese who are thoroughly familiar with all things Korean, including the natural geographical features of this country and the manners and habits of its people”.<sup>19</sup> While SCAP did not oblige these requests, it did order over forty Japanese minesweepers to waters off Korea in 1950 in order

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<sup>16</sup> In suit filled against the government, Suzuki Shigesaburo, a leader of the JSP, called into question the constitutionality of the National Police Reserve since the paramilitary force could be construed as “war potential”. In 1952 the Supreme Court dismissed the case for lack of relevance.

<sup>17</sup> Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan's Militant Teachers*, 101.

<sup>18</sup> Rinjirō Sodei, *Dear General MacArthur*, 230-32.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 234-37.

to help protect U.S. combat forces.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the U.S. began procuring small arms, uniforms, military vehicles, and other supplies from Japanese companies that had supplied the Japanese Imperial Army just five years before. More than 30,000 workers from approximately 20 companies were involved in meeting U.S. demand in this regard.<sup>21</sup>

Despite moves by SCAP, government officials, and de-purged Japanese militarists to rearm Japan and possibly implicate it in the Korean War, labor unions and educators continued to argue against a return to militarism. The labor movement had been divided into groups sympathetic and antagonistic to the JCP in the late 1940s and somewhat demoralized by the red purge, but as Yamamoto notes, these conditions reminded ordinary workers of the very circumstances that had led to war in the 1930s and resulted in a “radicalization of their attitude” against remilitarization.<sup>22</sup> *Sōhyō*,<sup>23</sup> formed in July 1950 as Japan’s largest trade union federation and a key ally of the Socialist Party, grew in strength on the slogan “Four Peace Principles” (a peace treaty that would include both power blocs of the Cold War, neutrality as official foreign policy, opposition to rearmament, and opposition to U.S. military bases in Japan) and workers

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<sup>20</sup> “The Japanese minesweeping forces served extremely well in combat operations (two minesweepers were sunk and one Japanese sailor was killed and eight were injured).” James A. Auer, “Article 9: Renunciation of War”, in *Japanese Constitutional Law*, ed. Percy R. Luney, Jr., and Kazuyuki Takahashi (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1993), 79.

<sup>21</sup> Tsukasa Matsueda and George E. Moore, “Japan’s Shifting Attitudes toward the Military: Mitsuya Kenkyu and the Self-Defense Force,” *Asian Survey* 7, no. 9 (September 1967): 618.

<sup>22</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-war Japan*, 38-39.

<sup>23</sup> *Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Sōhyōgikai* (General Council of Trade Unions in Japan).

understood the Constitution as the basis of those principles.<sup>24</sup> In addition, teachers continued their programs of peace education, and in 1951 - during the war - the JTU held its annual national conference under the theme, "Never Send Pupils to War Again."<sup>25</sup> As the editor of a peace education book for children made clear that same year, "The aim [of peace education] is to produce pupils who will grow up to hate war and act in such a way as to prevent the repetition of the inhumanities of warfare."<sup>26</sup> The effectiveness of peace education was already becoming evident in the nascent college student movement.

A major feature of early postwar Japanese higher education was the rapid expansion of enrollment. In 1930 the number of students in Japanese colleges was 184,234, and in 1940 it stood at 247,563. The democratization of education following the war resulted in college enrollment figures that swelled to 405,310 students in 1950 and 709,878 by 1960.<sup>27</sup> According to Shimbori, this made Japanese colleges more representative of and sensitive to mass culture and the prevailing sentiments of the day.<sup>28</sup> One way those sentiments found expression in campus life was through student activism, and this was especially evident in activism related to the issues of democracy and antimilitarism.

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<sup>24</sup> D.C.S. Sisson, "The Pacifist Clause of the Japanese Constitution: Legal and Political Problems of Rearmament," *International Affairs* 37, no. 1 (January 1961): 50-51.

<sup>25</sup> Keiko Hirao, "Peace Education: A Search for Strategy," *Peace & Change* 12, no. 3-4 (1987): 60.

<sup>26</sup> Osada Arata, ed., *Genbaku no ko [Children of the A-Bomb]* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1951), 13; quoted in Keiko Hirao, "Peace Education: A Search for Strategy": 60.

<sup>27</sup> Michiya Shimbori, "Zengakuren: A Japanese Case Study of a Student Political Movement," *Sociology of Education* 37, no. 3 (Spring 1964): 232.

<sup>28</sup> Students in general were organized and there were several important national student organizations at the time, including the All-Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Associations (*Zengakuren*), the Union of Socialist Students (*Shagakudo*), the Union of Students

In September 1948, 250 student representatives from 145 universities across Japan joined in founding the All-Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Associations, known in its shortened Japanese form as *Zengakuren*.<sup>29</sup> The main organizing body of student activism from 1948 through the 1960s, *Zengakuren* had close ties with the parties of the left and was active in defending the values of democracy and antimilitarism that had taken root during the critical juncture described in the previous chapter.<sup>30</sup> *Zengakuren* initially formed in reaction to on-campus issues such as tuition hikes and increased administrative control over faculty employment, but it grew in size and influence through its opposition to the red purge, the perceived return of war-time authoritarianism, the Korean War, and the lead-up to the 1951 Peace Treaty and Security Treaty with the U.S.<sup>31</sup>

During the early years of the Occupation, MacArthur and others had often spoken of re-founding Japan as the “Switzerland of Asia” and many Japanese came to imagine Japan’s future role in world affairs under the Peace Constitution as an unarmed, neutral democracy. In addition to organized labor and the student movement, one of the main proponents of the idea of unarmed neutrality

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of Private Universities (*Shigakuren*), the Union of Communist Students (*Kyosando*), and the Federation of Student Governments (*Zenjiren*).

<sup>29</sup> The full name of which is *Zen-Nihon Gakusei Jichikai Sōrengō* (全日本学生自治会総連合).

<sup>30</sup> By 1950 two competing factions had formed within *Zengakuren*: the anti-American, anti-Stalinist, and anti-imperialist *Shuryu-ha* (“Shuryu Faction”) and the *Han Shuryu-ha* (“Anti-Shuryu Faction”) which promoted the idea of a “two-step revolution” or the notion that parliamentary socialism would eventually result in communism. Michiya Shimbori, “Comparison Between Pre- and Post-War Student Movements in Japan,” *Sociology of Education* 37, no. 1 (Autumn 1963): 59-70.

<sup>31</sup> Michiya Shimbori, “Zengakuren: A Japanese Case Study of a Student Political Movement,” *Sociology of Education* 37, no. 3 (Spring 1964): 229-253.

in Japanese society was the Peace Issues Discussion Group (*Heiwa Mondai Danwakai*). Formed by more than fifty intellectuals in 1948, the group issued a number of statements in the influential monthly magazine *Sekai* that set out the prospects for an independent Japan to coexist peacefully with both the Eastern and Western blocs while realizing the goals of the Peace Constitution - the right to live in peace and the renunciation of war and armaments. Hook has pointed out that the group's statements became "a focal point of post-war peace thought" and that they helped to establish the new, postwar Japanese identity in the face of the Cold War and the nuclear era.<sup>32</sup> The affinity between the Peace Issues Discussion Group's thought and organized labor is evident in *Sōhyō*'s "Four Peace Principles" mentioned above, and the main opposition Socialist Party advocated unarmed neutrality as well. The group's opposition to the signing of peace and security treaties with the Western powers alone also influenced opposition views toward the postwar settlement with the U.S. and Japan's destiny as a sovereign state.

Despite widespread popular hopes that an unarmed and neutral Japan could reach a peace settlement that would include all of its former enemies, including the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China, the U.S. and Japanese governments concluded the Occupation on terms that excluded the two rival powers and that incorporated Japan into America's cold war strategy in Asia, a process that began in material terms with the establishment of the

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<sup>32</sup> Glenn D. Hook, *Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 27.

National Police Reserve and the use of Japan as the main staging ground for the U.N.'s police action in the Korean War.

The Security Treaty signed by the U.S. and Japanese officials on 8 September 1951 established the framework by which the two countries would initially interpret Japan's status as a sovereign state and its relationship with the U.S. The treaty made explicit reference to Japan's "inherent right of individual and collective self-defense" and provided for the maintenance of U.S. "land, air, and sea forces in and about Japan" for the purposes of defending Japan against attacks from abroad as well from those that might originate within the country, especially "large-scale internal riots and disturbances". In addition, the treaty gave the U.S. veto power over any Japanese decision to "grant ... any bases or any rights, power, or authority whatsoever, in or relating to bases or the right of garrison or of maneuver, or transit of ground, air, or naval forces of any third Power."<sup>33</sup> It was this agreement along with the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed the same day and which included the mandate for U.S. trusteeship over Okinawa and the other Ryūkyū Islands that established a U.S. military presence that continues to this day.<sup>34</sup>

Civil society groups opposed the settlement and labeled it a "partial peace"

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<sup>33</sup> Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan (8 September 1951).

<sup>34</sup> Under the extended occupation of Okinawa, which lasted until 1972, residents there were essentially stateless people since neither the U.S. nor Japan governments issued them passports. Once the plans for an extended occupation were public knowledge, Okinawans organized the Okinawa Reversion to Japan Association, collecting 200,000 signatures in 1951 for their cause. McCormack has pointed out that the continuation of U.S. control over Okinawa following the 1951 Security Treaty effectively divided Japan into a demilitarized mainland "peace state" and a U.S.-controlled Okinawan "war state", a division he argues remains today. Gavan McCormack, *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace* (London: Verso, 2007).

since the Soviet Union and China were excluded from negotiations and since the government had ignored popular calls for unarmed neutrality. Unionists overwhelmingly opposed the terms of the treaties, and the JTU was especially vocal in its opposition. It had advocated a settlement of the Occupation in accordance with the position of the Peace Problems Discussion Group and *Sōhyō*'s "Four Peace Principles". Allied with the JTU in opposition to the treaties were the Socialists in the Diet, the student movement and, a growing number of peace and women's organizations; the Women's Democratic Club even took up a slogan to mirror the JTU's: "Let's not send our husbands and children to war!"<sup>35</sup>

Prime Minister Yoshida's conservative government ignored the public protests against the Peace and Security Treaties, arguing that the settlement of the Occupation along the agreed upon terms was necessary as a hedge against the threat of international communism. Furthermore, Yoshida himself believed that the onset of the Cold War had delayed the peace negotiations long enough to strengthen the government's hand *vis-à-vis* the U.S. and against public opposition to rearmament. Evidence of this strengthened position was his interpretation just before the official termination of the Occupation in 1952 that "Article 9 prohibits war potential as a means of settling international disputes, but it does not prohibit it as a means of self-defense."<sup>36</sup> The U.S., though it did not agree to a *quid pro quo* of guaranteed defense in exchange for the right to

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<sup>35</sup> Franziska Seraphim, *War Memory and Social Politics in Japan, 1945-2005* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 104.

<sup>36</sup> Yoshida Shigeru speaking before the House of Councillors, quoted in: Yoshihisa Hara, "The Significance of the U.S.-Japan Security System to Japan: The Historical Background," *Peace & Change* 12, no. 3 (1987): 34.

maintain military bases, recognized Japan's right to self-defense and through the treaty required that Japan would "increasingly assume responsibility" toward carrying out that right. As the Occupation came to an end in 1952, the U.S. advised Japan to create a standing army of 350,000 men, a larger force than had been maintained at the time of the Manchurian Incident.<sup>37</sup>

The Occupation of Japan was riddled with contradictions. Occupation officials had acted as an exogenous influence in the constitutional re-founding of Japan, but they also secretly infiltrated the leading political organizations, seeking to monitor and undermine *not* the work of militarists from the pre-surrender regime *but* the work of those it deemed to be taking grassroots democracy and antimilitarism too far.<sup>38</sup> Occupation officials had initially purged the top militarists of the imperial era and tried some of them for war crimes, but there had been fewer sanctions for the arch-conservative political and business leaders who were an integral part of the Japanese empire and who, even before the end of the Occupation, regained a foothold in governance, particularly through the opportunities provided by the Dodge Plan, the red purge, and the Korean War. Of course, these events also led to the rehabilitation of military officials as noted above.

When it came to revising the Constitution and codifying its clauses, Eccleson points out, "the Occupation 'committed flagrant violations of normal

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<sup>37</sup> Andrew Gordon, ed., *Postwar Japan as History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 8.

<sup>38</sup> John Roberts, *Mitsui: Three Centuries of Japanese Business* (New York: Weatherhill, 1973), 458.

democratic procedure' in a wide range of areas from direct intervention in Japanese politics through a reinterpretation of labour rights to a revival of educational control."<sup>39</sup> The postwar political foundation that the Allied Occupation set, therefore, was wrought with contradictions. On one hand, the new political institutions codified citizen sovereignty, fundamental human rights, and antimilitarism. On the other hand, the methods of their implementation were often less than democratic and the actions of the Occupation once it began the reverse course were inimical to the very values that the new Constitution enshrined.

Rehabilitated during the phase of structural persistence, the end of the U.S. Occupation in the spring of 1952 finally opened the flood gates for conservatives who advocated constitutional revision, and thus began the reactive sequence against Japan's fundamental law and the sentiments of the majority of the public. Although the period from 1949-1952 was characterized by Occupation and Japanese government actions that undermined democracy and antimilitarism, revision of the Constitution was never a serious possibility. As mentioned above, such moves on the Japanese side would not only have embarrassed the U.S., they would also have been impossible given the inability of revisionists to marshal the necessary votes in the Diet and among the public in the national referendum that would have been constitutionally required. What the period of structural persistence did result in, however, was the setting of the stage for the reactive sequence that would follow. By 1952, the major political and social

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<sup>39</sup> Bernard Eccleson, *State and Society in Post-War Japan* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 17. Embedded quotation from: Ray A. Moore, "Reflections in the Occupation of Japan," *Journal of*

actors and organizations that would engage in the most severe political contestation of the postwar period had come to the fore. On one side were the revisionists in the conservative parties that controlled the Diet, and on the other were the parties of the left, especially the left- and right-wing Socialist parties and the JCP, and organizations in civil society that valorized Article 9: the union and student movements along with a growing number of peace and women's groups.

### *The First Reactive Sequence 1952-1960*

One of the first actions that the Yoshida government took at the end of the Occupation was the introduction of the Subversive Activities Prevention Bill (*Hakai Katsudo Boshi Hōan*) in the Diet. Claiming that “organized groups with international connections” were carrying out “dangerous terroristic subversive activities” and “guerrilla warfare”, the government designed the bill so that it would have the power to “restrict the activities of or even to dissolve organizations” involved in activities deemed subversive.<sup>40</sup> The bill provoked fierce public opposition, and there were accusations that it echoed the repressive “peace preservation” laws of 1894 and 1925. All three of the major daily newspapers (*Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Mainichi*) openly opposed the bill as did 32 cultural and 30 academic organizations.<sup>41</sup> On 1 March 1952, just one month before the end of the Occupation, 70,000 people demonstrated against the bill in

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*Asian Studies* 38, no. 4 (1979).

<sup>40</sup> John M. Maki, “Japan’s Subversive Activities Prevention Law,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (September 1953): 489.

<sup>41</sup> John M. Maki, “Japan’s Subversive Activities Prevention Law”: 509.

Tokyo and another 30,000 demonstrated in Osaka.<sup>42</sup> On the first day of May, which became known as “Bloody May Day”, 20,000 unionists (many with JCP ties) demonstrated near the Imperial Palace and scuffled with 3,000 police officers. Police killed two of the protesters, further aggravating the opposition. Ignoring the public outrage against the bill, the Yoshida government pushed it through the Diet and it became law on 21 July 1952. Following passage of the bill, the government established the *Kidōtai*, an elite, anti-riot police force charged with targeting demonstrators.

At the same time that the Yoshida government began restoring policing powers to the state that it had not had since before 1945, the U.S. pushed the government to revitalize Japanese war-making potential. In October 1953, the Eisenhower administration insisted that the Yoshida government allocate 200 billion yen to defense spending the following year and 250 billion in 1955. In addition, the U.S. again called on Japan to increase the number of defense personnel to 350,000. Yoshida responded the following month by announcing that Japan would establish new Self-Defense Forces that would be “called an army” but that would fall within the limits of the Constitution since it would be “an army without war potential”.<sup>43</sup> The government knew, however, that such moves could provoke strong public opposition due to the effect that education had had on preserving the popular valorization of Article 9. As Ikeda Hayato, a special envoy of then Prime Minister Yoshida, told his U.S. counterpart that same year,

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*: 510.

“Peace education is so thorough in Japan that the feeling of ‘Do not bear arms’ is widespread and deep-rooted in the Japanese people.”<sup>44</sup> Revisionists knew that changing Japan’s political institutions would also require changing popular identification with democratic antimilitarism.

Once the Occupation came to an end, the government immediately began advancing rearmament through institutional change. The first step was the expansion of the National Police Reserve in 1952 to a force of 100,000 personnel renamed the National Safety Forces. The further re-organization of these forces, along with the coast guard and the addition of an air unit, resulted in the Ground, Maritime, and Air branches of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in 1954. According to the government, it founded the SDF for the purpose of defending Japan against direct and indirect attacks and in order to guarantee Japan’s peace and independence. In addition, the government emphasized the SDF’s utility for natural disaster relief. Finally, the SDF was to be a civilian organization and its members were sworn by oath to be apolitical.<sup>45</sup> Ever since it was established in 1954 its personnel and leadership have legally been civilians classified as special civil servants, and any offenses committed by them have been adjudicated under the civil courts.

Despite the government’s assurances of the limited nature of the SDF, its existence went against the opposition’s call for unarmed neutrality and, the

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<sup>43</sup> Yoshida Shigeru quoted in: Yoshihisa Hara, “The Significance of the U.S.-Japan Security System to Japan: The Historical Background”, 34.

<sup>44</sup> Yamaima Akira, “Revision of the Fundamental Law of Education and Peace Education in Hiroshima Prefecture”, 1.

opposition argued, violated Article 9 of the Constitution. The JSP and trade union movement challenged the constitutionality of the SDF and proceeded to launch an “anti-base struggle” meant to disrupt the government’s acquisition of land for SDF bases and to oppose the permanent American military bases in Japan. In many ways, the anti-base struggle reflected the public’s rapidly decreasing support for the presence of U.S. bases in Japan; from 1953 through 1958 the percentage of respondents in national public opinion polls that favored the presence of U.S. bases steadily decreased from 33 percent to 8 percent while the percentage that opposed them increased from 42 percent to 58 percent.<sup>45</sup>

One outcome of the anti-base struggle was a ruling by the Tokyo District Court in March 1959 that found seven Japanese protestors “not guilty” of felonious trespassing on an American military base. The “Sunakawa Case” bolstered opponents of re-militarization when the Tokyo District Court ruled that the seven, who had interfered with surveyors planning a runway extension, could not be found guilty since the trespassing law was being carried out in support of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty of 1951 which the Court ruled was in violation of Article 9 of the Constitution - effectively ruling that the continued U.S. military presence in Japan was unconstitutional. Two days after the Tokyo District Court released its ruling, U.S. Ambassador Douglas MacArthur II met with Foreign Minister Fujiyama Aiichiro to discuss the case and its implications for treaty

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<sup>45</sup> James H. Buck, “The Japanese Self-Defense Forces,” *Asian Survey* 17, no. 9 (September 1967): 597-613.

<sup>46</sup> Douglas H. Mendel, Jr., “Japanese Attitudes toward American Military Bases,” *Far Eastern Survey* 28, no. 9 (September 1959): 130.

revision. At that meeting, Fujiyama assured MacArthur that the government would continue to advance revision and that the government would consider appealing the ruling directly with the Supreme Court so as to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.<sup>47</sup> The government did, indeed, appeal directly to the high court, and in December of the same year it reversed the lower court's ruling and let the charges stand. The Supreme Court refrained, however, from ruling on the constitutionality of the Self-Defense Forces, thus perpetuating the debate over whether or not their existence violated Article 9.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time that the Japanese government was altering political institutions in order to advance rearmament, the debate over constitutional revision was becoming a focal point of contestation both in political and civil society. In 1953 “fifty leaders of right-wing groups adopted a resolution for the outright scrapping of the Constitution” and the conservative Liberal and Progressive Parties formed committees aimed at revision.<sup>49</sup> The very names of parliamentary and non-parliamentary revisionist groups at the time indicated both the coordination between the government and revisionists in society and an implicit critique of the Constitution as a foreign artifact that the Occupation had forced on the Japanese: Diet Members League for Establishing an Independent Constitution (*Jishu-kempō kisei giin dōmei*), League for the Establishment of an Independent Constitution (*Jishu-kempō kisei dōmei*), and Youth League for the

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<sup>47</sup> “Records show Japan collaborated with U.S. to have base presence ruled Constitutional”, *Mainichi Shimbun*, (Tokyo), 9 April, 2010.

<sup>48</sup> John M. Maki, “The Japanese Constitutional Style,” in *The Constitution of Japan*, ed. Dan Fenno, 3-39.

Establishment of an Independent Constitution (*Jishu-kempō kisei seinen dōmei*). That same year anti-revisionists formed the Association for the Defense of the Peace Constitution (*Heiwa-kempō yōgo no kai*), and in the following year 135 democratic organizations established the National Federation for the Defense of the Constitution (*Kempō yōgo kokumin rengō*).<sup>50</sup>

After several years of contentious public debate on the Constitution, a 1955 *Mainichi shimbun* poll found that fewer than half of respondents (44.7 percent) “favor[ed] revision of the Constitution,” and of those only 18.4 percent reported that their reason for favoring revision was “for rearmament”. Fewer still (4.5 percent) reported that they were in favor of revision “because it was imposed by U.S.A.”<sup>51</sup> Clearly, even among citizens who were open to revision, those who wanted to revise the Constitution for the purpose of re-armament were a small minority, a strong indication that the public widely accepted antimilitarism. Furthermore, the fact that so few thought that the Constitution should be revised because of a belief that it was imposed by the U.S. indicated that the revisionists’ rhetorical strategy of drafting an “independent Constitution” failed to resonate with the public.

The formation of the “1955 system” of Japanese electoral politics that lasted practically uninterrupted until 2009 was a result of this constitutional debate.

While it is true that the formation of the unified Japan Socialist Party in 1955

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<sup>49</sup> Haruhiro Fukui, “Twenty Years of Revisionism,” in *The Constitution of Japan, Its First Twenty Years, 1947-1967*, ed. Dan Fenno Henderson, 48.

<sup>50</sup> Haruhiro Fukui, “Twenty Years of Revisionism,” 49-50.

precipitated the merger of the Liberal and Democratic Parties (the Democratic Party resulted from the previous year's merger of Progressives and a faction of anti-Yoshida Liberals), according to Fukui their union "represented the culmination of the revisionist upsurge".<sup>52</sup> Total constitutional revision was one of the LDP's six policy objectives, and one of the most ardent proponents of the merger of conservative forces, Bukichi Miki, said in a public statement that "the merger was conceived primarily as a means to achieve constitutional revision."<sup>53</sup> When the JSP won more than one-third of the House of Councillors seats in 1956 and the LDP won less than half, however, revisionists' plans for initiating the amendment process in the Diet were immediately stymied. Their inability to garner both the necessary votes in the Diet *and* the support of the public continues to this day.

With the possibility of revision blocked in the Diet, the LDP government took action to "produce a climate of opinion more favorable to revision".<sup>54</sup> Toward that end, in June 1956 the conservatives in the Diet passed Law No. 140 establishing a committee of Cabinet status known as the Commission on the Constitution (*Kempō Chōsakai*). The government invited the JSP to participate in the commission when it began functioning in July 1957, but the Socialists refused to cooperate and instead began working to expand the national movement against

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<sup>51</sup> *Mainichi Shimbun*, 4-6 February 1955: Allan B. Cole and Naomichi Nakanishi, eds. *Japanese Opinion Polls with Socio-Political Significance 1947-1957 Vol. 1: Political Support and Preference* (Medford, MA: The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 1959), 462-464.

<sup>52</sup> Haruhiro Fukui, "Twenty Years of Revisionism," 49.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> D.C.S. Sisson, "The Pacifist Clause of the Japanese Constitution: Legal and Political Problems of Rearmament", 54.

revision.<sup>55</sup> In addition, the National Federation for the Defense of the Constitution protested the inauguration of the commission and released a declaration stating that it was “regrettable in the extreme that the government, which bears the responsibility for the defense of the Constitution, had established the commission in spite of the opposition of a majority of the people.”<sup>56</sup> The JCP offered a similar critique arguing that the Commission went against Article 96 of the Constitution, which put the matter of amendment before the Diet - *not* the Cabinet.<sup>57</sup>

With the refusal of the JSP to participate, the composition of the commission included eighteen LDP Diet members, nineteen “persons of learning and experience”, and two members of the Green Breeze Society (Ryokufūkai), a minor party in the Diet at the time. The majority of the commissioners were public advocates of revision, but after holding public hearings across the country for seven years, the commission’s final report made no specific recommendations for revision.<sup>58</sup> No doubt public opposition to revision was a key reason for this. In its final report, the commission noted that in its seven years of holding central and regional public hearings, 85.7 percent of witnesses chose to address the topic of “right to self-defense and the Self-Defense Forces”, more than any other topic. The second most popular topic, mentioned by 67.3 percent of witnesses

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<sup>55</sup> John M. Maki, *Japan’s Commission on the Constitution: The Final Report* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1980), 23.

<sup>56</sup> John M. Maki, *Japan’s Commission on the Constitution*, 26.

<sup>57</sup> Robert E. Ward, “The Commission on the Constitution and Prospects for Constitutional Change in Japan,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 3 (May 1965): 401-429.

<sup>58</sup> Despite repeated invitations to participate in the commission’s work, the JSP refused. In addition, the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), which formed from a split from the JSP in 1959 and first won seats in the Diet in 1960, also turned down invitations to join in the commission’s work.

was “constitutional revision and the Constitution in general”, and the fifth most popular topic (38.8 percent) was “the relation between the renunciation of war and the structure of international peace.”<sup>59</sup> The commission concluded, however, that it did not deem the witnesses as representative of public opinion.

That conservative revisionists had established the SDF and the Commission on the Constitution was enough to mobilize political and social actors around defense of the Constitution, but more than anything else it was the political course charted by Kishi Nobusuke that accelerated the first reactive sequence of postwar Japanese politics to the point of unprecedented conflict between the government and society. The LDP selected Kishi as Prime Minister in 1957. A prewar admirer of the radical nationalist Kita Ikki, Kishi had served from 1936-1939 as the second highest civilian official in the Japanese puppet government in Manchuria and was a member in Tōjō’s Cabinet of October 1941 and a cosigner of the declaration of war against the U.S.<sup>60</sup> Charged as a Class A war criminal, Kishi served three and a half years in prison after Japan’s defeat but never went to trial and was de-purged in 1952. He quickly made his way back into politics where he openly favored elevating the emperor to Chief of State, increasing police powers, increasing pensions for wartime servicemen, revising the Constitution, and rearming Japan - even with nuclear weapons.<sup>61</sup>

Since the end of the occupation, successive Japanese governments had

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<sup>59</sup> John M. Maki, *Japan’s Commission on the Constitution*, 184.

<sup>60</sup> George R. Packard, II, *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), 48-49.

<sup>61</sup> George R. Packard, II, *Protest in Tokyo*, 52.

been planning for an eventual revision of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. By the late 1950s, there was an attitude of increased confidence among conservatives that Japan could succeed in revising the treaty on fairer terms. The Korean War spurred a period of economic growth that continued through the decade and gave the Japanese a new sense of prestige. In addition, the United Nations admitted Japan as a member in 1956 and relations between Japan and the Soviet Union normalized that same year. Trade relations with China had also begun to re-open. Kishi and the government took these achievements as propitious signs for a successful treaty renegotiation and sensed that these achievements had de-escalated public dissent. This was a serious miscalculation.

The electoral success of the unified JSP in 1956 was a boost to the opposition. In the House of Councillors election in July 1956, the JSP captured 39 percent of the seats, its largest share of the postwar period up until that time. In addition, the JCP, while only a minor party in the Diet, was rebounding from poor electoral results during their “guerrilla warfare” phase from 1952-1955.<sup>62</sup> Once they refocused on parliamentary politics in 1955, they began winning seats again. In terms of alliances with other social actors, there was a strong affinity between the opposition parties of the left and the student movement. A 1957 poll of Tokyo University students found that 50 percent of students supported the

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<sup>62</sup> The JCP failed to win any seats in the 1952 House of Representatives election and in the 1953 House of Councillors election.

JSP, 4 percent supported the JCP, and only 11 percent supported the LDP.<sup>63</sup>

Politically conscious students and the JTU had remained active throughout the decade because of their opposition to LDP policies like the elimination of democratic elections for local school boards, re-centralized control over textbooks and curriculum, a 1954 law banning political activities by school teachers, the introduction of an “efficiency rating system” for teachers, and the re-introduction of moral education (renamed “*dotoku*”) in 1958, a reminder of the prewar *shūshin* indoctrination system. In addition, by 1959 the student governments in 77% of the national universities held membership in *Zengakuren*.<sup>64</sup>

Knowing that a renegotiation of the security treaty was inevitable, the rising strength and influence of the parties of the left attracted the attention of the Eisenhower administration. In order to counteract the growing influence of the JSP and to re-orient Japanese society toward U.S. military objectives, the Central Intelligence Agency approved “four covert programs to influence the direction of Japanese political life” between 1958 and 1968.<sup>65</sup> The first action undertaken by the C.I.A. was covert financial assistance and electoral advice to LDP candidates before the May 1958 House of Representatives election because of concern “that potential electoral success by leftist political forces would strengthen Japanese

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<sup>63</sup> “No preference” was the response of 33 percent of students. Michiya Shimbori, “Zengakuren: A Japanese Case Study of a Student Political Movement”: 244.

<sup>64</sup> Michiya Shimbori, “Comparison Between Pre- and Post-War Student Movements in Japan”: 62.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. Department of State, Karen L. Gatz, ed., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIX, Part 2, Japan* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), 1.

neutralism and eventually pave the way to a leftist government in Japan.”<sup>66</sup> Then in 1959 the C.I.A. began covert payments to moderate members of the JSP to persuade them to split with the party. There is no public record of the JSP members who received payments, but in 1960 several members of the former Right-Wing Socialists broke away from the JSP and formed the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP).<sup>67</sup> The C.I.A. phased out its covert electoral interference in 1964, but its broader program of “propaganda and social action” targeting Japanese public opinion continued through the end of the Johnson administration.<sup>68</sup>

It is difficult to determine the effect that the C.I.A.’s efforts to undermine Japanese democracy had in terms of electoral outcomes. In the 1958 House of Representatives elections, the LDP lost ten seats despite the C.I.A.’s covert intervention. The JSP gained ten seats in the same election. Perhaps the LDP loss would have been greater without C.I.A. support. Looking at the entire duration of C.I.A. electoral interference (1958-1964), the JSP lost a total of twelve seats in the House of Councillors and twenty-two seats in the House of Representatives. Ironically, the JCP made a four-seat gain during the same period. Although the LDP gained nine seats in the 1960 House of Representatives election, it ended the period with a net loss of four seats in the House of Representatives and two in the House of Councillors. As Table One

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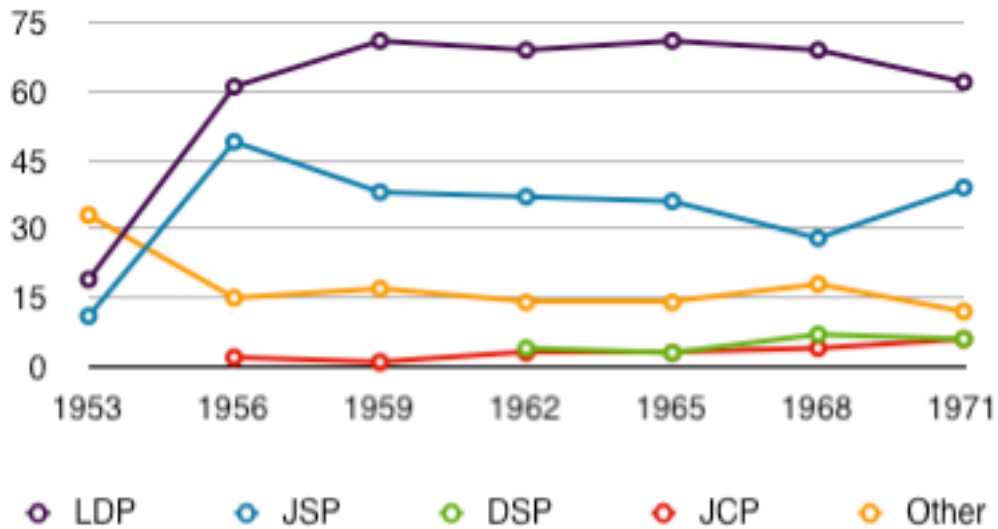
<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Minshu Shakaitō* (民主社会党)

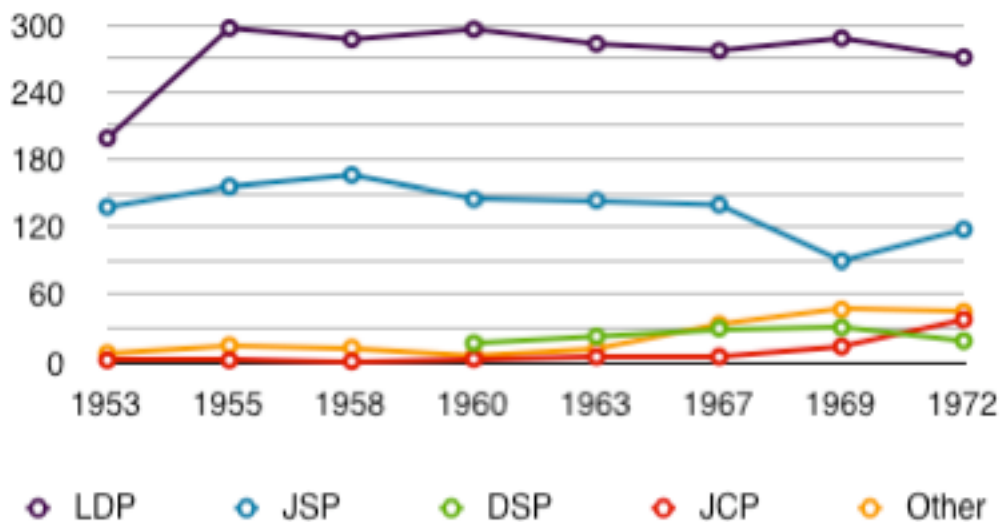
<sup>68</sup> U.S. Department of State, Karen L. Gatz, ed., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Vol. XXIX, Part 2, Japan*.

and Two show, the obvious beneficiary of the covert program was the new DSP, which gained four seats in the House of Councillors and twenty-three seats in the House of Representatives during the period of C.I.A. interference.

**Table One: House of Councillor Elections (1953-1971)**



**Table Two: House of Representative Elections (1953-1972)**



Despite the loss of ten seats by the LDP and the gain of ten seats by the JSP in the House of Representatives election of May 1958, the Kishi government introduced a new Police Duties Bill in the Diet later that year. Designed to expand police prerogatives, especially preventive interrogation, search, and arrest, the bill drew immediate opposition from the JSP and civil society groups. Knowing that the government would soon begin renegotiating the security treaty with the U.S., the parties of the left, the union movement, and civil society groups saw the Police Bill as a preemptive move to target opponents of the negotiations. While labor organizations and students took to the streets to strike and demonstrate against the bill, the JSP boycotted Diet sessions and eventually forced the LDP to shelve the bill. The quick mobilization of the opposition foreshadowed the opposition to the treaty negotiations that started the following year.

In preparation for the struggle against the U.S.-Japan treaty talks, in March 1959 the JSP and *Sōhyō* joined together with eleven other national organizations to form the People's Council for Preventing Revision of the Security Treaty (*Ampo Jōyaku Kaitei Soshi Kokumin Kaigi*).<sup>69</sup> The JSP prevented the JCP from joining as a national sponsor but permitted it observer status. *Zengakuren* also allied with the “Ampo” movement as did 134 other organizations.<sup>70</sup> The initial goals of the movement were to establish Japan as a neutral power and to oppose a continued alliance with the U.S., the stationing of U.S. troops on Japanese

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<sup>69</sup> *Sōhyō* was also well positioned to organize around the issue of treaty revision. In 1959 it had 3.7 million members or 51 percent of all organized labor. George R. Packard, II, *Protest in Tokyo*.

territory, and Japanese re-militarization.

Evidence of the effect of the *Ampo Tōsō* (anti-security treaty protests) on the public was the jump in support for neutralism as an official foreign policy. In a *Tokyo Shimbun* public opinion poll conducted in July 1959, the number of respondents who answered that the new treaty was “likely to involve Japan in war” (44.5 percent) was double the number who said that it would “guarantee Japan’s security” (21.5 percent). In addition, fewer than half said that Japan should protect its security by siding “with the free world” (45.3 percent) while more than a third agreed that Japan should a neutralist stance (36 percent).<sup>71</sup> A poll by the national *Yomiuri Shimbun* in September of 1959 found that 50 percent of respondents wanted Japan to follow a neutral course as opposed to 26 percent who wanted Japan to “side with the U.S. and free world”.<sup>72</sup>

As *Ampo Tōsō* developed, the participants increasingly emphasized the democratic nature of the movement and juxtaposed it against what they saw as an increasingly authoritarian government. As Sakamoto observed at the time, “for the first time, a large number of unorganized citizens voluntarily participated in politics” and “the process of transforming neutralism into a mass movement [became] the process of bringing democracy to the people.”<sup>73</sup> One indication that the movement was more democratic than the ones before it was the large number of women who joined in the struggle against treaty revision.

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 150

<sup>73</sup> Yoshikazu Sakamoto, “Neutralism and Democracy in Japan,” *Far Eastern Survey* 29, no. 10 (October 1960): 156.

Spurred to action by the U.S.'s hydrogen bomb test and the resultant Lucky Dragon #5 incident of 1954 in which a Japanese fishing boat and its crew were irradiated, housewives across Japan had several years of organizing experience, as evidenced by the 20 million signatures they had collected for the Suginami Ward Appeal to abolish nuclear weapons.<sup>74</sup> Although the Japanese government originally defended the U.S. nuclear test, the housewives' rapid mobilization resulted in a reversal by the state and both Houses of the Diet promptly passed unanimous resolutions calling for a ban on nuclear weapons.<sup>75</sup> Many of these women were active in civil society groups like *Gensuikyo* (the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs), one of the thirteen founding sponsors of the People's Council for Preventing Revision of the Security Treaty.<sup>76</sup>

Needless to say, when official planning began in 1959 for treaty renewal the following year, the government was unprepared for the popular outrage that formed. A growing and increasingly organized segment of the public joined in opposition to a continued alliance with the U.S., even on equal terms, and increased militarism at home. As Sasaki-Uemaru notes,

"From the spring of 1959 to the fall of 1960, an estimated sixteen million

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<sup>74</sup> In 1954 the U.S. government detonated its first hydrogen bomb at the Bikini Atoll in Operation Castle Bravo. Despite a warning that a shift in the wind had occurred that would blow the fallout beyond an area cleared of sea traffic, the commander in charge commenced with the detonation. The fallout irradiated the crew of the tuna fishing boat, Lucky Dragon #5 (*Daigo Fukuryū Maru*). The crew suffered severe radiation poisoning and one member died upon returning to the mainland. The incident sparked outrage among the Japanese, who dubbed it the "second Hiroshima", and it marked the beginning of the Japanese movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

<sup>75</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-War Japan*, 167.

<sup>76</sup> The full name of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in Japanese is *Gensuibaku Kinshi Shomei Undō Zenkoku Kyōgikai*.

Japanese engaged in protests against the Security Treaty. Over the course of the opposition, more than ten million people signed petitions against the treaty's renewal, some six million laborers engaged in sympathy strikes, and hundreds of thousands of citizens marched in the streets of Tokyo and other major cities around the country.<sup>77</sup>

To be sure, there were many disagreements within *Ampo Tōsō* about strategy, tactics, and even alliances, but the movement revealed the degree to which Japanese citizens still identified with the values of democracy and antimilitarism enshrined in the constitution. Made up of myriad groups advocating the preservation of Article 9 and the constitution, decentralized education reform, increased rights for organized labor, reduced police powers, and toppling the Kishi government, *Ampo Tōsō* demonstrated the extent to which the political culture remained transformed; the public accepted and embraced democracy and antimilitarism as integral elements of the political essence of Japan. If any more evidence of this were needed, surveys of the major trade unions' members at the time showed that 69-73 percent reported that they were opposed to treaty revision because they were opposed to war.<sup>78</sup> In the end, however, *Ampo Tōsō* failed to prevent a revision of the treaty and the Kishi and Eisenhower administrations codified a new security framework, one that put the two countries on a relatively more equal footing. The price of adopting the treaty, though, was quite high for the government. The movement forced the Kishi government to cancel a state visit by Eisenhower since he could not guarantee the safety of the U.S. President. In order to force the treaty revision through the Diet, Kishi

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<sup>77</sup> Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous*, 16.

ordered the police to remove opposition party members from the chambers just before the final vote on revision was cast. Less than a month after the treaty came into effect, Kishi resigned as Prime Minister as a result of the furore that arose over undemocratic maneuvers.

The success of the Kishi government in forcing through treaty revision in 1960 marked the end of the first reactive sequence in postwar Japanese politics. Although *Ampo Tōsō* failed to stop the government from perpetuating a close military relationship with the U.S., it demonstrated to revisionists that a sizable portion of Japanese citizens was willing to organize in defense of the ideals of the postwar Constitution, especially democratic antimilitarism. The very fact that mass public action took place *before* the treaty was negotiated and signed and *not* in reaction to it after-the-fact was a clear indication of the public commitment to democratic antimilitarism. LDP politicians, therefore, took *Ampo Tōsō* as a warning against continuing on the path toward constitutional revision. Ikeda Hayato, who replaced Kishi as Prime Minister, made this clear by assuring the public that the government would “not push the [sic] constitutional revision, even if we can obtain the two-thirds majority in both Houses.”<sup>79</sup> Reflecting this new, more cautious approach to the matter of revision, when the Commission on the the Constitution released its Final Report in 1964, it made no formal recommendations for constitutional revision, despite the fact that thirty-one Commissioners favored amendment of the Constitution and only seven opposed

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<sup>78</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-War Japan*, 102.

it.<sup>80</sup>

### *The Outcome of the First Reactive Sequence 1960-1980*

With the battle over treaty revision resolved as a *fait accompli*, Prime Minister Ikeda turned his attention toward preserving and accelerating the economic expansion that Japan had enjoyed throughout the 1950s. Many scholars have posited that Japan still has its war-renouncing Constitution because of a strategy, attributed to Yoshida Shigeru, of using constitutional antimilitarism as a hedge against increased expectations on the part of the U.S. that Japan fully re-arm. According to this hypothesis, Japanese governments have avoided increasing defense expenditures and instead focused on competitive economic development with the knowledge that the security treaty with the U.S. acts as a sufficient deterrent to potential foes. I will discuss this hypothesis in more detail in Chapter Six, but suffice it to say here that the lesson that Japanese revisionists learned from *Ampo Tōsō* was that explicit attempts to revise the Constitution or to take actions that might implicitly undermine Article 9 could result in high political costs and extreme national instability. Indeed, many on the left remember Kishi's forced resignation as the only time in Japanese history that the people overturned an authoritarian regime, and many on the right took it as a warning against misjudging the degree to which the people valorize

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<sup>79</sup> Ikeda quoted in Isao Sato, "Comment: Revisionism During the Forty Years of the Constitution of Japan," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 53, no. 1 (1990): 99.

<sup>80</sup> Robert E. Ward, "The Commission on the Constitution and Prospects for Constitutional Change in Japan": 408.

the postwar Constitution.

Looking for a way beyond the conflictual politics of the previous years, Ikeda announced plans to focus on doubling the income of Japanese workers and the GNP over ten years. Politically, he urged reconciliation, and his first Cabinet's public slogan was "tolerance and patience".<sup>81</sup> The government's turn away from the contentious issue of constitutional revision and toward the economy coincided with a re-orientation of *Sōhyō* to economic matters. Many of the opposition groups that had made up *Ampo Tōsō*, including the labor unions, had experienced deep divisions and even membership splits over the course of the movement. In addition, the population was changing as a generation with few or no memories of the war years entered a society that was becoming increasingly materialistic.<sup>82</sup>

In the "outcome phase" following the reactive sequence of 1952-1960, successive LDP governments avoided overt moves that the public might regard as intensifying the perceived threat to Article 9. Furthermore, internal splits deepened between LDP factions over revision and they became "unable to agree among themselves on either the general desirability of constitutional revision or the particular types of changes that should be attempted."<sup>83</sup> This did not mean, however, that revisionists within the party had given up on their goal of tapping into the memories of the prewar days, memories that they saw as synonymous

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<sup>81</sup> Bert Edström, *Japan's Evolving Foreign Policy Doctrine: From Yoshida to Miyazawa* (NY: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999), 46.

<sup>82</sup> Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-War Japan*, 101.

<sup>83</sup> Robert E. Ward, "The Commission on the Constitution and Prospects for Constitutional Change in Japan": 422.

with Japan's success in catching up with the West in the early twentieth century. Still, it was clear that legislative maneuvers that might be construed as authoritarian or militaristic were better avoided. One way revisionists continued pursuing their aims, however, was in the realm of culture: if the political culture was such that a critical number of people would not accept changes to Japan's political institutions, then the focus of revision had to be aimed at changing the political culture as a preparatory step to institutional change. This was a strategy of whipping the horse rather than the cart.

Two areas that came under target in revisionists' struggle to change Japan's postwar political culture were education and religion, and in both sites of contestation LDP revisionists targeted historical memory. In the early 1960s the JTU had focused much of its energy on legal battles that had started in the late 1950s over teachers' participation in strikes and other political activities. In 1965, however, the Ministry of Education drew JTU opposition by publishing an interim report titled *Image of an Ideal Man* that was meant as a study of the national education system and the ideal student-as-product that should result from compulsory schooling. What drew the JTU's ire was a passage in the report that read,

"The Emperor is the symbol of Japan. We have carried the flag, sung the anthem, and loved and revered the Emperor. We must remember that loving and revering our fatherland is identical to loving and revering the Emperor."<sup>84</sup>

The JTU opposed the report in general and the above passage in particular primarily because the notion of the “ideal man” imagined by the Ministry ran counter to the ideals of secular pluralism guaranteed by the Constitution. In other words, it ran counter to the narrative of “liberated history” established in the years immediately after the war. For those who had lived in the pre-surrender days, the veneration of the Emperor called for in the report evoked memories of the emperor-centric *kokutai* system, and the union promptly announced that “it was not a legitimate function of a democratic government to establish a mold into which all students should fit” and that it refused to carry out such a program in Japanese classrooms.<sup>85</sup>

A second move by the Ministry of Education that provoked the JTU was the re-establishment of strict government control of textbooks in general and history textbooks in particular. This move by the government was meant to consolidate their control over the content of Japan’s historiography and, therefore, historical memory. A system had been in place since the Occupation years by which textbook authors had to submit their books to a government screening board for approval but local school boards were able to make the final decision about what books to adopt. In 1963, the LDP changed this process by passing a bill that made textbooks free to all students but that banned local boards of education from having a say in which texts their schools would use. According to the new law, that authority now rested with county-level school boards and, as a result,

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<sup>84</sup> Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan’s Militant Teachers*, 177.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 177-78.

“teachers lost control of textbooks, and the process of monopolization of the textbook industry was complete.”<sup>86</sup> This monopolization of the textbook process meant that the conservative Ministry of Education had the upper hand in selecting all textbooks for the national public education system and could thereby ensure that textbook content, especially that of history textbooks, fit their narrative of historical memory.

The JTU had long opposed the centralized control of the textbook approval process, but the Ienaga case of 1965 further drove its opposition to the government’s education policy. In this case, Ienaga Saburō, a professor of Japanese history at the University of Education in Tokyo, sued the government when it repeatedly refused to approve the fifth edition of his text, the four previous editions of which had been approved and used in Japanese schools since 1947. In particular, the Ministry opposed Ienaga’s treatment of Japanese war crimes and his criticism of early Japanese myths that had been used to legitimate the *kokutai* ideology. The JTU immediately backed Ienaga and began organizing study groups around the country to focus on the Ienaga case in particular and the issue of government censorship of textbooks in general.<sup>87</sup> The case went to trial three times and was finally resolved in 1993 when the Supreme Court rejected Ienaga’s appeal of the two previous rulings - the Tokyo District Court’s ruling of 1974 and the Tokyo High Court’s ruling of 1986.<sup>88</sup> While Ienaga

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<sup>86</sup> Nozaki Yoshiko and Inokuchi Hiromitsu, “Japanese Education, Nationalism, and Ienaga Saburo’s Textbook Lawsuit”, in *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 105.

<sup>87</sup> Benjamin C. Duke, *Japan’s Militant Teachers*, 178.

<sup>88</sup> Noam Chomsky and others nominated Ienaga for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999 and 2001.

failed in his attempt to sue the government for censorship, his case drew attention to the issue of government textbook revision and kept it in the public eye for decades.

A third issue that highlights LDP governments' attempts to affect Japanese historical memory in the 1960s was the effort to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine as a state institution. During the Occupation, one of the cleanest breaks from the pre-surrender emperor system was the Constitutional separation of state and religion. Prior to 1945, the government considered *Shintō* a central aspect of the Japanese polity - not a religion. In her authoritative examination of the relationship between *Shintō* and the state, Hardacre has shown how *Shintō* shrines were used in the state-making process as sites of surveillance and also in the nation-making process as local sites of incorporation into the emperor-centric political community.<sup>89</sup> After the war, some revisionists continued to insist that "the shrines were not religious" and that they "should be the sites of public rituals designed to foster a sense of belonging to the nation state."<sup>90</sup> Toward this end, the LDP, backed by conservative civil society groups like the Japan War-Bereaved Association (*Nihon Izokukai*) and the Association of Shintō Shrines (*Jinja Honchō*) introduced a Yasukuni Shrine Bill (*Yasukuni Hōan*) in the Diet five times between 1969 and 1974. Passage would have re-established Yasukuni Shrine as a state-supported institution, but the legislative attempts failed in the face of strong public opposition. The opposition parties along with civil society

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<sup>89</sup> Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*.

groups like the Union of New Religious Organizations, which alone collected 3,277,405 petition signatures against the bill, mobilized a well-organized resistance.<sup>91</sup> Thwarted in the Diet, revisionist LDP lawmakers established the Society for Honoring the Glorious War Dead (*Eirei ni Kotaeru Kai*). In Chapter Five I examine the continuation and intensification of the Yasukuni Shrine dispute in the second reactive sequence of the postwar years from 1980 through 2009.

Although the government succeeded in consolidating its control of the textbook system, the popular reaction against the effort to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine indicated that the public was still vigilant about defending the Constitution and “liberated history” along with it. This vigilance was also reflected in activism more explicitly focused on military affairs. By the early 1960s, the Japanese public had generally come to accept a role for the Self-Defense Forces. A public opinion poll conducted in 1963, for example, indicated that 76 percent of respondents were “in favor” of maintaining the defense establishment, as compared to 58 percent in 1954 when the SDF was founded.<sup>92</sup> This did not mean, however, that the public would accept militarism in any form; of growing concern to the public was Japan’s role in the U.S. war on Vietnam and the matter of nuclear weapons.<sup>93</sup> Evidence of this vigilance was the reaction to the “Three

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<sup>90</sup> Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 210.

<sup>91</sup> Helen Hardacre, *Shinto and the State*, 146-147.

<sup>92</sup> Tsukasa Matsueda and George E. Moore, “Japan’s Shifting Attitudes toward the Military: Mitsuya Kenkyu and the Self-Defense Force”: 621.

<sup>93</sup> “According to public opinion survey results from 1965, when U.S. bombing in Vietnam commenced, until 1972, the percentage of Japanese interested in the war was never less than 60 percent, and the opinion that the United States was the country most at fault in the Vietnam issue was consistently strong. In the latter half of the 1960s, the majority of Japanese polled held that

Arrows Study” of 1965 and the sustained opposition during the late 1960s to the presence in Japanese territory of U.S. bases and nuclear-powered warships.

In February 1965, JSP lawmakers publicly revealed details of the SDF’s 1963 General Defense Plan of Operation, a secret study of defense contingency plans. Revelations about one section in particular, the “Three Arrows Study” (*Mitsuya Kenkyu*), brought accusations that “the Japanese military was planning a *coup d’état* and reestablishment of an authoritarian type of government.”<sup>94</sup>

Particularly explosive were details that called for the SDF to blockade the eastern coast of China and to support U.S. offensive action as a reserve force in Japan, Korea, and Manchuria if another “crisis” should break out on the Korean peninsula. In addition, the study made provisions for “total mobilization” of Japan in the event of such an emergency through the establishment of agencies that would “control and regulate industry, communications, transportation, information media and all economic activity, including the allocation of civilian and military material, and prices, banks and financial institutions.”<sup>95</sup> With the report revealed to the public by the JSP, opinion quickly turned against the government of Satō Eisaku (the younger brother of former Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke). Reacting to the public outrage and doubts over civilian control of the defense establishment, Prime Minister Satō placed a ban on such research that lasted for

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the U.S. forces were stationed on the Japanese mainland under the Japan-U.S. Security Pact in the interests of the U.S. and not for the sake of Japan.” Kazuto Kojima, “Public Opinion Trends in Japan,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (Summer 1977): 210.

<sup>94</sup> Tsukasa Matsueda and George E. Moore, “Japan’s Shifting Attitudes toward the Military: Mitsuya Kenkyu and the Self-Defense Force”: 614.

<sup>95</sup> *New York Times*, 21 February, 1965, 7.

over a dozen years.<sup>96</sup>

By the mid-1960s, Japan's role in the U.S. war on Vietnam was apparent to the public and there was increased criticism of the government. To ease the growing public outcry, in 1967 the government passed legislation restricting the export of armaments from Japan and Prime Minister Satō introduced the "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" (*hikaku sangensoku*) - that Japan would not produce or possess nuclear weapons and that it would not allow the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan. Because of the the U.S. war on Vietnam and revelations about the Three Arrows Study, however, the public remained sensitive to military matters. Evidence of their vigilance was the growing outrage over visits to Japan by U.S. nuclear-powered warships. In January 1968, there were demonstrations against the arrival of the aircraft carrier Enterprise in Sasebo Harbor. When the media reported in May of the same year that the Maritime Safety Administration had detected increased radioactivity in water and air samples in the vicinity of the atomic submarine Swordfish, public outrage only increased, and when the atomic submarine Plunger arrived in port in December it was met by thousands of protestors organized by the JSP and *Sōhyō*.

At the same time that people were organizing against port-of-call visits by U.S. nuclear-powered warships, the anti-base movement was also seeing increased activism, a reflection of public opinion against the continued presence of U.S. bases. In 1968, for example, only 14 percent of respondents to a national

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<sup>96</sup> Thomas U. Berger, "Alliance Politics and Japan's Postwar Culture of Antimilitarism," in *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin (NY:

poll replied that it was “good” to have American naval and air bases remain in Japan compared to 61 percent who replied that it was “bad”.<sup>97</sup> When a U.S. fighter plane stationed at the Itazuke airbase in Fukuoka crashed on the grounds of Kyushu University in June 1968, students demonstrated at the base and were soon joined by 24,000 people demonstrating at fifty-seven locations throughout the country.<sup>98</sup> In February 1969, 55,000 people demonstrated at the Kadena Base in Okinawa, which was still under U.S. trusteeship at the time.<sup>99</sup> Demonstrations continued throughout the year with 149,000 protestors at 318 locations demanding the unconditional return of Okinawa and the abolition of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty on the anniversary of its passage in April.<sup>100</sup>

Since revisionists in the LDP had temporarily given up on their desire to revise the Constitution with the end of the reactive sequence of 1952-1960, the public activism described above was focused on the implications of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, including the continued maintenance of U.S. bases on the mainland and Okinawa and the nature of Japan’s military posture within the alliance. The continuation of activism during this period was evidence that democratic antimilitarism was still a prominent feature of Japanese political culture two decades after Japan’s re-founding.

Despite continued activism around issues of peace and militarism there was also concern among those who valorized democratic antimilitarism that with the

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Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999), 196.

<sup>97</sup> 25 percent answered, “Don’t Know”. Douglas H. Mendel, Jr., “Japanese Views of the American Alliance in the Seventies,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (Winter 1971-1972): 530.

<sup>98</sup> *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 8 June, 1968.

<sup>99</sup> *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 5 February, 1969.

passage of time those born and raised after the war would find militarism less objectionable since they had no memories of life before and during the war. When a poll of Hiroshima elementary and junior high school students conducted in 1968 revealed that many of them did not know the exact time and date of the atomic bombing of the city twenty-three years earlier, there was popular concern that memories of the war and its horrors were being lost. The publication of the poll's results, however, sparked a peace education revival across the country and led to the foundation of a national organization of teachers who were *hibakusha* (direct victims of the atomic bombings).<sup>101</sup> The *hibakusha* teachers vowed to pass on their memories of the war in general and the atomic holocausts in particular. It was through this revival in peace education that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki came to the center of peace curricula beginning in the 1970s. Even today Hiroshima and Nagasaki are popular destinations for annual school trips, and films about the atomic bombing continue to be shown in schools and on the major television networks on the August anniversaries of the bombings. This is not to say, however, that peace education from the 1970s on only focused on the atomic bombings. As Hirao reports, by the 1980s the pedagogy of peace education was much broader and centered on learning about the inhumanities and agonies of warfare, recognizing the causes of war through scientific analysis, and inspiring antiwar practice in the students'

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<sup>100</sup> *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 29 April 1969.

<sup>101</sup> Keiko Hirao, "Peace Education: A Search for Strategy," *Peace & Change* 12, No. 3-4 (1987): 59-68.

own lives.<sup>102</sup>

As for contestation in the sphere of public education, the controversy over textbook and curriculum content mentioned above never fully abated, but the 1970s gave way to an immobilism that reflected the outcome of the first reactive phase in postwar politics. By the late 1960s, the Ministry of Education gradually came to have a prominent group of “internationalists” who were increasingly concerned with Japanese international competitiveness and with furthering the use of public education as a means of human resource development. In addition, the Japan Federation of Employers (*Nikkeiren*) pushed for industrial aims in education and a return to the multi-track, prewar model rather than the model of comprehensive education introduced during the Occupation, a position akin to more conservative members of the Ministry.<sup>103</sup> As Schoppa has argued, disagreements between the internationalist wing of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry’s more conservative members, outside interest groups like the Japan Federation of Employers, and the JSP and JTU resulted in a period of immobilist politics throughout the 1970s.<sup>104</sup> The nature of the debate also shifted to focus on kindergarten expansion, teacher reforms, the possible restructuring of the 6-3-3 system, and university reforms.<sup>105</sup> The JTU aimed its most vehement opposition at the last two proposed reforms, arguing that they were meant to “revive pre-war

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<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*: 62.

<sup>103</sup> Edward R. Beauchamp, “The Development of Japanese Educational Policy, 1945-1985,” *History of Education Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (Autumn 1987): 299-324.

<sup>104</sup> Keiko Hirao, “Peace Education: A Search for Strategy”.

<sup>105</sup> The 6-3-3 system refers to the structuring of public education into six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, and three years of high school instruction. The

governmental authority over education contrary to the Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education”.<sup>106</sup>

The 1970s also saw demobilization of university student activism. The last major episode of student activism to occur in the postwar period was at the end of the 1960s as Japanese university students protested Japan’s role in the U.S. war on Vietnam and the renewal of the U.S.-Japan security agreement. By 1966 Japanese industries were producing napalm, military vehicles and other armaments and supplies for U.S. forces in Vietnam, and in the first half of that year alone, U.S. military contracts with Japanese companies amounted to nearly \$50,000,000.”<sup>107</sup> Throughout the mid- to late 1960s the student movement had fragmented into factions and sub-factions, and by the end of the decade much of their energy was put into fighting each other, often in pitched battles with bamboo spears, hard hats, and batons fashioned out of pipe. There was still organized resistance, however, by students against the war on Vietnam, the U.S. refusal to return Okinawa, campus policies that they deemed authoritarian, and the renewal of the security treaty.

In 1968 there were disturbances at 131 of the country’s 845 universities and in June students took over Tokyo University where they successfully repelled police sieges for more than six months and won concessions from the university

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Occupation introduced the system and it was long opposed by conservatives who wanted a return to the prewar model.

<sup>106</sup> Leonard James Schoppa, *Education Reform in Japan: A Case of Immobilist Politics* (London: Routledge, 1993), 187.

<sup>107</sup> Tsukasa Matsueda and George E. Moore, “Japan’s Shifting Attitudes toward the Military: Mitsuya Kenkyu and the Self-Defense Force”, 617.

authorities.<sup>108</sup> It should be noted, though, that under Prime Minister Satō the Diet passed a Law for Emergency Measures of University Administration that granted the Ministry of Education and university presidents the authority to supersede the authority of the faculty and to suspend teaching and research functions.<sup>109</sup> The Satō government also intensified policing of student radicals. As compared to the 1959-1960 protests when 900,000 police officers faced 4.7 million students, in 1967-1970 there were 6.7 million police to confront Japan's 18.7 million students.<sup>110</sup> 29,000 of these police were part of the elite *Kidōtai*, which the government used to neutralize student riots, gather intelligence on student organizations, and conduct round-the-clock, covert surveillance of over one hundred key student activists.<sup>111</sup> As the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty came up for renewal in 1970, the tension between students and the police came to a head as universities again erupted in protests and students mobilized in protest.

On 23 June 1970, 750,000 people participated in nationwide demonstrations against security treaty renewal. There were notable changes, though, from ten years earlier. By the start of the 1970s there was less public sympathy for student activists than there had been during the 1950s because of their factional in-fighting and increased propensity toward violence. Only half as many unions participated in the 1970 protests as in 1960 and *Sōhyō* refused to endorse student protests the second time around. In addition, whereas the *Ampo*

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<sup>108</sup> George Paloczi-Horvath, *Youth Up in Arms* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 309.

<sup>109</sup> Edward R. Beauchamp, "The Development of Japanese Educational Policy, 1945-1985": 317.

<sup>110</sup> Peter Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 59.

*Tōsō* demonstrations had turned the conflict over treaty revision into a “crisis of democracy”, in 1970 there was less urgency as the government’s viability was never at stake.<sup>112</sup> The Satō administration helped to defuse opposition party dissent by renewing the treaty without revisions, thereby avoiding debate in the Diet. Finally, Prime Minister Satō had begun to signal changes in the government’s overall posture on military issues throughout the late 1960s.

As mentioned above, the activism that took place in response to the Three Arrows Study and the port-of-call visits by U.S. nuclear-powered warships resulted in Prime Minister Satō’s declaration of the three non-nuclear principles and the Diet’s restrictions on the export of armaments. At the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s, Satō took further steps to de-escalate the conflict between revisionists and democratic antimilitarists by negotiating the 1969 U.S.-Japan Okinawa Reversion Agreement, passing legislation that restricted Japan’s use of space to peaceful purposes, having Japan join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1970, and passing into law the three non-nuclear principles in the Diet.<sup>113</sup> Although many Japanese, and especially many residents of

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<sup>111</sup> Patricia G. Steinhoff, “Student Conflict,” in *Conflict in Japan*, ed. Ellis S. Krauss, Thomas P. Rohlen, and Patricia G. Steinhoff (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 175.

<sup>112</sup> Ellis S. Krauss, *Japanese Radicals Revisited: Student Protest in Postwar Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974), 1-3.

<sup>113</sup> The U.S. and Japanese governments undermined the first and third of these achievements even before they came into effect. According to a declassified Memorandum of Conversation, U.S. Ambassador Edwin Reischauer (1961-66) recognized the reversion of Okinawa as a “politically important symbol” for the LDP but made sure that U.S. military officers could effectively control the islands in case of military emergencies and that the U.S. could maintain nuclear weapons there. These provisions were adopted in a secret pact between the U.S. and Japan that was confirmed for the first time by the Japanese Foreign Ministry in 2009. In addition, the memo contained a “secret action plan” by which the U.S. covertly funneled money to the Okinawa LDP through the general party to ensure that conservatives would maintain a controlling interest in Okinawa politics. The purpose of these moves, according to the memo, was to place “Okinawa

Okinawa, saw the conditions related to Okinawa's reversion to Japanese territory as a betrayal, the government hoped to signal that Japan could assert itself as an equal partner in the U.S.-Japan security relationship.

If the Japanese public still had mixed feelings about the existence of the SDF and suspicion that it might serve as a vehicle for full remilitarization, some of that uneasiness was put to rest by conditions surrounding the ritual suicide of the celebrated author, poet, and playwright Mishima Yukio on 25 November 1970. Mishima joined the SDF in 1967 and soon founded the *Tatenokai* (Shield Society), his own private paramilitary group that practiced martial arts and was sworn to defend the Emperor. When he and four of his *Tatenokai* followers attempted to launch a *coup d'état* from the Tokyo headquarters of the SDF's Eastern Command, they were met with jeers and heckles from the SDF personnel. After standing on a balcony with a megaphone trying to convince his fellow SDF members to launch a *coup* as a way to revive Japan's lost spirit, Mishima reacted to their ridicule by returning to the adjoining room and disemboweling himself. Then in the tradition of *bushidō*, the ancient warrior ethic, his *Tatenokai* compatriots beheaded him with a samurai sword. One thing that Mishima's *coup* attempt demonstrated was that in 1970 SDF personnel were generally not receptive to appeals to revisionist narratives of the nation and appeals to historical memory along Mishima's lines. Mishima's *coup* attempt and

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outside the limitations of the Constitution.” In 1981, Reischauer confirmed that the U.S. continued to introduce nuclear weapons into Okinawa even after its reversion to Japan - with the tacit approval of the Japanese government. Steve Rabson, “‘Secret’ 1965 Memo Reveals Plans to Keep U.S. bases and Nuclear Weapons Options in Okinawa After Reversion,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 5-1-10, 1 February, 2010.

ritual suicide were shocking but also seen as anachronistic.

A far greater shock to the Japanese came with the surprise thaw in relations between the U.S. and China. Prime Minister Satō had followed the U.S. lead in building a strong alliance with Taiwan and had opposed China's admission to the United Nations, so when U.S. policy toward China changed unexpectedly, many Japanese wondered about the implications for Japan. In fact, Satō and then director general of the Defense Agency Nakasone Yasuhiro considered a major build-up of Japanese military potential, the possible acquisition of nuclear weapons, and a turn toward an autonomous defense posture (*jishuboei*), but according to Berger, they scrapped the plans because of the domestic and international political costs that Japan would have incurred by following such a radical break with the post-1960 consensus.<sup>114</sup> Instead, Satō began to perceive the waning pre-eminence of military power in world affairs and the rise of *kokusaika*, or internationalization.<sup>115</sup>

Satō's successor, Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei, was able to normalize Japan's relationship with China, but the onset of the oil shock in 1973 and the U.S.'s complete withdraw from Southeast Asia at mid-decade furthered Japanese officials' worries about the degree to which the U.S. could be relied upon to provide stability on the international scene in general and security in Asia and Japan in particular. Furthermore, Tanaka got caught in domestic and international scandals, the most well-known of which was the Lockheed bribery

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<sup>114</sup> Thomas U. Berger, "Alliance Politics and Japan's Postwar Culture of Antimilitarism," in *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin, 197.

scandal that broke in 1976 - two years after his resignation as prime minister. The economic downturn, shifting geopolitical interests, and domestic political turmoil led to changing fortunes for the LDP and in-fighting among its factions. Although the JSP was unable to capitalize on the LDP's disarray, minor parties in the Diet began gaining seats and the JCP reached postwar highs for seats won in both Houses by the end of the decade.<sup>116</sup>

While the LDP turned much of its attention to its own political misfortunes and factional politics, bureaucrats in the Defense Agency were concerned about shifting international relations and tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. In 1975, the Defense Agency recommended to Prime Minister Miki Takeo steps for improvement in the quality of the SDF and requested that the Cabinet more clearly spell out its use as a strictly defensive force. Sensitive to public opinion on the matter, Prime Minister Miki's Cabinet approved the request and introduced legislation passed by the Diet that enumerated three principles prohibiting the export of military weapons and related materials. In addition, Miki introduced the informal "one percent ceiling" rule on defense spending the same year.<sup>117</sup> The Defense Agency also developed a National Policy Defense Outline that ensured that Japan would not develop an autonomous defense posture and

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<sup>115</sup> Bert Edström, *Japan's Evolving Foreign Policy Doctrine*, 58.

<sup>116</sup> Although the LDP continued to win about 50 percent of seats in both Houses during the 1970s, their plurality in the Diet was, in part, due to malapportionment. In 1976, the Supreme Court ruled the apportionment system for the House of Representatives as unconstitutional. Following the ruling, the LDP added a few seats to the chamber, thus providing some additional representation to urban areas, but the Supreme Court ruled again in 1983 that there were still "distortions in the ratio of voters per parliamentary seat of as much as five to one", and in 1985, "the most overrepresented districts had six times the representatives of the most underrepresented districts" - always favoring the LDP. Louis D. Hayes, *Introduction to Japanese Politics*, 121.

that it would continue to maintain a minimal defensive capability with reliance on the U.S. security relationship. Berger points out that these developments were an indication that Japanese policymakers themselves were determined “to monitor and contain the Japanese armed forces.”<sup>118</sup> This cautious approach to military development can be attributed, at least in part, to policymakers’ sensitivity to popular opinion regarding the Constitutional ban on war and military potential. Additionally, Keddell has pointed out that the LDP benefited from the policy since it helped them in dealing with the opposition parties.<sup>119</sup> Clearly, the rejection of an autonomous defense posture in the 1970s and the commitment to minimal defensive capabilities showed that revisionists had lost much power since the reactive sequence ending in 1960.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have traced the structural persistence, reactive sequence, and outcome phases that followed the critical juncture of the immediate postwar years. During the period of structural persistence that lasted from 1949-1952, the institutional framework by which Japan renounced war and constitutionally pledged itself to reject the maintenance of war potential remained intact and there was no immediate threat of direct constitutional revision. This is not say,

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<sup>117</sup> The “one percent ceiling” refers to the limiting of Japanese military spending to one percent of Japan’s GNP.

<sup>118</sup> Thomas U. Berger, “Alliance Politics and Japan’s Postwar Culture of Antimilitarism,” 198.

<sup>119</sup> The LDP’s electoral vote share “had dropped from 57 percent of the vote and 296 seats in 1960 to 41.8 percent of the vote and 249 seats by 1976.” Joseph P. Keddell, Jr., *The Politics of Defense in Japan: Managing Internal and External Pressures* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 52-53.

however, that there were no serious challenges to the values of democracy and antimilitarism enshrined in the Constitution. Occupation officials responded to the outbreak of the Cold War by abandoning their initial project - the establishment of a peace-loving democracy - and turned instead to the co-optation of Japan as a reliable anti-communist ally. This meant pushing marketization, purging Communists in industry and government, and rehabilitating imperial era militarists. It was this phase that prepared the ground for the intense reactive sequence that followed from 1952-1960.

During the reactive sequence of the 1950s, revisionists used Japan's return to sovereignty as the opportunity to launch an attempted counter-reformation aimed at undoing postwar institutional arrangements. The goal of this reactionary project was to "settle accounts" with the Left and strategies included increasing police powers and legally restricting the political activities of teachers. It was also during this reactive sequence that revisionists focused squarely on altering Japan's political institutions. This resulted in the formation of the SDF, the founding of a unified conservative party that would work toward toward constitutional revision, the establishment of the Cabinet-level Commission on the Constitution, and the push for a re-negotiated security treaty with the U.S. at decade's end. These moves were met, however, with counter-reactions from the opposition in political and civil society. Beginning with organized resistance to increased police powers and culminating in the mobilization of millions of citizens for unarmed neutrality and against the U.S. Cold War military framework and re-

armament, the period demonstrated continued public identification with the core postwar values of democracy and antimilitarism.

The outcome of the reactive sequence from 1952 until 1960 was a period during which LDP governments attempted to resolve the intense conflict of the previous phase by abandoning attempts to directly alter the Constitution. With efforts to alter Japan's political institutions thwarted, revisionists aimed instead at affecting Japanese political culture. This was done by consolidating control over public school textbooks, especially history textbooks, and by legislative moves to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead. Furthermore, because of public opposition to any moves that could be interpreted as threatening to Article 9 and dissatisfaction with Japan's role in supporting the U.S. war on Vietnam, LDP governments tried to signal their commitment to the *status quo* established in 1960 by placing limits on military contingency planning, weapons exports, and military spending and legislatively banned the production, possess, or introduction of nuclear weapons. Finally, the government's decision to forgo an autonomous military posture, despite the intense uncertainties of the mid-1970s, further indicated the degree to which revisionist imperatives had been rejected in the face of continued popular valorization of democratic antimilitarism.

## **Chapter Five: A Second Reactive Sequence Begins**

In the previous chapter I traced the first reactive phase in postwar Japanese politics, a phase consisting of identifiable periods of structural persistence, reaction and counter-reaction, and finally an outcome in which LDP governments' turned their attention away from outright revision of the Constitution, made attempts to de-escalate conflict, and reached a policy consensus on maintaining as limited a military establishment as they deemed practicable. In this chapter I explain how and why conflict over Japan's postwar political institutions, collective identity, and historical memory re-emerged at the end of the 1970s and how the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Japan's "bubble economy" helped to intensify debates over Japanese democratic antimilitarism. I focus on how revision-minded state-level actors and their supporters in civil society responded to external and internal crises and what those responses indicated about the continuing debate over Japanese identity and historical memory.

In the first section of this chapter, I reconstruct the beginnings of the second reactive sequence in postwar politics by analyzing Japanese governments' efforts to advance remilitarization and reinterpretation of Article 9 during the last two decades of the twentieth century. After facing continued domestic vigilance against remilitarization in the 1960s and coming to consensus about a minimal military posture despite the economic and geopolitical uncertainty of the early 1970s, state-level actors in the late 1970s faced new domestic and international

challenges. Changes in LDP leadership that coincided with those challenges and domestic policies aimed at weakening organized labor, one of the key social groups involved in the anti-revision campaigns during the first twenty-five years of the postwar period, led to new opportunities for revisionists. Here I ask: How did revision-minded leaders in the LDP use the opportunities of the period to advance militarization beyond the minimal posture consensus of the mid-1970s and in doing so begin a new project of reinterpreting Article 9? And how, if at all, did public attitudes toward the Constitution and military change in response?

In the second section of the chapter I investigate revisionists' use of symbols central to the prewar, emperor-centric polity to affect a reinterpretation of historical memory and collective political identity. First, I focus on the controversy over Japanese prime ministers' visits to Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead during the period in question. What did their defense of visits to the shrine, despite popular opposition, indicate about the use of historical memory for revisionary purposes in the second reactive phase? And how did prime ministers use visits as a way to affect collective identity in their role as exemplar nationalists, especially given the shrine's significance as a monument to self-sacrifice for the nation? Second, I analyze the contestation over the government's re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies in Japanese public schools during the same period. What role did the re-introduction of compulsory ceremonies employing the *Hinomaru* flag and the anthem *Kimigayo* play in contestation over Japanese historical memory and collective identity? What did the state's

insistence on venerating the emperor-centric symbols reveal about the role of compliance with authority, and how did young people, especially, react to that revisionist program?

In concluding this chapter, I present a preliminary, cross-case analysis of the will to sacrifice. Employing data from the World Values Survey, I examine Japanese attitudes toward the willingness to fight and die for one's country against similar data from the U.S., Germany, and South Korea. Since its adoption as fundamental law, revisionists have been intent on revoking or amending Article 9 of the Constitution, a legally binding renunciation of war and prohibition on the maintenance of military potential. Although they failed in their campaign for outright constitutional revision during the first reactive sequence of 1952-1960, they succeeded in beginning a process of incremental reinterpretation of the constitution in order to justify *de facto* remilitarization. While this has resulted in institutional and policy changes such as the establishment of the SDF and the gradual expansion of its use - it is not clear that Japanese political culture has changed in such a way as to support further remilitarization, especially if further institutional changes require a public willing to fight and die for the country.

### *Remilitarization: Beyond the Minimal Military Posture*

In the previous chapter I explained that despite uncertainties spurred by the 1973 oil shock and the termination of the U.S. war against Vietnam by mid-decade, the Japanese government reached a consensus on rejecting an

autonomous military posture and the acquisition of nuclear weapons and on affirming a commitment to maintain only the minimum amount of military potential deemed practicable by the government within the limits of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. That the government settled on such a consensus despite economic crisis and geopolitical uncertainty reflected the final outcome of the first reactive sequence and followed earlier moves to de-escalate the conflict over the interpretation of constitutional antimilitarism. At the end of the 1970s, however, new exogenous circumstances and a changing LDP leadership provided revisionists with the opportunity to up-end the consensus on a minimal military posture.

The LDP had managed renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1970 by letting it renew without revisions, thereby avoiding contentious debate with opposition parties in the Diet and the kinds of mass public demonstrations that had occurred in 1959-1960. In 1978, however, the U.S. and Japan agreed on informal revision of the treaty through their Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation, a move that Hook argues initiated the resumption of overt re-militarization.<sup>1</sup> The guidelines spelled out the two countries' responsibilities in tactical planning, joint exercises, and logistical support and led to the resumption of regional contingency planning for the first time since the "Three Arrows Study" controversy of 1965.

When Prime Minister Miki Takeo resigned due to the LDP's poor showing in

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<sup>1</sup> Glenn D. Hook, "The Erosion of Anti-Militaristic Principles in Contemporary Japan," *Journal of Peace Research* 25, no. 4 (December 1988): 381-394.

December 1976 Lower House elections, the party elected arch-conservative Fukuda Takeo, a close associate of former Prime Minister Kishi, to replace him. Rhetorically, Fukuda was the first prime minister in the postwar period to revive the concept of Japan-as-Great-Power in policy speeches, and while he recognized increased internationalization in economic affairs, he also associated change with insecurity in his public speeches.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted, however, that Fukuda did not publicly call for further reinterpretation of Article 9 and even admonished the countries of the world to forego the use of “military power as a means of settling disputes,” echoing the first paragraph of the article.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of the 1970s, a sense of crisis and uncertainty was rising among Japanese leaders and their counterparts in the U.S. In 1978 the Soviet Union began increasing its military presence on the disputed Kurile Islands north of Japan, and the Soviets forged a military pact with the Vietnamese the same year. In 1979 China invaded Vietnam, and the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. In January 1980 U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown called on Japan to abandon its “1 percent limit” on military spending.<sup>4</sup> The following year, Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkō triggered a public uproar when he publicly referred to Japan’s relationship with the U.S. as an “alliance” - the first time a Japanese head of state had done so in the postwar period.<sup>5</sup> Under Suzuki’s leadership, the Cabinet

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<sup>2</sup> Bert Edström, *Japan’s Evolving Foreign Policy Doctrine*, 91 and 176.

<sup>3</sup> Fukuda Takeo quoted in *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>4</sup> *New York Times*, 14 January, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan’s Remilitarisation* (NY: The International Institute for Strategic Studies and Routledge, 2009), 24.

approved an increase of 7.75 percent in the military's budget appropriation, "the first boost in defense as a percentage of total budget since 1956."<sup>6</sup> Although the resultant increase in military spending did not exceed the 1 percent limit, it carried symbolic significance in a country where antimilitarist norms still prevailed.

Although the 1 percent limit was meant, in part, to prevent further domestic political conflict over Japanese re-militarization, the JSP criticized the cap. The reason the JSP opposed the limit was because linking military expenditures to GNP allowed for significant growth of the former with every increase in the latter. From 1975 through 1991, the annual increase in military spending averaged 8.6 percent and was never below 5.2 percent because of Japan's gains in GNP.<sup>7</sup> These inputs led to quantitative and qualitative increases for the Japanese military, though at this stage the government held to its self-imposed limitation against acquiring weapons that were primarily for offensive purposes.

Perhaps one reason LDP governments were hesitant to break the 1 percent limit was the persistence of antimilitarist views in public opinion. Several polls demonstrate the public's views on national defense, constitutional revision, and the maintenance of the SDF at the time:

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<sup>6</sup> Allen S. Whiting, "Prospects for Japanese Defense Policy," *Asian Survey*, 22, no. 11 (November 1982): 1136.

*Asahi Shimbun* (11/1/78)

“What is the most important means of national defense?”

42 percent	“Peace diplomacy”
20 percent	“Economic power”
15 percent	“Constitutional pacifism”
15 percent	“Patriotism”
2 percent	“U.S. Military aid”

*Asahi Shimbun* (1/1/1979)

“Japan should amend the Constitution.”

17 percent	“Yes”
73 percent	“No”
10 percent	“Don’t know”

*Yomiuri Shimbun* (9/25/81)

“The Constitution is helpful to Japan’s security.”

26.8 percent	“Yes”
41.4 percent	“Somewhat”
11.6 percent	“No”
20.2 percent	“No reply”

*Yomiuri Shimbun* (9/25/81)

“What should be done with the SDF?”

16.6 percent	“Strengthen”
56.9 percent	“Keep at present level”
13.3 percent	“Reduce”
4.1 percent	“Abolish”
9.1 percent	“No answer”

The first poll presented above shows that at the end of the 1970s the Japanese public held much faith in defending the country through non-military means; the percentage of the public choosing “Patriotism”, presumably a proxy for individual willingness to sacrifice for the country, and “U.S. Military aid” combined amounted to only 17 percent. While

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<sup>7</sup> Japan Defense Agency. *Defense of Japan 1992* (Tokyo: The Japan Times, 1993), 264.

“Constitutional pacifism” was only chosen by 15 percent of respondents, the non-military means of defending Japan that a strict adherence to Article 9 would necessitate (“Peace diplomacy” and “Economic power”, for example) amounted to 62 percent of responses.

As the second poll presented above indicates, the relatively low selection of “Constitutional pacifism” as “the most important means of national defense” (15 percent) in the first poll did not mean that the Japanese public was interested in altering the constitution; 73 percent of respondents opposed amending the constitution versus 17 percent who favored such a move. In addition, the two items from the 1981 *Yomiuri* poll listed above show that 68.2 percent of the public did, in fact, consider the constitution as *at least* somewhat helpful to Japan’s security versus 11.6 percent of respondents who responded that the constitution was not helpful to Japan’s security. Finally, only 16.6 percent of respondents wanted to “strengthen” the SDF versus 17.4 percent who wanted to “reduce” or “abolish” them. That a majority of respondents (56.9 percent) wanted to keep the SDF at its “present level” implied that the public had largely come to accept the government’s interpretation of Article 9 such that it could permit the maintenance of “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential” through a military establishment deemed “defensive”.

Taking the results of the polling data in whole, there was a clear incentive for LDP governments at the time to proceed cautiously on overt attempts to expand the capabilities and role of the SDF and to avoid attempts to amend the constitution. Furthermore, if revisionists thought that the passage of time and generations would eventually lead to attitudes more favorable to re-militarization, the results of a poll of university students in 1983 showed that young people continued to have a skeptical view; 90 percent opposed “all military service”, and 66 percent opposed the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty - more than two decades after its original passage.<sup>8</sup>

Public opinion favoring non-military means of defense and preservation of the constitution and opposing a reliance on patriotism and a strengthening of the SDF - along with a near-unanimous rejection of military service by university students - were obviously problems for revisionists. In particular, the strong opposition to amending the constitution made any overt calls for revision all but *verboten*. The prominence of antimilitarist sentiments among the Japanese public, however, did little to deter U.S. officials from continuing to push Japan toward increasing its military spending and expanding its military potential. In 1982, for example, U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger suggested to Japanese officials that if they did not “quickly and

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<sup>8</sup> Edwin P. Hoyt, *The Militarists: The Rise of Japanese Militarism Since WWII* (NY: Donald I. Fine, Inc., 1985), 104.

significantly increase [Japan's] defense capabilities" that Congress might retaliate through import restrictions or a draw-down of U.S. military forces in Japan.<sup>9</sup> In fact, Prime Minister Suzuki had already begun accelerating defense spending - from a 6.5 percent increase in 1980 to 7.6 percent in 1981 and 7.8 percent in 1982 - but the increases were discounted by the U.S. since they still fell under 1 percent of GNP.<sup>10</sup>

By 1984, the government began testing the waters on exceeding the 1 percent limit. This followed from intensifying pressure by U.S. officials but was also made possible by the shifting policy positions of the JSP and other opposition parties in the Diet. As the main opposition party, the Socialists had always held that the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was unconstitutional, but in 1984 they signaled growing acceptance of the SDF when party leader Ishibashi Masashi pronounced that the forces were "not illegal".<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the DSP and Komeitō (Clean Government Party) eased their opposition to LDP defense policy.

In the early 1980s, a new reactive sequence was beginning in Japanese politics, and the LDP leader who did the most to accelerate militarization and challenge the consensus reached in the early 1970s was Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro (1982 -1987). Nakasone, a former commissioned officer in the Japanese Imperial Navy, was an outspoken

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<sup>9</sup> "Weinberger specifically urged that Japan double its annual increase in military spending from the [then-]current rate of 4.6% to at least 10%." *New York Times*, 27 March 27 1982.

<sup>10</sup> Bert Edström, *Japan's Evolving Foreign Policy Doctrine*, 113.

nationalist and hard-liner on military issues, and he was also a long-time proponent of constitutional revision and advocate of education reform in line with conservative aims.

Nakasone, who was famously on a first name basis with U.S. President Ronald Reagan, committed Japan to a role in the U.S.'s Strategic Defense Initiative and abandoned Japan's prohibition on acquiring offensive-oriented weapons systems by acquiring F-15 fighter planes. As Hook argues, these decisions on the part of the Nakasone administration finally subsumed Japan within the U.S. global strategy and "physically integrated [the SDF] with U.S. forces in a system of American making."<sup>12</sup> Hook also notes that the Nakasone administration undermined Japan's three non-nuclear principles by allowing transit of U.S. nuclear weapons via Japanese territory, especially warships making port-of-call visits while armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles, and exempted the U.S. from Japan's self-imposed ban on defense-related technology exports.<sup>13</sup> Finally, Nakasone's 1987 budget, signaled the government's abandonment of the 1 percent limit.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ishibashi's statement on the SDF was something of a political balancing act. He claimed that while the SDF was not illegal, it was still unconstitutional - a position that drew criticism from the party's leftist stalwarts.

<sup>12</sup> Glenn Hook, "The Erosion of Anti-Militaristic Principles in Contemporary Japan", 393.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 388.

<sup>14</sup> The budget proposed military spending at 1.004 percent of GNP, a cautious increase over the 1 percent limit but symbolic nonetheless given the decade-long consensus on the matter. Spending stayed above 1 percent of GNP for three years in a row (1987, 1988, and 1989) before falling below the limit again. Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation*, 149.

In addition to Nakasone's program of increased militarization, he also promoted a renewed sense of Japanese nationalism. Rhetorically, Nakasone and other conservatives promoted the idea that Japan should become a "normal nation" (*futsū no kuni*), which primarily "meant liberating Japan from the abnormal restraints on its military imposed by Article Nine".<sup>15</sup> Also implied in the "normal nation" rhetoric was the longing for a political community in which the members explicitly exhibited "love of country" and a willingness to sacrifice for the nation if necessary. Revisionists' rhetorical foil to the imagined and longed-for "normal nation" was a public afflicted with *heiwa bokei*, or "peace-induced blurry thinking".<sup>16</sup> The narrative of an idealized "normal nation" as opposed to one in which people's minds had been dulled by peace implied that the public's continued insistence on and valorization of democratic antimilitarism was "abnormal" or "unnatural" and, therefore, in need of revision.<sup>17</sup> Coupled with the rhetorical tactic of invoking a "normal nation", Nakasone made a highly publicized visit to Yasukuni Shrine in 1984 and began education reforms that included the re-introduction of mandatory national flag and anthem ceremonies. I examine the significance of these

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<sup>15</sup> Kevin M. Doak, *A History of Nationalism in Modern Japan: Placing the People* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2007), 269.

<sup>16</sup> The word *bokei* is used in Japanese in reference to a range of mental states including blurred thinking, absent-mindedness, and even the loss of mental faculties associated with senility.

<sup>17</sup> The narrative construction of an opposition between what is "normal", "natural", or "inevitable" and that which is "abnormal", "unnatural", and "contingent" is a hallmark of hegemonic projects aimed at inducing compliance to authority through the relatively "low costs" of narrative world-construction as opposed to the relatively "high costs" of compliance through physical coercion.

two projects to debates over Japanese identity and historical memory in the section that follows.

Coupled with Nakasone's promotion of nationalism was a program of increased market liberalization. In education, Nakasone moved to weaken the JTU through reforms subordinating new teachers to non-unionized senior colleagues.<sup>18</sup> After the LDP's strong showing in the election of both Houses of the Diet in 1986 the attack on unionized public employees continued as Nakasone broke up and semi-privatized Japan National Railways. Both of these moves weakened the JSP since the party had long depended on the support of public employee unions.

Despite the LDP's consolidation of power through the mid-1980s, the party suffered serious electoral setbacks at the end of the decade as it was hit by popular opposition to a national consumption tax proposal and a bribery scandal that implicated over one hundred LDP lawmakers including Nakasone. After the "bubble economy" of the late 1980s collapsed in 1991, the party faced more serious challenges and lost its hold on parliament in 1993 when a coalition government that excluded the LDP came to power, the first interruption in LDP control of the Diet since the "1955 System" was established.

Despite the LDP's electoral setbacks, by 1990 the military consensus that had resulted as an outcome of the first reactive sequence had been up-ended as demonstrated above, and with the end of the Cold

War new opportunities presented themselves for conservatives who still wanted to revise the Constitution, if only through interpretation. Although the LDP still controlled the Diet when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, the first significant attempt to transform SDF responsibilities, and with them the interpretation of Article 9, failed when the Diet rejected the United Nations Peace Cooperation Bill of 1990. Proponents of the bill had argued that Article 51 of the United Nations Charter gives member states “the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense” and that, therefore, it was permissible for Japan to dispatch troops for “collective self-defense,” but the public demonstrated overwhelming skepticism of the constitutionality of the proposed legislation.<sup>19</sup> Midford has argued that the failure of the bill was “an important example of an LDP government retreating from a desired policy initiative in the face of a large and stable opposing opinion majority.”<sup>20</sup> Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki next proposed using non-armed dispatches of the Air Self-Defense Force to airlift refugees out of danger, but only 33 percent of the public supported such a move, and the government scrapped the proposal.<sup>21</sup> In the end, though, the opposition

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<sup>18</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History Since the Meiji Renovation*, 326.

<sup>19</sup> A poll conducted by NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corp.) in October 1990 found that only 9 percent of respondents thought that the proposed Diet legislation to send SDF forces overseas to help with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations was constitutional.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Midford, *Japanese Public Opinion and the War on Terrorism: Implications for Japan's Security Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2006), 15-16.

<sup>21</sup> Purrington cites an *Asahi Shimbun* survey from February 1991 showing 33 percent of respondents supported such an airlift while 55 percent opposed it. Courtney Purrington, “Tokyo's Policy Responses During the Gulf War,” *Asian Survey* 36, no. 8 (August 1996): 166.

was unable to prevent the government's involvement in the first U.S.-led war against Iraq.

When Western leaders settled for pressing Japan for a financial contribution to the campaign against Iraq, Kaifu found himself constrained by Finance Ministry resistance and further public opposition. Pressure from President George H. W. Bush ultimately broke the stalemate between the Cabinet and the MOF, resulting in a contribution of \$13 billion to the military campaign -- a financial contribution that ranked only behind the U.S., Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. In addition, the Japanese government sent six minesweepers to the Persian Gulf, the first overseas deployment of Japanese forces for reasons other than training since MacArthur deployed Japanese minesweepers during the Korean War in 1950.<sup>22</sup> Still, the government's response invited attacks by revisionist "hawks" within the LDP who thought that Kaifu had squandered an opportunity to set a bolder precedent for the use of the SDF overseas.

In countering the government's plans, opposition parties and civil society groups were not able to organize protests to match those that occurred in counter-reaction to government actions deemed authoritarian

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<sup>22</sup> According to Purrington, the Japanese government deployed the minesweepers to the Gulf in order "(1) to provide a symbolic gesture of human support for multinational effort and strengthen U.S.-Japan ties; (2) to break the deadlock within the country on nonfinancial contributions to world problems and serve as a precedent for future SDF dispatch abroad; and (3) to allow Japanese companies to be included in lucrative reconstruction projects in the Gulf Region." Courtney Purrington, "Tokyo's Policy Responses During the Gulf War," 171. For an analysis on the government's decision to deploy minesweepers, see: Peter J. Woolley, "Japan's 1991 Minesweeping Decision: An Organizational Response," *Asian Survey*, 36, no. 8 (August 1996): 804-817.

or militarist in the 1950s and 1960s. Still, Sims notes that the government's actions drew strong criticism from a public that still retained "substantial" valorization of constitutional antimilitarism.<sup>23</sup> That those sentiments still had purchase with young people was demonstrated in 1991 when students roundly booed U.N. Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali's suggestion that Japan amend Article 9 during an appearance at a Japanese university.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, 1,067 Japanese citizens brought suit against the government in Tokyo District Court claiming "that the government had damaged their right to peace, as guaranteed by Article 9 and the Preamble to the Constitution" by participating in the Gulf War and claiming damages "to their right as taxpayers (various constitutional provisions require that tax dollars be spent for constitutional purposes)," but the court dismissed the claims.<sup>25</sup>

In 1992 the LDP government under Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi (1991-1993) made a second attempt to expand the scope of SDF responsibilities

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<sup>23</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History Since the Meiji Renovation*, 333.

<sup>24</sup> Matthew J. Gilley, "Japan's Developing Military Potential within the Context of its Constitutional Renunciation of War," *Emory International Law Review*, 14 (Fall 2000): 1681-1718.

<sup>25</sup> The Court's ruling included the following opinion, "[I]t is clear that permanent pacifism is one of the most basic and important ideas in Japan's postwar Constitution, that the fundamental human rights of the Japanese people cannot be guaranteed unless they have a peaceful existence, and that the Constitution declares the right to peaceful existence among all the nations of the world and desires that the right be realized. These peaceful ideals do not, however, give individuals 'concrete rights or legal interests' that can be damaged and remedied in a tort action. The Preamble and Article 9, as discussed by the court, may give a right to peace at some level, but the Constitution does not describe the right with the proper level of specificity or detail. Therefore, it lacks 'concreteness'--while the courts can identify that every person has the right to a peaceful existence, the right is not so specific that it can be tortiously damaged. This conclusion is consistent with the Japanese history of positivism: when confronted with an ambiguous right or provision, the Japanese courts are not willing to infer their contents. Instead, they prefer to deflect

through the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations bill (the PKO bill). The bill passed after amendment and established a limited, three-year window during which units of up to 2,000 persons, including SDF personnel, civilian police, and election observers, could be dispatched so long as they were not in areas where combat was likely. The fact that the bill limited Japan's participation in UN peacekeeping operations to humanitarian, non-combat roles was a result of both the difficulty lawmakers had squaring the bill with Article 9 and the fact that public opinion opposed such measures. A June 1992 *Yomiuri* poll, for example, showed that a majority (52 percent) opposed PKO legislation and 44.1 percent supported it.<sup>26</sup>

The successful passage of PKO legislation opened the way for Japan to participate in a number of UN peacekeeping operations in the mid-1990s, but the public remained cautious about the expanded role of the SDF. Prior to the departure of the first dispatch under PKO provisions, an *Asahi Shimbun* poll showed that the approval to disapproval rates for the dispatch were 52 percent to 36 percent, but a large majority (71 percent to 20 percent) agreed that "Japanese international contributions should be limited to nonmilitary matters."<sup>27</sup> This demonstrated the public's continued support for Article 9's prohibition against "the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes."

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these questions into the political arena and seek a specific grant or enumeration from a legislative body." Quoted in *Ibid.*, 1713.

<sup>26</sup> Rinn-Sup Shinn, "Japanese Participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 24 August 1992. (<http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-24:1>) Viewed 14 March 2009.

As the government continued to implement the law through repeated dispatches, public acceptance of such missions markedly increased and opposition decreased. After passage of the bill in 1992, a dispatch of SDF troops and civilian personnel arrived in Cambodia as members of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). In March 1993 the government sent a small contingent of 53-members to participate in United Nations Operations in Mozambique (UNMOZ), and in 1994 two units (300- and 180-members respectively) assisted with international humanitarian relief operations for Rwandan refugees and thirty election observers were sent to El Salvador. Finally in 1996 the government dispatched a small unit of the SDF to the Golan Heights to participate in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. Sticking to the limits imposed by the bill as passed, the government declined UN requests to dispatch its troops to UN PKO operations in Somalia, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia, although Japan helped to fund those missions.

As Table 1 shows, the public became more supportive of these operations over time. Over three years, the percentage of the public that supported “more active participation” in UN PKOs increased by 29 percent and those who thought that Japan should “participate less actively” or “not at all” declined by 37 percent (from a high of 19 percent in 1996 to 12 percent in 1998) and 50 percent respectively.

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<sup>27</sup> *Asahi Shimbun* poll reported 28 September 1992. Shiro Okubo, “Japan’s Constitutional Pacifism and United Nations Peacekeeping,” in *Japan’s Quest: The Search for International Role*,

**Table Three: Change in Attitude Toward PKO Dispatches<sup>28</sup>**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
Should become more active in participation	24%	24%	26%	31%
Should maintain the current level of participation	46%	46%	48%	48%
Should become less active in participation	18%	19%	15%	12%
Should not participate	6%	4%	3%	3%

The passage and implementation of the PKO bill clearly changed the interpretation of the Self-Defense Forces' role and the parameters within which the government could dispatch units overseas, but peacekeeping deployments did little to change the public's attitude regarding the constitutionality of Japanese forces. More than four decades after the Diet established the SDF, a 1997 *Asahi Shimbun* survey showed that only 21 percent of the public regarded the SDF as constitutional while 54 percent said that they were unconstitutional.<sup>29</sup> The data indicate that while the public became increasingly willing to accept SDF

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*Recognition, and Respect*, ed. Warren S. Hunsberger (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 111.

<sup>28</sup> I have omitted the responses for "Other" and "Don't Know" in the table. Recurring item format: "At the moment, 80 countries in the world have participated in the United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations (PKO). Based on the International Peace Cooperation Act, Japan has participated in the PKO in Cambodia, Mozambique, and El Salvador, and helped refugees in Rwanda. [Later iterations include 'Golan Heights'] Do you think Japan should continue to participate in these PKO activities or not? Choose from the list." Source: Shin Joho Center/Prime Minister's Office, 12-22 October, 1995; 3-13 October, 1996; 25 September - 5 October, 1997; 19-29 November 1998, Japan Public Opinion Location Library. (The data were obtained from the Japan Public Opinion Location Library, JPOLL, Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. Neither the original collectors of the data, nor the Roper Center, bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.)

dispatches, its view of the SDF was that it should serve primarily as a non-military force in line with Article 9.

A final policy development of the period with significance to the study at hand was the adoption of the 1997 Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation during the second term of LDP Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō (1996-1998). Whereas the 1978 Guidelines had established parameters for Japan's continued incorporation into the U.S.'s evolving Cold War strategy, the 1997 Guidelines aimed to update the two states' military cooperation in a post-Cold War world. Spurred in part by U.S. and Japanese leaders' growing sense of crisis in regards to the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait, the guidelines expanded the range of acceptable conditions under which Japan could take military action. For example, the 1997 Guidelines permitted the Japanese government to take military action against threats even if they did not involve a direct attack on Japanese territory. In other words, the 1997 Guidelines allowed Japan to respond militarily to threats located outside of its borders, a further conceptual stretching of Article 9.<sup>30</sup> As a poll published by the *Asahi Shimbun* after the adoption of the Guidelines showed, 80 percent of respondents said that the Guidelines were "suspect of violating the constitution".<sup>31</sup> Oros has argued that Japan's military policy would have moved even more dramatically to the right by this time if not for "the continued power of the postwar security identity of

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<sup>29</sup> *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 23 April, 1997.

<sup>30</sup> Matthew J. Gilley, "Japan's Developing Military Potential within the Context of its Constitutional Renunciation of War".

domestic antimilitarism.”<sup>32</sup>

As I have shown in this section, beginning in the late 1970s successive LDP prime ministers challenged the consensus on a minimal military posture forged at the end of the first reactive phases of postwar Japanese politics. At the level of policy, prime ministers initiated a new reactive sequence by edging up military spending throughout the 1980s with Nakasone finally pushing spending past the 1 percent limit in 1987, undermining the three non-nuclear principles, passing legislation allowing the SDF to engage in overseas missions, if even of a limited nature, and adopting new guidelines that incorporated Japan into the U.S.’s post-Cold War global order.<sup>33</sup> In addition, for the first time since the war years, politicians reintroduced the rhetoric of “Japan-as-Great-Power”, and Nakasone in particular questioned “the ‘constitutional taboo’ in order to undertake a ‘settlement of accounts of the postwar period.’”<sup>34</sup> That he did this not only through policy revisions but also through projects aimed at challenging the prevailing sentiment of democratic antimilitarism seemed to indicate a recognition on his part that Japan’s political culture would have to change before constitutional revision could be achieved.

Revisionists during the first reactive sequence from 1952 through 1960 largely discounted the changes that had occurred in Japanese political culture

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<sup>31</sup> Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Constitutional Revision Research Project. Available online at: <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rijs/crrp/chronology/y1997-2006.html> (Viewed on February 3, 2010).

<sup>32</sup> Andrew L. Oros, *Normalizing Japan: Politics, Identity, and the Evolution of Security Practice* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2008), 78.

<sup>33</sup> Gavan McCormack, *Client State*, 60.

<sup>34</sup> Yoichi Higuchi, “The Constitution and the Emperor System: Is Revisionism Alive?”: 53.

during the critical juncture and period of structural persistence. Perhaps because some of them, like Kishi, had been officials in the imperial regime, they thought that government officials could interpret or change institutional arrangements without significant resistance from society - especially when civil society was underdeveloped. When that strategy led to the legitimacy crisis of 1959-1960 and the turn toward some measure of political reconciliation in the 1960s and early 1970s, revisionists had to settle for campaigns aimed at affecting Japanese collective identity and historical memory as I showed in Chapter Four through the examples of textbook control and the unsuccessful Yasukuni Shrine bill. In the section that follows I analyze the project undertaken by prime ministers in the second reactive sequence to re-legitimize Yasukuni Shrine as an official site for honoring the will to sacrifice and the enforcement of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies in public schools as a project designed to instill nationalist norms and, in the process, submission to centralized authorities.

*Reviving Kokutai Memories: Bringing the Emperor Back In*

As I showed in Chapter Two, the official ideology of Japan during the Meiji, Taishō, and early Shōwa eras centered on the *kokutai* concept of Japanese collective identity and historical memory. This ideational construction of a unique and superior “political essence” of the Japanese rested on a belief in an emperor-centric community marked by obedience to authority and bound by the will to sacrifice. As with nationalisms more generally, the emperor system (*tennōsei*)

claimed origins in time immemorial (a line of emperors descended from the sun goddess *Amaterasu*), a destined future (an eternal imperial reign over an ever-expanding empire), and the overcoming of fatality through continuity (self-sacrifice as a means of regenerating the nation).

In this section, I analyze two projects undertaken by revisionists in the second reactive sequence that sparked public counter-reactions because of their implications to postwar collective identity and historical memory. These projects, the attempt to re-habilitate Yasukuni Shrine as a public site of veneration for Japan's dead soldiers and the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies, carried reminders of the *kokutai* ideology for those who valorized the postwar constitution and with it the norms of democracy, secular pluralism, and antimilitarism. In examining both of these projects and public reaction to them, I show how revisionists attempted to assert a hegemonic view of Japanese identity and historical memory in order to supplant constitutional patriotism with a revitalized nationalism.

Up until 1975, it was common for prime ministers to visit Yasukuni Shrine in a private capacity and to time their visits with the spring or autumn rites for the imperial ancestors. The first visit by a prime minister on the August 15 anniversary of Japan's surrender was in 1975 by Prime Minister Miki Takeo (1974-1976).<sup>35</sup> The timing of the visit drew much domestic criticism, and the spring 1979 visit of Prime Minister Ōhira Masayoshi (1978-1980) brought

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<sup>35</sup> "Prime Minister Worships for War Dead at Shrine," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 21 April, 1984.

increased condemnation when newspapers revealed that the shrine's head priest had secretly interred and deified the spirits of fourteen Class-A war criminals there the previous autumn. Visits by prime ministers continued uninterrupted, however, until 1985 when Nakasone Yasuhiro became the first postwar prime minister to visit in his official capacity along with most of his cabinet ministers and 170 Diet members.<sup>36</sup> Although Nakasone would remain in office for two more years, he was so concerned about the vehement objections to his official visit, especially from China and other Asian nations, that he did not make any more visits to Yasukuni Shrine. No prime ministers visited the shrine again until Koizumi Junichirō visited in 2001. He made annual visits through 2006, drawing strong criticism both from Japan's neighbors and members of the Japanese public.

The campaign to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine as a state institution where public rituals of national belonging premised on dying for the country could occur has been carried out along with other attempts to revive imaginings of the prewar national essence. During Prime Minister Nakasone's years in office (1982-1987) conservatives argued that Japan must become a "normal nation". This discursive strategy was aimed at undermining Japan's unique role as the only country to constitutionally ban war and the standing army, but of course since the institutional requirements for amending the constitution were impossible to surmount at the time, advocates of "normalization" focused on changing

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<sup>36</sup> "Nakasone, Cabinet Member Pay Official Visit to Yasukuni," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 15 April, 1985.

Japanese attitudes. The “normal nation” debate, with an explicit emphasis on patriotism and ‘love of country’, can best be understood as a project undertaken by revisionists, the goal of which is to move the public toward accepting eventual amendment of Article 9.

Revisionist supporters of prime ministers’ visits such as Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintarō<sup>37</sup> refer to the shrine as a symbol of Japanese greatness in the period from the Meiji Restoration until the end of the war in the Pacific. Revealing a temporal aspect of ritual, prime ministers’ visits may be thought of as establishing a sense of continuity in historical memory between the past, present, and future. One reason temporal continuity is important is because it suggests an enhanced legitimacy of the present authorities by alluding to an unbroken chain of rule formerly embodied by the emperors.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, spatial allusions to that historical memory like Yasukuni Shrine set off boundaries by which one’s belonging and loyalty to the nation can be evaluated.

The formation of collective identity and historical memory is always a contested, political process, and it sheds light on the problem of political

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<sup>37</sup> Ishihara Shintaro was a young novelist in the 1950s celebrated for his depictions of postwar anxiety and powerlessness who later served in the Diet and was elected Governor of Tokyo in 1999. In 2000 he became the first Tokyo governor to visit Yasukuni Shrine in his official capacity. He has also caused stirs with his claims that the Chinese have exaggerated the Nanjing Massacre of December 1937 and his xenophobic warnings about foreign nationals. See: Yumiko Iida, *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan: Nationalism as Aesthetics*. (London: Routledge, 2002), 127. See also: Ryuhei Hatsuse, “Japanese Responses to Globalization,” in *The Political Economy of Japanese Globalization*, ed. Glenn D. Hook and Hasegawa Harukiyo (London: Routledge, 2001), 178.

<sup>38</sup> Anthony Smith notes that the construction of an ethno-history helps “to crystallize and perpetuate ethnic identities.” Anthony Smith. *National Identity*. (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 26.

legitimacy.<sup>39</sup> The shrine and the soldiers apotheosized there signify the emperor system (*tennōsei*) and play a role in the construction of notions of a Japanese essence that are historically linked to official, imperial nationalism. The visits, then, hark back to an emperor-centric nation, and revisionists have insisted that the emperor, too, visit the shrine, though imperial visits ceased after 1975 when the timing of Prime Minister Miki's visit sparked public concerns over revisionism.

Revisionist politicians defend prime ministers' visits to the shrine and have called for the emperor to resume visits to the shrine. In January 2006 Foreign Minister Asō Tarō said that the emperor should visit as soon as possible since, "From the viewpoint of the spirits of the war dead, they hailed 'Banzai' for the emperor – none of them said long live the prime minister."<sup>40</sup> Echoing his remarks, former Prime Minister Nakasone said that souls of the war dead "have been waiting for the emperor, not for the prime minister."<sup>41</sup> Connecting the dots between the emperor, the war dead, and notions of Japanese collective identity during the imperial era by politicians like Asō and Nakasone suggests a direct challenge to the culture of antimilitarism and points to a project aimed at revitalizing the will to sacrifice.

One line of evidence for such a revival is the emphasis by revisionists on the relationship between the emperor and the nation. In fact, there have been

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<sup>39</sup> As Aronoff argues, political legitimacy depends upon the transference of power into authority and the challenges that arise to that authority. Myron J. Aronoff "Political Culture," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes, eds., (Oxford: Elsevier, 2002): 11640.

<sup>40</sup> Asō Tarō quoted in "Aso Says it is Desirable for Emperor to Visit Yasukuni," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 29 January, 2006.

repeated attempts to “bring the emperor back in.” In addition to the aforementioned calls for the emperor to resume visits to Yasukuni, revisionist politicians within the LDP have also sought to recast the emperor into a more central role in regard to Japanese collective identity. In December 2005 the Secretary General of the LDP, Takebe Tsutomu, claimed that Japan is “an ‘emperor-centric’ country, whose national character is that everyone is willing to support the center.”<sup>42</sup> His statement echoed then-Prime Minister Mori Yoshirō’s May 2000 comments stating that Japan is a divine country centered on the emperor.<sup>43</sup> This view of the nation evokes historical memories of the prewar founding of the nation as well as the fusion of the emperor with the state and delegitimizes the postwar constitution as the foundation of the Japanese polity.

Another line of evidence for efforts to rekindle the will to sacrifice is a renewed emphasis on the relationship between Yasukuni Shrine and Japanese young people. Having no personal memories of the age of self-sacrifice for the emperor and nation, young people are potentially a weak link in any attempt to marshal the ultimate will to sacrifice. Evidence of this is a 2003 survey of Japanese students who were asked how they would respond to an invading army. Only 12 percent said that they would surrender, 44 percent said that they would flee to a safe place, and 29 percent said that they would resist without

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<sup>41</sup> Nakasone Yasuhiro quoted in “Nakasone Proposes Emperor Visit Yasukuni at Some Point,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 10 February, 2006.

<sup>42</sup> Takebe Tsutomu quoted in “Japan is ‘Emperor-centric’ nation, Takebe Says,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 6 December, 2005.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

force. Only 13 percent said that they would use force in resisting.<sup>44</sup> Surely these figures are a point of concern for revisionists who want to revoke Article 9.<sup>45</sup>

As Billig notes, “The political crisis which leads to the war can be quickly created, but the willingness to sacrifice cannot be. There must be prior rehearsals and reminders so that, when the fateful occasion arises, men, and women, know how they are expected to behave.”<sup>46</sup> In a political community founded upon the right to live in peace and antimilitarism, there is nothing in the constitution that provides state-level actors with the authority to order citizens to sacrifice themselves for the country. One effect of repetitive visits to Yasukuni by state officials, especially prime ministers is that it keeps the shrine in the public consciousness as a reminder of individual self-sacrifice for the nation. As if to cross the gap between the postwar political culture with its strong antimilitarist sentiments and Japan’s prewar past, Yasukuni has been used rhetorically to connect sacrifice with peace. As then-Health and Welfare Minister Koizumi Junichirō said after an August 1997 visit to the shrine, “Today’s peace is built on the sacrifices of those who fell in a national crisis.”<sup>47</sup>

Evidence of efforts to reacquaint Japanese young people with the will to sacrifice includes the 2005 decision by the Machida Board of Education in Tokyo,

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<sup>44</sup> “Survey Shows Teenagers Pessimistic About Future,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), 22 February, 2003.

<sup>45</sup> By comparison, a national poll of twenty-year-olds taken in 1965 (*Yomiuri*) indicated that in the same circumstances (invasion of Japan) 41 percent expressed a willingness to fight, 11 percent “would not fight against aggression but rather stand still”, and 5 percent would flee. Yasumasa Tanaka, “Japanese Attitudes Toward Nuclear Arms,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 34, no. 1 (Spring 1970): 27.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Billig. *Banal Nationalism*. (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 124.

despite the objections of the local teachers' union, to begin annual excursions for elementary and junior high school students to the Yūshūkan Hall, a war museum built on the grounds of Yasukuni in 1882.<sup>48</sup> The museum displays armaments from the imperial era including an authentic "Zero" fighter plane, and its narratives refer to imperial military campaigns as "sacred war." Upon entering the museum, students see portraits of some of the deified war dead including wartime Prime Minister Tōjō, one of the executed war criminals. In a small auditorium, the museum loops a movie entitled "We Never Forget" that begins with the song "Forever Love" by the popular rock band *X Japan*.<sup>49</sup>

Supporters of Yasukuni Shrine are also proactive in efforts to attract young people to the shrine and to familiarize them with the Yūshūkan's version of pre-1945 Japanese history. In February 2005 the fund-raising arm of the shrine launched a youth group called *Asanagi* or "Morning Calm" that numbered 250 within one year. Its purported aim is "to raise awareness among the postwar generation of Yasukuni's perspective of events regarding the World War II period."<sup>50</sup> Hisamatsu Sadanari, president of the shrine's fund-raising organization has said, "For Yasukuni to prosper over the long term depends on whether we can successfully correct young people's perspectives on the inevitable war."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Koizumi Junichirō quoted in "8 Cabinet Members Visit Yasukuni Shrine," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 15 August, 1997.

<sup>48</sup> "Education Board Backs Children's Tour of Yasukuni Museum," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 14 July, 2005.

<sup>49</sup> The song has also been used by the LDP in election campaign TV commercials. "More Young Japanese People Visiting Yasukuni Shrine," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 9 November, 2005.

<sup>50</sup> Hiroshi Matsubara and Yoshitake Yu, "History Issue," *The Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 19 April, 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Sadanari Hisamatsu, quoted in *Ibid.*

This attempt to redefine Japan's past militarism as "inevitable" challenges the narrative of "liberated history" that emerged after the war and suggests a hegemonic project aimed at naturalizing the goal of the *kokutai* ideology -- forging a collective identity centered on the obedience to authority and the will to sacrifice.

Yasukuni's educative project involves not only the displaying of war artifacts and a retelling of Japan's war history but also a strong affective component. For some young people, the latter may be as effective or more so than the former. As one member of *Asanagi* put it, "The history that I was taught [there] was not really convincing, but young soldiers' farewell notes displayed at Yūshūkan were very moving."<sup>52</sup> As recently as 2006 the shrine's webpage noted the importance of emotional connections to those who sacrificed for the nation; a short animated sequence about the Yūshūkan showed a Zero fighter plane passing over the screen with what looked like bullets whizzing past as a text scrolled by reading, "Now the truth of modern Japanese history is restored. These profound emotions that we wish to convey to the generation that does not know war... [sic]"<sup>53</sup> The usage of "truth" in regard to a revisionist interpretation of history and the emphasis on "emotions" indicate a hegemonic project aimed at challenging the historical memory of the postwar period through an affective strategy.

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.yasukuni.or.jp/yusyukan/movie.html> (Viewed on 3 May 2006).

LDP prime ministers have reflected the shrine's attempt to rehabilitate self-sacrifice through hegemonic rhetoric aimed at re-imagining Japanese collective identity. After the firestorm of criticism that arose following his 1985 visit, for example, Prime Minister Nakasone answered his critics by saying that he thought "it only natural to pay homage to those who fought for their country and fell in war."<sup>54</sup> What his comments about the purported naturalness of worshipping there left out, however, was the context of war, an issue especially sensitive to Japan's former colonies and targets of aggression. Koizumi and his staff also tried to naturalize visits to the shrine. During a 2001 campaign visit to the Japan War-Bereaved Association, one of his aides characterized his position on visits as "the most natural thing to do."<sup>55</sup> After becoming prime minister that year, Koizumi visited Yasukuni and said later that the trips were "only natural for a Japanese."<sup>56</sup> Comments like these essentialize and homogenize Japanese identity, attempt to naturalize the visits as inevitable, and metaphorically substitute Koizumi's symbolic rhetoric and action for the actions of all Japanese. In this way, he acts as an exemplar nationalist.

The fact that Koizumi visited Yasukuni Shrine for six years in a row (2001-2006) as prime minister may have been aimed at restoring legitimacy to the visits since annual visits by prime ministers came to a halt after Nakasone's 1985 visit. Perhaps he hoped that future prime ministers would be able to continue these

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<sup>54</sup> Nakasone Yasuhiro quoted in "Nakasone, Giving In, Will Shun Shrine," *The New York Times*, 9 October, 1985.

<sup>55</sup> "Koizumi Vows to Make Yasukuni Visits Official if Elected," Kyodo News Service (Tokyo), 16 April, 2001.

visits and that the public would come to see them as “natural” and “inevitable”. It is important to note that the repeat visits were spoken of in deterministic and perpetual terms. For example, in 2006 then-Foreign Minister Asō Tarō said, “it is not possible for Prime Minister Koizumi to stop visiting Yasukuni Shrine.”<sup>57</sup> Tokyo Governor Ishihara also suggested that the very existence of Japan depended on continued visits saying, “If the prime minister does not go this year, I think this country would go rotten from the inside and collapse.”<sup>58</sup> His comments underscore Asō’s and suggest that a discontinuation of visits was a threat to the integrity of the nation.

Prime ministers and defenders of the visits have also launched attacks against their opponents in order to call into question the reasonableness of their opposition or to shut down debate altogether. These comments have overwhelmingly targeted foreign opponents of the visits, particularly China and South Korea. Koizumi called the cancellation of diplomatic summits between the two countries and Japan over the Yasukuni issue “abnormal,”<sup>59</sup> and then-Foreign Minister Asō said, “It’s best for China to keep quiet”<sup>60</sup> about the issue. Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe Shinzo, adding insult to injury, said “It is obviously wrong

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<sup>56</sup> Koizumi Junichirō quoted in “Culture at Root of Yasukuni Issue,” *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), 11 September, 2001, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Asō Tarō quoted in “No Way for Koizumi to Stop Yasukuni Visits as China Wishes: Aso” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 6 January, 2006.

<sup>58</sup> Ishihara Shintarō quoted in “Ishihara Says Japan Will Crumble if Koizumi Stops Yasukuni Visits,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 28 January, 2006.

<sup>59</sup> Koizumi Junichirō quoted in “Koizumi Calls Refusal of Summits by China, South Korea ‘Abnormal,’” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 8 February, 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Asō Tarō quoted in “Aso Says it is Desirable for Emperor to Visit Yasukuni Shrine,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 29 January, 2006.

to use the diplomatic tool of refusing meeting as leverage [...] It should be the attitude of a mature nation to continue talks even where there are problems.”<sup>61</sup>

What is interesting about these statements is that defenders of the visits have sought to shut down critical reflection on the controversy and to aim their criticism at foreign opponents, thus framing the controversy as a struggle between Japan and outside forces. Noting the role of frames in the exertion of political power, Entman notes, “frames select and call attention to particular aspects of the reality described, which logically means that frames simultaneously direct attention away from other aspects.”<sup>62</sup> As Honda points out, this way of framing the controversy also provides an outlet for domestic frustrations, deflecting them outward:

“Many Japanese are feeling frustrated right now, frustrated against the economy, frustrated against politics, frustrated against the gap between the rich class and the poor class [...] This is the key, probably, reason why he gets support, especially from young people, 20s, 30s, if Koizumi shows a very strong attitude toward those countries, they somehow forget about their frustrations.”<sup>63</sup>

As the above evidence shows, proponents of the visits try to naturalize the visits, suggest that the shrine is inextricably connected with the natural essence of the Japanese, make the visits seem unstoppable, and paint opponents’ objections as abnormal, irrational, and immature. They also call attention to

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<sup>61</sup> Abe Shinzō quoted in “Abe Criticizes China for Refusing Summit Talks,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 26 January, 2006.

<sup>62</sup> Robert M. Entman, “Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm,” *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (Autumn 1993): 54.

<sup>63</sup> Honda Masatoshi quoted in “Japanese Scholar Says Polls on Yasukuni may be Misleading,”

foreign objections to the visits while largely ignoring domestic protests, on constitutional grounds, that the visits violate the separation of state and religion. Finally, there is Honda's suggestion that Koizumi and his supporters may have been using the visits to deflect criticism from unsatisfactory domestic conditions.

Those Japanese who have objected to the rehabilitation of Yasukuni have done so from the point of view of constitutional patriotism, an understanding of the Japanese political community as pluralist, officially secular, antimilitarist by law, and re-founded after the war informs their opposition. In addition to individual Japanese, groups like the Japanese Buddhist Federation, Japanese Christian organizations, and the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (*Rengō*) have opposed the visits as have political parties like New Komeito (the lay-Buddhist affiliated "Clean Government Party"), the Japanese Communist Party, the Democratic Party of Japan (*Minshutō*, hereafter DPJ), the Social Democratic Party (*Shamintō*) and others. Public dissent challenges the notion that the prime minister represents the views of all Japanese or that there is something about being Japanese that makes visits inevitable or natural.

Groups that oppose the visits have expressed their objections on the floor of the Diet, in newspaper editorials, and in other venues, and they have also taken to the streets. Carrying banners that read "Yasukuni visits defy 'no more war' commitment" and "You're going against peace and coexistence with Asia," members of citizens' groups, including the National Association of the War Bereaved Families for Peace, picketed in front of Prime Minister Koizumi's office

in 2005.<sup>64</sup> Their rhetoric clearly affirmed their valorization of constitutional antimilitarism, showed that opposition to the visits is not a foreign phenomenon, and sought to diffuse the tense standoff between Japan and its neighbors triggered by Koizumi's repeated visits.

Yasukuni Shrine visits have also provoked radical right-wing nationalists, a small minority of revisionists, to take extreme actions. For example, in August 2006 a right-wing nationalist burned down the house of LDP Diet member Katō Kōichi after he criticized Koizumi for going to Yasukuni Shrine. In the spring of 2007 the *Asahi Shimbun*, which often editorialized against Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni Shrine received two postcards with messages alluding to the murder of an *Asahi* journalist by a rightwing activist in 1987. One of the postcards warned, "It is inevitable that one or two of your staff will be killed." At about the same time, the *Yomiuri* reported receiving a mysterious package containing a gun and bullets. After Prime Minister Abe avoided Yasukuni Shrine on August 15 2007, a right-wing extremist sent a package containing "his severed left pinky finger, a DVD showing the finger being chopped, and a protest statement" to the LDP's party headquarters and dozens of other right-wing activists rallied outside the prime minister's office criticizing Abe for being a "traitor" for not praying at Yasukuni.<sup>65</sup>

In an effort to resolve the conflict over Yasukuni Shrine, some Japanese have proposed constructing a secular memorial for remembering the war dead.

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<sup>64</sup> "Citizens Protest Koizumi's Shrine Visit," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 18 October, 2005.

Spearheaded by *Soka Gakkai*, the nation's largest lay Buddhist organization, and New Komeito, the junior partner to the LDP in the ruling coalition, the proposal for an alternative shrine has drawn support from other groups and the public.<sup>66</sup> The establishment of a nonpartisan lawmakers' group for studying the issue also attracted members of the DPJ and about 100 members of the LDP, indicating disagreement within the dominant party, possibly between revisionist and neo-liberal factions.<sup>67</sup> The business community, of course, is wary of any negative impact the visits to Yasukuni might have on economic relations between Japan and its two biggest Asian trading partners – China and South Korea. Okuda Hiroshi, the president of the Japan Business Federation (*Nippon Keidanren*), expressing concern about the possible economic ramifications of the diplomatic impasse between Japan and its neighbors at the time offered as a solution the separation of the Class-A war criminals from the other war dead at Yasukuni Shrine.<sup>68</sup>

The establishment of an alternative, secular facility would be a move toward situating Japanese identity squarely in the postwar, democratic state rather than in the Japan of State Shintō and the emperor system.<sup>69</sup> Revisionists

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<sup>65</sup> Mari Yamaguchi, "Japan Rightist Arrested after Mailing Finger to Protest PM's Absence at War Shrine" *Associated Press* (Tokyo), August 23, 2007.

<sup>66</sup> In a national telephone survey, 49% of respondents supported the building of a secular national memorial, 31% opposed it, and 20% responded "Don't know./Can't say." "November 2005 Nikkei Special Telephone Opinion Poll on 'Cabinet Reshuffle,'" Available online at: <http://www.nikkei-r.co.jp/nikkeipoll/qandres/y200511a.html> (Viewed 1 May, 2006).

<sup>67</sup> "New Komeito Presses for New War Memorial Over Yasukuni Issue," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 22 October, 2005.

<sup>68</sup> "Yasukuni Row Splits Coalition," *The Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), 28 May, 2005.

<sup>69</sup> It should be noted, too, that prime ministers visit either Hiroshima or Nagasaki (alternating year-by-year) on the anniversary dates of the dropping of the atomic bombs. These visits have been used to convey messages of peace and to remind the nation of the unforeseen and devastating

have so far rejected this proposal including Koizumi who said, “no facility will substitute for Yasukuni Shrine.”<sup>70</sup> Echoing his comments and alluding to the importance of Yasukuni Shrine as a symbol for revisionists, former Prime Minister Nakasone added, “We must avoid doing anything that would cause Yasukuni Shrine [...] to lose popularity.”<sup>71</sup> Since Koizumi left office, however, no prime minister has made an official visit to the shrine.

To constitutional patriots who oppose the visits, Yasukuni Shrine is inextricably connected with the imperial past. The political parties and members of civil society who object to the visits engaged in a counter-hegemonic practice against those revisionists who wanted to naturalize the visits and rehabilitate the glory of self-sacrifice for the nation. Re-establishing symbolic actions of imperial Japan stretches the temporal boundary of the political community, taking it back beyond the postwar emergence of the secular, democratic, and antimilitarist state.

Yasukuni Shrine’s close association with the emperor system also suggests a projection of that imagining of the nation into the future, especially since the first article of the Meiji Constitution claimed, “The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages

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consequences of war. Given their symbolic resonance, though, these sites are not conducive to revitalizing the will to sacrifice. Yasukuni Shrine, then, provides an alternative site to commemorate the war, one that lends itself much more readily to sacrifice for the nation.

<sup>70</sup> Koizumi Junichirō quoted in “Koizumi Says No War Memorial Will Substitute for Yasukuni Shrine,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 17 January, 2005.

<sup>71</sup> Nakasone Yasuhiro quoted in “Nakasone Against Building Alternative War Memorial,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 26 January, 2005.

eternal.”<sup>72</sup> According to Kapferer, people are receptive to symbols and discourse that allude to history because through them, “History is never distant but present and immediate.”<sup>73</sup> The shrine, therefore, can be understood as symbol of the perpetuity of authority. And since the transference of power to authority depends upon the use of discourse and symbols, naturalizing visits to Yasukuni and the will to sacrifice through hegemonic rhetoric becomes a technique for legitimizing the present authorities through allusions to an unbroken line of rule made possible by the sacrifices of the past, regardless of their context.

Appeals to the historical memory of sacrifice have played a role in the contentious struggle over Yasukuni Shrine. Despite opponents’ assertions that the shrine elicits memories of Japan’s victims in the imperial period and the consequences of militarism, revisionists have suggested that Yasukuni Shrine and the prime ministers’ presence there somehow protects the nation. As Eriksen points out, threat, insecurity, and “the problem of personal oblivion” are key forces for movements of identity revitalization.<sup>74</sup> Certainly, Japanese revisionists might identify any number of threats to the nation. Perceived external threats include the rise of a truly competitive China and the threat of a nuclear-armed North Korea. Domestically, years of anemic economic growth and the aging population are seen as threats to Japan’s short- and long-term viability. Eriksen’s insight about personal oblivion operates at the level of individual identity, but in

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<sup>72</sup> The Constitution of the Empire of Japan, reproduced in Glenn D. Hook and Gavan McCormack. *Japan’s Contested Constitution*. (London: Routledge, 2001), 181.

<sup>73</sup> Bruce Kapferer. *Legends of People, Myths of State*. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988), 50.

<sup>74</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 160.

the case of Japan, it might also be applied at the level of the collective self.

Depressed economic conditions and neo-liberal reforms have combined to erode the lifetime employment system in Japan. This has caused an acute sense of insecurity in terms of uncertain financial well-being and displaced social networks, especially among the middle and lower class and the young. Without a sense of long-term security, surely there is the threat of personal oblivion, if even subconscious. The aging and dwindling population of Japan, which officially began shrinking in 2005, extends the threat of oblivion to the collective self, conjuring the possibility that the Japanese community may be extinguished in time - if even in the distant future. A sense of existential crisis regarding the present and the imagined future surely plays into the imaginings of revisionists.

But perhaps revisionists perceive other, more immediate threats to the nation. One is the decline in the will to sacrifice after Japan's re-founding on the principles of democratic antimilitarism. Many young people are not inclined to die for the nation, even in the case of an invasion. This reality challenges revisionists' longing for an idealized past that they associate with unity, obedience to authority, and sacrifice for the nation. To mobilize people, especially to mobilize them to sacrifice for the nation, there have to be ideas, salient symbols, and narratives that resonate with them. Yasukuni Shrine is an obvious reminder of the will to sacrifice, a point of particular significance since the party that pushes hardest for visits there by the prime minister, the LDP, also proposes

revising the constitution by eliminating Article 9 in order to turn the Ground Self-Defense Force into a national army.

Billig also notes, “Every nation must have its history, its own collective memory. This remembering is simultaneously a collective forgetting: the nation, which celebrates its antiquity, forgets its historical recency. Moreover, nations forget the violence which brought them into existence.”<sup>75</sup> Seen from the perspective of the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, Japanese revisionists want to remember the ascendance of Japan relative to other countries during the imperial era, but they willingly forget the consequences of that mobilization in terms of colonial subjugation, the civilian victims of the imperial army, and the innocent victims of the war at home. Yasukuni Shrine is remembered for what it denotes while sweeping aside what it connotes, especially what it connotes to Japan’s former colonies and to citizens who have embraced constitutional patriotism.

That the reflections on Yasukuni Shrine above find parallels in the controversy over the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies during the same period is a further indication that revisionists aimed to affect Japanese political culture, especially collective identity and historical memory, as part of their effort to undo postwar democratic antimilitarism and “clear the postwar political legacy,” as Nakasone put it.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Michael Billig. *Banal Nationalism*, 38.

<sup>76</sup> Tomohito Shinoda, *Leading Japan: The Role of the Prime Minister*. (London: Praeger, 2000), 135.

In 1977 the Ministry of Education issued a statement proclaiming it “preferable to display the national flag and sing the national anthem on national holidays and for other ceremonies” in all public schools.<sup>77</sup> In a change of policy in 1989, the Ministry decided that the singing of *Kimigayo* and displaying of the *Hinomaru* at school entrance and graduation ceremonies would be compulsory beginning the following year.<sup>78</sup> In line with the decision to mandate use of the flag and anthem in schools, the Ministry required all sixth-grade social studies textbooks to describe the *Hinomaru* as the national flag and *Kimigayo* as the national anthem beginning in 1991, despite the fact that the government had never legally recognized them as such.<sup>79</sup> The Diet established them as the legal symbols of Japan, however, in 1999.<sup>80</sup>

Looking only at the aforementioned series of policies implemented by the state, the procedural and legal establishment of *Kimigayo* and the *Hinomaru* as national symbols seems to come about incrementally and unproblematically. This legalistic, or official, retelling of the story of their ritualization, however, leaves out the fact that each proclamation was a maneuver in the face of contestation between political parties and the protests of various social actors.<sup>81</sup> In Japanese public schools, for example, teachers, both individually and through their labor

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<sup>77</sup> “Of Flags and Anthems,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), March 5, 1999.

<sup>78</sup> According to a national public opinion poll conducted in 1990, only 35 percent of respondents “associated *Hinomaru* with the national flag and national image” and “older people associated it strongly with the war”. In a survey of a high school in Osaka, only 8.9 percent of the students thought of it as the national flag or a symbol of Japan. Roger Goodman and Ian Neary, eds., *Case Studies in Human Rights in Japan* (Richmond, Surrey: Japan Library, 1996), 101.

<sup>79</sup> “New Primary School Textbooks Promote National Flag, Anthem,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), July 1, 1991.

<sup>80</sup> “Flag, Anthem Given Legal Status,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), August 10, 1999.

unions, have objected to mandatory displays of the *Hinomaru* and enforced singing of *Kimigayo*. They see obligatory participation in political rituals as a step back toward the traditional *shūshin* system of education that placed emphasis on values such as unquestioning submission to superiors and the erasure of boundaries between the individual and the community.

In addition, teachers have made the case that any reprimands stemming from a failure to comply with the ceremonies violate Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution, which guarantee the inviolability of free thought and conscience and the right to freedom of assembly, association, and speech, respectively. A 1989 statement by The Japan Teachers' Union, representing 600,000 members at the time, criticized the Ministry's new guidelines as an effort to revive prewar nationalistic ideologies and as a violation of the constitution. Arguing against the mandatory ceremonies, Yamazumi Masumi, a professor of education at Tokyo Metropolitan University, argued, "Graduation and commencement are pivotal points for individual growth, not the time for a government to impose national goals."<sup>82</sup> Educators opposed the guidelines, then, as antithetical to the Japanese political community as established by the postwar constitution.

Although the Ministry of Education has not made reprimands a part of official policy on the use of *Kimigayo* and the *Hinomaru* in the schools, regional and local boards of education have docked teachers' pay, refused to rehire

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<sup>81</sup> The bill legalizing *Kimigayo* as the national anthem and the *Hinomaru* as the national flag passed into law on a 166-to-71 vote in the House of Councillors. *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> "Order to Fly Flag, Sing Anthem Angers Japanese Teachers," *Asahi News Service* (Tokyo), December 1, 1989.

retired teachers who oppose the policy, and given written and verbal warnings to teachers, among other actions. In turn, teachers have filed numerous suits arguing that the guidelines and the reprimands violate the constitution. In one case, a public elementary school teacher who was issued a written warning by the Tokyo Board of Education for wearing a blue “peace” ribbon (representing opposition to the flag) to a 2000 graduation ceremony filed a damages suit in the Tokyo District Court. In a statement concerning her action, she said, “I wore the blue ribbon as a symbol of peace, and my way of protecting the children and showing them the importance of free expression.”<sup>83</sup> In another suit, 117 Tokyo teachers filed suit in May 2004 following the Tokyo Board of Education’s introduction of punishments for teachers who fail to fully instruct pupils to stand and sing the anthem.<sup>84</sup>

While these cases highlight recent legal challenges to the forced use of *Kimigayo* and the *Hinomaru* in public schools, protests of their inclusion in school ceremonies have taken many forms and have increased as their use was gradually codified and enforced. Throughout Japan, teachers have boycotted ceremonies and rehearsals, protested by refusing to stand for the *Hinomaru* or sing *Kimigayo*, and passed out leaflets opposing their use. All of these actions indicate resistance to coerced, nationalistic rituals.

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<sup>83</sup> Miwako Sato, quoted in “Teacher Sues Authorities Over Compulsory National Flag Display,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), February 13, 2004.

<sup>84</sup> “Tokyo Teachers Sue Education Board Over Compulsory Anthem Singing,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), May 27, 2004.

The struggle over the meaning of the flag and anthem has not been limited to the schools, however, and it has not just been education officials who have defended their compulsory use. The disagreement has played out in newspaper editorials, the expulsion of municipal assembly members who oppose the rituals, and statements by local and national politicians. For example, in a March 2004 editorial, the *Yomiuri* chided dissenting teachers, writing that they “seriously poison the atmosphere at graduation ceremonies, during which all students, parents, and teachers must cooperate,” and calling their behavior “thoughtless.”<sup>85</sup> The word “poison” identifies the dissenting teachers as a dangerous force threatening the purity of the flag and anthem rituals, and the word “thoughtless” marks their opposition as irrational. In a similar vein, Gifu Prefecture’s governor went so far as to say that anyone who refused to respect the flag and anthem should “be stripped of their Japanese citizenship.”<sup>86</sup> Reducing the issue to a matter of fact, he added, “Respecting the flag and anthem of the nation is naturally the duty of any Japanese citizen,” implying both that the ceremonies were beyond question because they are rooted in the nature of membership in the Japanese political community and that anyone who disagreed should be politically excluded from that community.<sup>87</sup>

The kinds of statements noted above are meant to foreclose any critical reflection on *Kimigayo* and the *Hinomaru*. While proponents of the ceremonies do

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<sup>85</sup> “Hinomaru, Kimigayo Must Be Respected,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), March 31, 2004.

<sup>86</sup> Kajiwaru Taku, quoted in “Gifu Governor Fans Flames Over National Anthem, Flag,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), October 2, 1999.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

not call for or mention the possibility of an outright return to the imperial system, Yoshino has warned, “a sentiment that has been suppressed can be rekindled and gradually brought back into consciousness with the gradual diminution of the self-critical mood of the nation.”<sup>88</sup> The hegemonic rhetoric of proponents of the ceremonies reflects just such a diminution of critical self-awareness. There are other groups, however, that not only reject the revisionist program in the schools but articulate alternatives to it.

Perhaps the most remarkable and creative actions in opposition to the ceremonies have been undertaken by Japanese students. The formation of identity and the sense of belonging and exclusion are always in flux, always contested. This is especially true for adolescents. In many ways, young people are treated like, and usually feel like, marginal persons. No place is this more salient to them than at school, where they are the targets of socialization and identity shaping through subtle and overt disciplinary compliance. While public school teachers, as civil servants maintaining a state function, are marginalized in the sense that some political agency is stripped away from them in the workplace, students have practically no formal, procedural voice whatsoever in matters of the legislation or bureaucratic regulation that pertains to their public life at school.

In Japan, young people are marginal citizens until *Seijin no hi* or Coming of Age Day. Every second Monday of January people turning twenty that calendar year gather at city halls or other municipal venues to mark their passage

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<sup>88</sup> Kosaku Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan* (London: Routledge, 1992), 211.

into adulthood. That day is the temporal boundary between the marginal status of childhood and the legal and social status of a responsible member of society. It is at twenty that people may vote and buy alcohol, and it is then that they are subject to adult laws. What is significant about some students' concerted responses to the ceremonies, then, is that they are practicing organized political resistance before initiation into society; they are carrying out specific acts of political refusal rather than general acts of juvenile rebellion. In the case of opposition to the flag and anthem ceremonies, Japan's "children" have often exhibited a critical political consciousness through their challenges to the ceremonies, and their actions suggest a rejection of nationalism altogether.<sup>89</sup>

There have been numerous occasions when students in Japanese schools have collectively refused to sing *Kimigayo* or stand for the *Hinomaru* since the controversy over their re-introduction began. At other times, they have passed out leaflets, stamped their feet through the anthem or boycotted ceremonies altogether. In 1998, students from Hiroshima Prefecture's Sera High School, where the flag and anthem issue was becoming particularly contentious, made a stir while on a school trip in South Korea. When they visited a memorial for victims of Korea's independence movement who were killed by Japanese troops in a demonstration in 1919, they "prayed for those who died and for peace

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<sup>89</sup> It is probably safe to say that in general, Japanese young people do not see their collective identity defined by nationalist imaginings. The culture of consumerism plays a much stronger role in their identity formation. For example, in a survey of twenty- and thirty-somethings carried out by the weekly magazine *Spa!*, one respondent suggested that "a designer like Calvin Klein could design a more attractive flag" and another rejected *Kimigayo* on the basis that "a jazz-style anthem or one composed by Sakamoto Ryūichi would be more fun." Roger Goodman and Ian Neary, eds., *Case Studies in Human Rights in Japan*, 102.

and read an apology for Japanese acts of aggression.”<sup>90</sup> The following January, their principal, who had approved their trip, committed suicide during a bitter dispute over the flag and anthem ceremonies between the local board of education, the PTA, parents, teachers, the Hiroshima Teachers Union, and a local minority rights group.<sup>91</sup> In the same prefecture a year later, one junior high school principal had to take the *Hinomaru* down from a graduation site after students took over a microphone and demanded its removal before walking out of the gymnasium *en masse*.<sup>92</sup>

In the case of Tokorozawa High School in Saitama Prefecture, student opposition to the flag and anthem played out in the fashion of a sustained social drama. In 1990, students there established a Charter of Student Rights proclaiming “the student body’s right to self-government.”<sup>93</sup> In addition, the student council passed a resolution expressing its opposition to the mandatory use of the flag and anthem in school ceremonies.<sup>94</sup> Seven years later, the principal at Tokorozawa High School “canceled hoisting the flag and singing the anthem because he could not reach an agreement with the students,”<sup>95</sup> and the student council issued the following resolution: “The continuation of ceremonies of the past will only result in confusion. We can avoid such confusion by doing

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<sup>90</sup> Mori Chiharu, “Students Carried Apologies to S. Korea,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), March 8, 1999.

<sup>91</sup> “Board: Suicide Came Amid Protests,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), May 1, 1999.

<sup>92</sup> “Hiroshima Kids Walk Out Over Flag,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), March 11, 2000.

<sup>93</sup> “Editorial” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), April 22, 1998.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> “40% of Students Boycott Entrance Ceremony,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), April 10, 1998.

away with ceremonies altogether and creating a new type of event.”<sup>96</sup> At the same school in 1998, forty-percent of the students boycotted the official entrance ceremony where a newly hired principal insisted on displaying the *Hinomaru* and singing *Kimigayo*. When the first ceremony finished, pupils held a student-organized, alternative ceremony attended by the entire in-coming class and most of the teachers.<sup>97</sup> In 1999, 278 of 406 seniors boycotted graduation and the students again organized an alternative ceremony, about which the Saitama Board of Education Superintendent commented, “We will continue to give guidance to school officials in Tokorozawa High School so that normal educational activities can be carried out.”<sup>98</sup> It should be noted that while a majority of teachers at Tokorozawa High School endorsed student resolutions and actions in after-the-fact votes, the main impetus for the actions came from the students themselves and they made articulate appeals to their constitutional rights of speech and expression.<sup>99</sup> The fact that they consciously and consistently engaged in political acts of refusal and organized their own ceremonies indicates that they saw no room for symbols of the nation, however interpreted, in their rites of passage. Rather, they based their arguments for refusing the ceremonies on appeals to constitutional patriotism.

In a 1989 survey comparing Japanese and American students’ opinions on their national flags, 86 percent of American students expressed some

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<sup>96</sup> “Editorial,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), April 22, 1998.

<sup>97</sup> “40% of Students Boycott Entrance Ceremony,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), April 10, 1998.

<sup>98</sup> “2 Graduation Ceremonies Held at School,” *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), March 9, 1999.

attachment or affection for the flag, whereas 41 percent of Japanese felt the same way. In the same survey, 60 percent of Japanese students considered *Kimigayo* the national anthem, with 25 percent reporting that they would like it replaced with another song. Some 8 percent saw no need for a national anthem at all. Reacting to the survey, an official from the Ministry of Education said, "This confirms that it is important from an early age to teach students to respect the flag and the national anthem."<sup>100</sup> Following in that vein, the Ministry of Education issued guidelines for fully implementing their compulsory use by 1992. As the above examples of contestation show, however, teachers and students challenged these regulations, leading the government to introduce a document containing a "unified view" on compliance into the House of Representatives in 1994.<sup>101</sup> Despite the legal adoption of the symbols by the Diet in 1999 and the efforts of the Ministry to "teach students to respect the flag and the national anthem," an opinion survey of students aged twelve and older in 2003 found that 43 percent had no interest in the flag or anthem and only 17 percent felt attached to both symbols.

As the struggle over the flag and anthem grew more contentious, local and prefectural governments turned their attention from surveying attitudes on the symbols and the percentage of schools participating in their use to direct

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<sup>99</sup> For a thorough analysis of the Tokorozawa High School case, see: Robert Aspinall and Peter Cave, "Lowering the Flag: Democracy, Authority and Rights at Tokorozawa High School," *Social Science Japan Journal* 4, no. 1 (2001): pp. 77-93.

<sup>100</sup> Yoshida Kazusumi, quoted in "Few Japanese Students Respect National Flag, Survey Finds," *Asahi News Service* (Tokyo), November 8, 1989.

<sup>101</sup> "Govt Encourages Schools to Raise Hinomaru Flag," *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), October 15, 1994.

monitoring of teachers' and students' compliance. Thus, ceremonies became actual checkpoints where officials, carrying out surveillance, monitored compliance with the ceremonies. Checkpoints, as Migdal describes them, "refer to the sites and practices that groups use to differentiate members from others and to enforce separation."<sup>102</sup> In this case, on the days of entrance and graduation ceremonies, schools become temporary checkpoints to differentiate between those who comply with the mandated ceremonies and those who refuse.<sup>103</sup> Migdal also conceives of checkpoints as "ways of enforcing the categorization of space by using various sanctions and rewards."<sup>104</sup> Here again, Japanese school ceremonies fit Migdal's notion of checkpoints since there have been numerous efforts to discipline and reprimand teachers, school staff, and principals who do not comply with regulations concerning the flag and anthem.

The use of schools as checkpoints for teachers' behavior started as early as 1999 when the Kanagawa Prefectural Board of Education asked all 514 principals in the district to identify teachers who opposed the ceremonies. Toward that end, the board distributed a form with which the principals were to classify dissenting teachers in one of three ways: "as openly opposed, refusing to

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<sup>102</sup> Joel S. Migdal, ed. *Boundaries and Belonging* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 6.

<sup>103</sup> Of course, Japanese public schools, in general, are checkpoints on other days, too. For example, they monitor student dress, appearance, and language. While this may be true of most schools anywhere, there is a specific constellation of encouraged and enforced norms that distinguish Japanese schools. For more on the role of Japanese schools, see: Robert L. Cutts, *An Empire of Schools*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997) and Brian J. McVeigh, *The Nature of the Japanese State*. (London: Routledge, 1998).

<sup>104</sup> Joel S. Migdal, *Boundaries and Belonging*, 7.

cooperate, or taking actual measures against [compliance].”<sup>105</sup> Even though 98 percent of the 166 high schools in the Prefecture displayed the flag that year, only 16 percent of them sang *Kimigayo*, prompting Liberal Democratic Party members of the prefectural assembly to personally monitor graduation ceremonies in 2000.<sup>106</sup> That same year, the Hiroshima Prefectural Board of Education sent officials to monitor all 155 high school entrance ceremonies. In addition to checking for the proper ceremonial use of the flag and anthem, they also recorded the number of students, parents, and teachers who stood up while singing, the number of people who walked out during ceremonies, and whether or not the principal of each school sang the anthem. Afterwards, one principal said, “I felt as if I were under the surveillance of public security police.”<sup>107</sup>

The escalation from surveillance carried out by principals to surveillance carried out by persons who are likely unrecognizable by students and teachers is akin to panopticism, the method of observation conceived by Jeremy Bentham.<sup>108</sup> In Bentham’s version, a prison inmate is always visible to a guard but has no way of knowing when he is being watched. The aim is to have the person under observation monitor himself since he does not know when the gaze of the monitor is upon him. Foucault observed, “this invisibility [of the guard] is a guarantee of order,” and its effect is to “induce [...] a state of conscious and

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<sup>105</sup> “Kanagawa Teachers Face Flag, Anthem Rigors,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), December 9, 1999.

<sup>106</sup> Manabe Mitsuyuki and Kurihara Toshio, “Kanagawa Schools to get LDP Watchdogs,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), February 26, 2000.

<sup>107</sup> Aihara Hiroshi, “Schools Pass Nationalism Test,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), May 10, 2000.

<sup>108</sup> Jeremy Bentham, *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962).

permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power.”<sup>109</sup> Knowing that a school ceremony could possibly be monitored, but not being able to know necessarily who the monitor is, then, is meant to discipline ceremony attendees through their own self-monitoring. One can imagine that, in time, it might not be necessary to send a monitor at all if everyone thinks that there might be one present and adjusts their behavior accordingly.

The examples above from Kanagawa and Hiroshima are representative of numerous instances of surveillance in school ceremonies. In other districts, ceremony participants have been assigned seats so as to make readily identifiable the teachers, staff, and students who dissent. Schools also have monitored and recorded the volume with which students and teachers sing the anthem during ceremonies. In 2005, such surveillance took place in Hiroshima Prefecture and in Tokyo, where disciplinary action was taken against eleven and fifty teachers, respectively.<sup>110</sup> Since there are no national legal provisions for enforcing participation in the ceremonies, it has been local boards of education that have enacted rules of compliance, but they only apply to teachers and staff, not to students.<sup>111</sup> That is why teachers have been reprimanded but students have not. One idea behind this is to get students to comply for fear that the authorities will punish their teachers. For some teachers, though, their sense of solidarity with their students outweighs their fear of surveillance or punishment.

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<sup>109</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 200-201.

<sup>110</sup> “Hiroshima: Sing Anthem Loud ... Or Else,” *The Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), April 14, 2005.

<sup>111</sup> The surveillance of teachers in particular follows a tradition in Japanese education of “‘constant’ evaluation’ of teachers by senior school authorities.” McVeigh, Brian J. *The Nature of the Japanese State*, 170.

When students, including some foreign nationals, at one Tokyo school told their teacher that they did not want to stand and sing *Kimigayo*, he also refused to participate in the ritual, saying later, “I refused to stand up because I didn’t want such students to be isolated during the ceremony.”<sup>112</sup> Other teachers in the district voiced concerns about the ceremonies because of the images they evoked from the past, saying that they refused to sing *Kimigayo* because of “its connection to wartime militarism” or because of opposition to “the order that enforces (teachers to sing the song) by power.”<sup>113</sup> Ishihara Shintarō, the Governor of Tokyo and an outspoken revisionist, however, has said that the flag and anthem “are important tools to educate children about national identity” and that teachers are forbidden from imposing their “biased ideas” about *Kimigayo* and the *Hinomaru* on students.<sup>114</sup>

Apparently, some authorities believe that the symbols and the rituals that go along with them are so important that they are worthy of police attention. In the fall of 1999, for example, police in Kure, Hiroshima Prefecture launched an independent probe into local school practices regarding the flag and anthem. In an official investigation, they asked the board of education how it instructed students about the symbols and whether schools in the district were complying with the guidelines for ceremonies. In addition, they wanted to know about the use of the symbols at athletic events, an area outside of the officially prescribed

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<sup>112</sup> Arita Eriko, “Teachers Will Be Punished For Not Singing Anthem,” *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), March 31, 2004.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Arita Eriko, “Teachers Will Be Punished For Not Singing Anthem,” *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), March 31, 2004.

guidelines. Following the action, a member of the Hiroshima Prefecture teachers union, echoing the comments by the principal mentioned above, said, “Their probe reminds us of pre-war special police forces.”<sup>115</sup> In May 2004, a more intensive investigation occurred in Tokyo when police raided the house of a retired high school teacher who had passed out copies of a magazine article about the flag and anthem controversy at a commencement ceremony and asked the attendees not to stand during the playing of *Kimigayo*.<sup>116</sup> In December of that year, he was indicted for obstructing the proceedings of the school after the Tokyo Board of Education filed a complaint against him for the spring protest. In response to the lawsuit, the teacher said, “The indictment is a warning to other teachers that they will be treated like criminals if they don’t follow the orders.”<sup>117</sup>

To those who oppose the ceremonies, “following orders” and keeping their “biased ideas” to themselves sound too much like the imperial era when schools were sites of authoritarian campaigns to control dissent and inculcate the values of submission to authority.<sup>118</sup> The teachers and students who protest against the ceremonial use of the flag and anthem and the transformation of schools into checkpoints are engaged in a counter-hegemonic practice against those politicians and public officials who want to naturalize them and their ritualistic use.

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<sup>115</sup> Takahashi Kazutaka, “Police Flag Probe Irks Teacher Union,” *Mainichi Daily News* (Tokyo), October 4, 1999.

<sup>116</sup> “Ex-teacher’s House Raided Over Hinomaru, Kimigayo Controversies,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), May 21, 2004.

<sup>117</sup> Justin McCurry, “Japan Charges Man Over Anthem Protest,” *The Guardian* (London), December 4, 2004.

<sup>118</sup> See: Byron K. Marshall, *Learning to be Modern*.

In the case of nationalism, naturalizing a certain imagining of the nation as perpetual, immutable, and commonsensical is a hegemonic enterprise. As Eriksen puts it, “Nationalism reifies culture in the sense that it enables people to talk about their culture as though it were constant.”<sup>119</sup> As with the attempt to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine, the re-introduction of the cultural symbols and ceremonies of imperial Japan can be taken as a project aimed at stretching the temporal boundary of the political community, taking it back beyond its postwar re-founding. As with Yasukuni, the use of the flag and anthem can be understood as triggers of a temporal perception of perpetuity. And since the transference of power to authority depends upon the use of discourse and symbols, the employment of *Kimigayo* and the *Hinomaru* becomes a technique for legitimizing the present authorities through allusions to an unbroken line of rule. The very lyrics of *Kimigayo*, which convey the hope for a reign lasting eight thousand generations, suggest authority unconstrained by time. Each singing of it, then becomes the performance of an ethically constitutive story that signals to the singer and listener a sense of the political community’s immutable continuity and the core value of obedience to authority.<sup>120</sup>

It should not be surprising, though, that this struggle is taking place primarily in the schools. As I have shown in previous chapters, education has long been a target of the nationalist project in Japan - as it is in all nations. But the contestation over the ceremonies shows, as Gellner reminds us, “the

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<sup>119</sup> Smith, Anthony D. *National Identity*, 102.

obligatory cultural unity of rules and ruled [...] is indeed inscribed neither in the nature of things, nor in the hearts of men, nor in the pre-conditions of social life in general.”<sup>121</sup> Japanese young people exemplify this observation. For marginal members of society, the students who opposed the ceremonies exhibited a keen and critical political consciousness, one that negates the homogenizing role of mass education. The example of students holding their own ceremonies shows that they are imagining a way of belonging that is a practical and practicable alternative to revisionists’ imagining of the Japanese nation. If revisionist politicians and school officials want to construct an historical memory of the nation as inextricably and favorably bound to the imperial era, then students are positing a different historical memory of the nation, one that begins after 1945.

Appeals to historical memory have played a role in the contentious struggle over the flag and anthem. The Tokyo teacher who was reprimanded for wearing a blue “peace” ribbon on her blouse recalled the association of the two with the war, “Many people in other Asian countries do not want to look at the flag, the symbol of Japanese occupation of their lands, even after 60 years after World War II, and I believe its coercive display at school ceremonies is against our Constitution.”<sup>122</sup> In response to an order from the Tokyo Board of Education that *Kimigayo* be sung with live accompaniment, she said, “I will never play *Kimigayo*. I hope my students remember the existence of a teacher who did not

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<sup>120</sup> The idea of “ethically constitutive stories” comes from: Rogers M. Smith, *Stories of Peoplehood*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>121</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 125.

<sup>122</sup> Sato Miwako, quoted in: “Teachers Threatened with Moves on Nat’l Anthem, Flag,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), November 25, 2003.

play it.”<sup>123</sup> Taking her words as representative of the general movement against the rituals, there is a memory of Japan’s victims in the imperial era, an affirmation of the postwar constitutional state, and the idea that resistance, too, must be remembered. Representing popular revisionist sentiments on the other hand, the author of a letter to the *Asahi shimbun* expressed a sense of threat, writing that if the symbols were so bound to Japan’s past memories, “then the more reason for us to keep them,” and if Japan were to lose them as well as the emperor, “it almost seems we will no longer be Japanese.”<sup>124</sup>

As with the project of rehabilitating Yasukuni Shrine, the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies sheds light on the dynamic of remembering and forgetting that leads to the banality of nationalism. Billig, analyzing the function of flags in reproducing nationalism at the level of banality points out the “continual ‘flagging’, or reminding, of nationhood [...] reminding [that] is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding.”<sup>125</sup> This is the level of nationalism naturalized. The more Yasukuni Shrine, *Kimigayo*, and *Hinomaru* become accepted symbols of the nation, their images glimpsed perhaps occasionally and unconsciously in the periphery, the more they become “simultaneously present and absent [...] without the conscious activity of individuals remembering.”<sup>126</sup> Once patterns of social life become habitually established, “thoughts, reactions and symbols become turned into

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<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Mogi Chikako, “Flag and Anthem Still Sensitive Symbols for Japanese,” *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), April 28, 1989.

<sup>125</sup> *Banal Nationalism*, 8.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

routine habits, and, thus, they become *enhabited* [sic]. The result is that the past is *enhabited* in the present in a dialectic of forgotten remembrance.”<sup>127</sup>

In this section I have examined two projects carried out by revisionists - the attempt to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine and the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies in Japanese public schools. These projects aimed at affecting Japanese political culture, especially collective identity and historical memory, and they occurred at the same time that revisionists in government challenged the minimal military consensus that was an outcome of the first reactive phase of postwar politics. As I showed in the first section of this chapter, revisionists’ moved to undermine Article 9 through changes in military policy from 1976 through the end of the century in order, as Nakasone put it, to break “the constitutional taboo” and this resulted in increased military spending, the acquisition of offensive weapons systems, the admission of nuclear weapons in Japanese territory, moves toward the militarization of space (SDI), introduction of a legal framework for dispatching the SDF overseas, and a reformulation of the U.S-Japan security framework that greatly expanded the scope of operations in which the SDF could participate. The continued valorization of constitutional antimilitarism, however, continued to constrain Japanese government’s ability to utilize these changes. As I have demonstrated above, the valorization of the Peace Constitution is complimented by public opinion and public action that exhibits a wariness of attempts to rehabilitate symbols and practices associated with Japan’s imperial past. That there is significant public opposition to symbols

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<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

associated with self-sacrifice for the nation and obedience to authority must be especially troubling to revisionists. Even if Article 9 were amended, the fact that constitutional patriotism is a predominant characteristic of Japanese collective identity and nationalism is not does not bode well for revisionists. In addition, the low willingness to sacrifice further complicates the ability to rely on the public in times of armed conflict. As I show in the brief section that follows, the low willingness to fight for the country continues to be a persistent attitude of the Japanese, sixty-five years after the war and twenty years into the second reactive sequence described above.

### *The Willingness to Fight*

One attitudinal indicator that shows both the extent to which Japanese political culture has changed since the prewar years and the internalization of antimilitarism by the Japanese public is the measure of people's "willingness to fight" for their country. Whereas the prewar *kokutai* ideology was premised on Japanese subjects' willingness to die for the Emperor, the 1947 Constitution represented an institutionalized renunciation of war and the maintenance of any war potential as a fundamental law of the polity, a foundational element of postwar Japan. As I have argued throughout this work, the re-founding of Japan along these lines led to a change in collective identity such that fewer people think in nationalistic terms and more think in terms of constitutional patriotism. Whereas a key aspect of nationalism as an ideology is the notion that the nation

is preserved through the blood sacrifice of its members, constitutional patriotism is premised on allegiance to the fundamental laws of the political community. In the case of postwar Japan, that law - especially the right to live in peace and Article 9 - all but precludes the necessity of dying for one's country. Despite revisionists' efforts to re-introduce the will to sacrifice through veneration of the Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead and obedience to state authority through compulsory flag and anthem ceremonies that symbolically hark back to the prewar national essence, the Japanese public's understanding and general acceptance of postwar antimilitarism seems to have inoculated them from efforts to revive the will to sacrifice.

One example of the Japanese public's low "willingness to fight" was the 2003 survey of students mentioned above that found that only 13 percent said that they would use force in resisting an invading army. As a point of comparison, the 1999 results of a wave of the World Values Survey (WVS) conducted in the United States showed that in response to the statement, "Of course, we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that, would you be willing to fight for your country?" 72.7 percent of all respondents and 60 percent of those aged 15-29 answered "Yes".<sup>128</sup> Even if we were to aggregate those Japanese students who would resist with or without force, the combined 42 percent is markedly lower than the 60 percent of US young people willing to fight for their country. This is not a perfect comparison, however, because the

question format, demographic segment, and year of data collection are not identical, but the results are indicative of a much lower willingness among Japanese youth (as compared to American young people) to resort to violent or militaristic solutions to international conflicts. A better point of comparison is multi-wave, cross-national data for multiple countries on an identical survey item.

Between 1981 and 2005, the World Values Survey (WVS) conducted five waves of public opinion polling in Japan. In each of the five years (1981, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005) the “willingness to fight” survey item mentioned above appeared. The *highest* proportion of “Yes” responses was 34 percent in 1981. The *lowest* proportion was 20.4 percent in 1990. As the results for 1981 indicate, thirty-four years after the establishment of the postwar constitution, just one-third of Japanese expressed a willingness to fight for their country in a time of war. The 1990-2006 data shown in Figure One below, indicate a willingness to fight of between only one-fifth and one-fourth of Japanese respondents.<sup>129</sup>

For comparison, I include in Figure One results for the identical WVS item for the United States, (West) Germany and South Korea. A comparison of the data for Japan with the others shows that across all waves of the WVS conducted in the four countries, Japan’s *highest* proportion of “Yes” responses (34.2 percent in 1981) is notably lower than the *lowest* proportion of “Yes” responses in the United States (63.1 percent in 2006) and South Korea (72.7

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<sup>128</sup> Data were obtained via the World Values Survey “Online Data Analysis” portal. (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>) The World Values Survey bears no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

percent in 2005). Only the low mark for Germany during the period (37.4 percent in 2006) comes close to Japan's high mark.

While the WVS item concerning a willingness to fight for one's country helps to show that post-war Japanese political culture is characterized by attitudes indicative of an unwillingness to engage in violence in defense of the country, it alone is not enough to lead us to the conclusion that Japan's antimilitarist political culture is the result of explicitly antimilitarist political institutions, namely the 1947 Constitution. The argument *is* bolstered, though, when we engage in a more nuanced comparison of the data from Japan with data from Germany and South Korea.

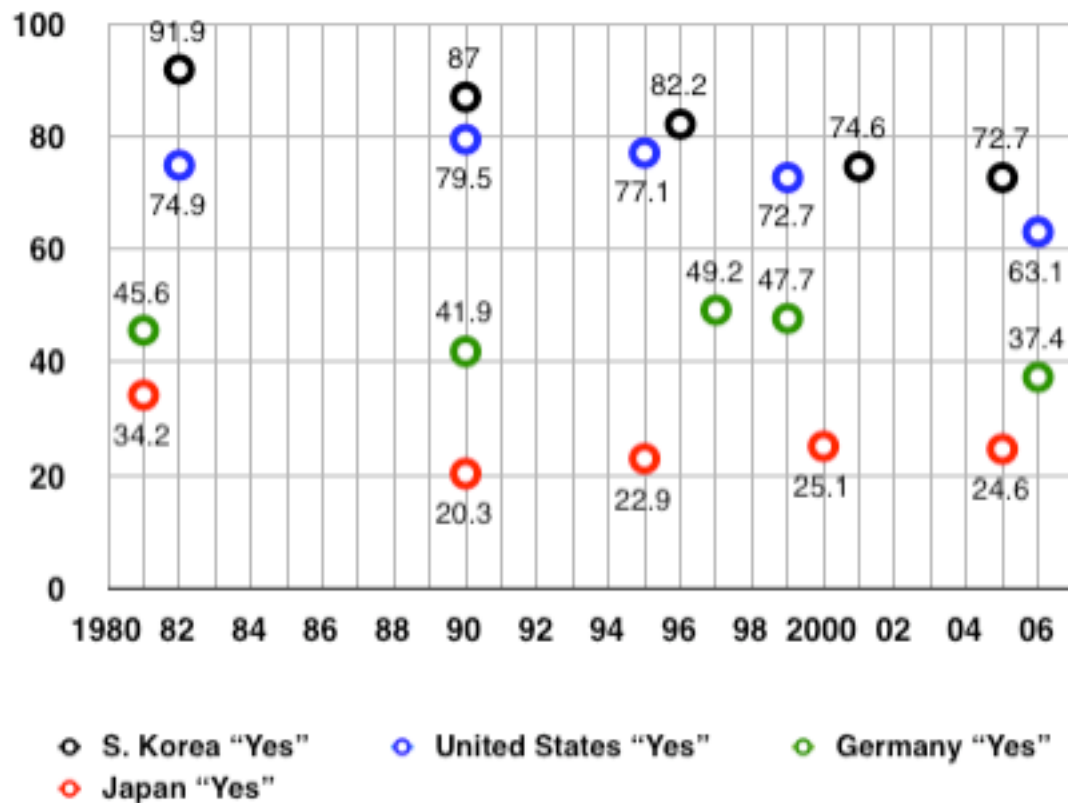
Looking just at the WVS data on this item for Germany and Japan and considering other points of comparison bolsters the argument that Japan's democratic *and* antimilitarist constitution has had an effect on the formation of Japan's democratic *and* antimilitarist postwar political culture, at least in terms of people's attitudes. Obviously if we can "control" for other variables, it will be easier to determine the likelihood that Japan's constitution shaped those postwar attitudes. Comparing Japan and Germany, we know that both countries had relatively illiberal political cultures and highly authoritarian governments leading up to and through the war years. In other words, we know that they had similar starting points in terms of their respective political institutions<sup>130</sup> and political

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<sup>129</sup> Data were obtained via the World Values Survey "Online Data Analysis" portal. (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>) The World Values Survey bears no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

<sup>130</sup> As noted, the 1890 Meiji Constitution was modeled on the Prussian constitution of 1850.

Figure One: "Willing to Fight for Your Country?"



cultures at the time of their defeat in 1945, so the change in Japanese attitudes toward militarism cannot be thought of as a natural reaction to or rejection of the pre-surrender period, although such a rejection may have had an effect in both countries. We also should note that the two countries suffered similar fates as a consequence of the war in terms of human and material losses, so we can rule out Japan's defeat in total war as the key explanation for the development of a democratic and antimilitarist political culture since it was not unique in that regard. For that matter, South Korea also suffered significant human and material losses during the Korean War.

One condition that Japan, Germany, and South Korea shared was occupation by foreign powers, most notably the U.S. What was fundamentally different about those occupations, though, in terms of the resultant political institutions was that while both Germany and Japan adopted democratic governance, only Japan's was democratic *and* antimilitarist. While the Federal Republic of Germany did not re-establish an army until 1955, there was never a constitutional prohibition of war or the standing army. Japan's SDF, established just one year earlier, continues to exist in the context of Article 9. Indeed, the SDF is still not legally recognized as an army.

The fact that the U.S. also occupied South Korea in the form of trusteeship from 1945-1948 is another indication that it was not occupation exclusively by the U.S. that patterned Japan's antimilitarist attitudes, especially when we note South Korea's relatively high rating on the "willingness to fight" item. As I have pointed out, in Japan there was a critical juncture during which the public came to accept political institutions that were democratic *and* antimilitarist before the occupation turned toward anti-communism and with it a de-purge and rehabilitation of leaders from Japan's imperial, militarist, and authoritarian regime. In South Korea, however, the U.S. military government shunned the democratic "People's Committees" from the start and instead supported the minority of the population that was reliably anti-communists - many of whom had been Japanese collaborators during the colonial period.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Bruce Cummings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (NY: W.W. Norton, 2005).

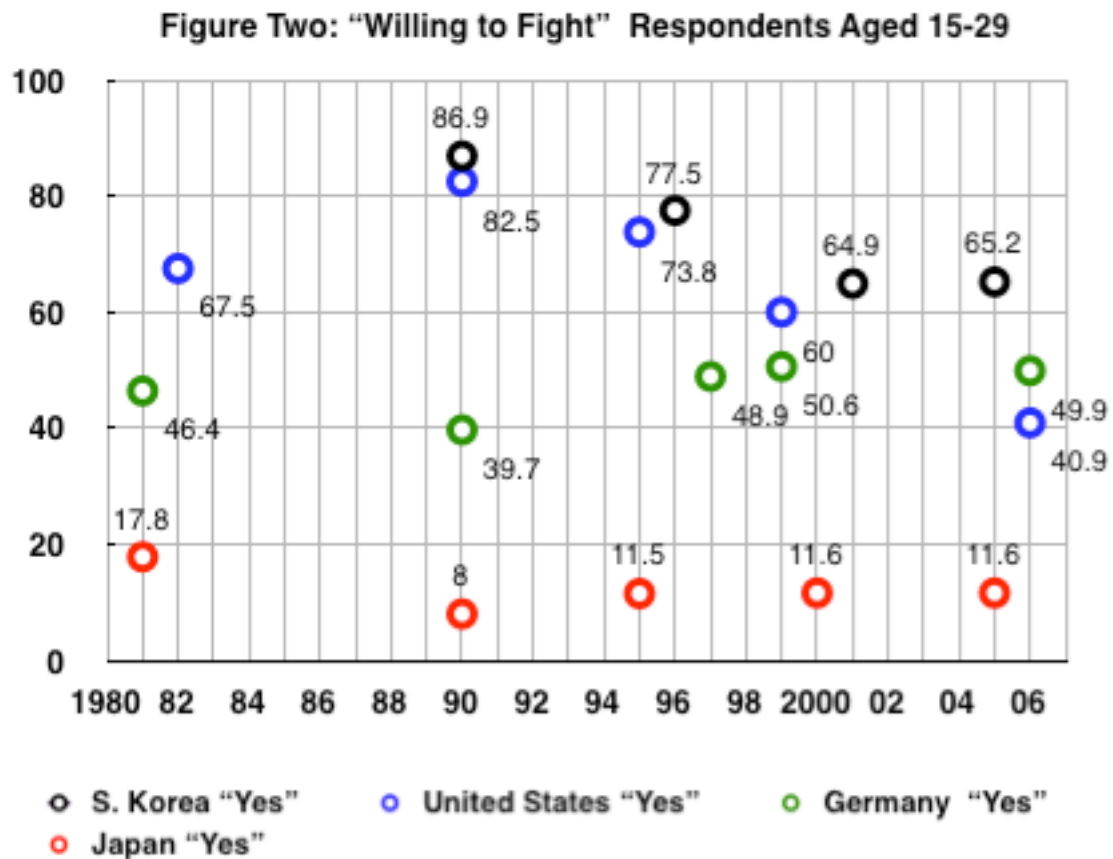
It seems possible, then, that the fact that Japan's fundamental political institutions are explicitly antimilitarist might have something to do with the Japanese public's general unwillingness to fight for their country, a proxy for the willingness to sacrifice. Going back to the data, over a twenty-five-year-period, the results from Japan on the "willingness to fight" item show that with one exception fewer than a quarter of Japanese were willing to fight whereas the number willing to fight in Germany, with one exception, was consistently 42-49 percent. I would argue that the data suggest, then, that it is possible not just to make a successful transition from authoritarianism to democracy but to make that transition to a particular kind of democracy – one premised on antimilitarism. Finally, I would argue that the Japanese case demonstrates the importance of political institutions in providing a basis for political culture. Specifically, I trace the persistent, relative unwillingness of Japanese to fight in the defense of their country to the fact that the postwar constitution does not recognize such a necessity and provides no institutional arrangement by which the state can order citizen-sovereigns to fight - to kill and die - for the nation.

The data from the same five waves of surveys shows an even more pronounced unwillingness to fight on the part of Japanese young people, those aged 15-29.<sup>132</sup> As Figure Two shows, the percentage of Japanese respondents aged 15-29 who answered in the affirmative on the "willingness to fight" item was consistently around half or less than half of the overall response rate for Japan

on the item as presented in Figure One. It is young people who predominantly make of the fighting forces of armies everywhere. The exceptionally low willingness to fight in war that Japanese young people exhibit must be a point of concern for revisionists who advocate that Japan become a “normal nation”, one with a military that has fully developed offensive capabilities and that can project its force anywhere in the world in the name of collective self-defense. Even without such changes, Japanese young people’s low willingness to fight must worry and even embarrass Japanese military “hawks” and revisionists. These are the same members of society who supported the re-introduction of mandatory national flag and anthem ceremonies and the program to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine, both of which serve to raise young people’s sense of nationalism and symbolically allude to the *kokutai* imagining of obedience to divine authority and the willingness to die for the emperor as the means of (re)generating the nation and achieving deification.

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<sup>132</sup> The World Values Survey does not have information available for the 1982 survey in South Korea showing data sorted by respondent’s age, hence the omission of that information in Figure Two.



Perhaps Japanese young people's low willingness to fight is a result not only of Japan's generally antimilitarist political culture but also, at least in some measure, the result of peace education. As I have demonstrated in previous chapters, the Japanese Teachers Union has been a consistent proponent of peace education and educators have long struggled against national government officials' attempts to re-write history through revisionist textbook screening guidelines, a topic to which I return in the chapter that follows. Though not part of

the national curriculum, many teachers include peace education in their classroom lessons and some have joined in national organizations to promote peace education. One such organization, the New English Teachers' Association (*Shineigokyōiku Kenkyūkai*) is an all-volunteer organization with 500 member-teachers. According to association member Nara Katsuyuki, an English teacher since 1971, during regular English classes the organization's members sometimes teach about the Japanese "victimizers" and the "victims" of the war, Article 9 as a "treasure of the whole world" and a "beacon of hope and peace", and the abolition of nuclear weapons.<sup>133</sup> The view of teachers like Nara is that "the biggest reason for [Article 9] remaining unchanged is that people's awareness for defending Article 9 has been extremely great."<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, if it were not for Article 9, Nara insists, Japan's history since 1945 would have turned out quite differently - "without the peace-oriented constitution Japan might have dispatched its army to Korea in the early 1950s and Vietnam in the 1970s."<sup>135</sup> These are the kinds of messages about the constitution that teachers who engage in peace education impart to their students, and it may help account for the strong unwillingness to fight for their country by Japanese young people.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have traced the emergence of a second reactive sequence in postwar Japanese political history. As I have demonstrated,

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<sup>133</sup> Email correspondence from Nara Katsuyuki to the author, September 16, 2009.

<sup>134</sup> Email correspondence from Nara Katsuyuki to the author, September 28, 2009.

successive LDP prime ministers challenged the minimal military posture established as the policy consensus of the mid-1970s. This reactive sequence proceeded through the de facto re-interpretation of Article 9 through a revision of military policy rather than through amendment of the constitution. In addition, revisionists initiated two projects aimed at fostering nationalism. One was the attempt by prime ministers to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine and with it veneration of the will to sacrifice for the nation, and the other was the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies in public schools. As I have demonstrated, the nature of the public opposition to the use of those symbols indicated the degree to which a significant number of Japanese continue both to reject notions of collective identity and historical memory based on the kokutai imaginings of the Japanese nation and to valorize democratic antimilitarism.

Finally, as I have argued using cross-case data from the World Values Survey, despite revisionists' program of re-militarization and the attempt to rehabilitate imperial symbols and practices associated with the will to sacrifice and obedience to authority, the Japanese public exhibits a particularly low willingness to fight for their country as compared to other countries. This attitudinal orientation is particularly pronounced in the Japanese young people (15-29-year-olds). This may be, in part, due to the long history of teachers conducting peace education in Japanese schools and despite programs aimed at revitalizing obedience to authority and the will to sacrifice.

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<sup>135</sup> Email correspondence from Nara Katsuyuki to the author, October 15, 2009.

## Chapter Six: Constitutional Patriotism vs. Nationalism

In the previous chapter I argued that a second reactive sequence in Japanese postwar politics began in the late 1970s. This new sequence of reaction against constitutional antimilitarism has involved abandonment of the minimal military posture consensus that resulted as an outcome of the first reactive phase, overseas deployments for the SDF, and a program to affect Japanese political culture through the rehabilitation of imperial symbols and practices associated with self-sacrifice for the nation and enhanced state control of education. I suggested that these latter moves were part of revisionists' efforts to challenge the collective identity and historical memory of the postwar Japanese polity by challenging the norms of constitutional patriotism. While there was not a concerted effort on the part of revisionists in political or civil society to amend the constitution during the early part of this reactive sequence, there was a perception that, as Higuchi put it, "concealed revisionism" was underway, an "attitude of the holders of political power who would ignore the rules imposed by the Constitution and attempt therefore to have us forget the constitution's fundamental value."<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter I analyze the further development of the second reactive sequence from the last years of the twentieth century through the first decade of the twenty-first. I begin this analysis by tracing the recurrence of parliamentary

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<sup>1</sup> Yoichi Higuchi, "The Constitution and the Emperor System: Is Revisionism Alive?", *Law & Contemporary Problems* 53, no. 1 (1990): 51-52.

efforts to amend the constitution at the end of the 1990s. With the end of the Cold War, a shake-up occurred in Japanese party politics that led to the eclipse of the Japan Socialist Party as the main opposition party and the eventual rise of the Democratic Party of Japan, culminating in their control of the Diet and the formation of the first DPJ-led government in 2009. A key question that I pose in regard to this reorganization of the party system is: why did the debate over revising Japan's fundamental law come up at this time despite continued public support for the postwar constitution?

A second aim of this chapter is to analyze the rapid changes in military policy that have occurred in the first decade of the twenty-first century. These changes include the first-ever deployment of the SDF to an active combat zone, adoption of a legal framework for the militarization of space, and a loosening of the policy against arms exports. With the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. and the U.S.-led wars against Afghanistan and Iraq that followed, Prime Minister Koizumi (2001-2006) was able to use the LDP's advantage in the Diet to pass new legislation that expanded the legal uses of the SDF and brought Japanese military aims still closer to those of the U.S. government. The LDP prime ministers who followed Koizumi before the DPJ swept his party out of office continued in that vein. In this chapter, I ask how changing international circumstances and changes in the party system provided the LDP with these new opportunities to advance militarization.

Third, I examine revisionists' attempts to affect Japanese political culture through the continuation of the program to re-orient Japanese collective identity and historical memory by supplanting constitutional patriotism with a revisionist nationalism. Beginning with Hashimoto Ryūtarō in 1996 and continuing through Asō Tarō (2008-2009), a number of governments were formed under the leadership of revisionist prime ministers, leaders who represented LDP factions most intent on constitutional and historical revision, including Koizumi who made regular, annual visits to Yasukuni Shrine from 2001 through 2006. Under these prime ministers, revisionists continued in their attempts to make a particular imagining of the nation the object of popular valorization rather than the principles enshrined in the constitution, particularly democratic antimilitarism. In particular, they added to the "normal nation" rhetorical strategy with LDP Prime Minister Abe Shinzō's (2006-2007) campaign to brand Japan as a "beautiful country" (*utsukushii kuni*), and they achieved one of their long-held objectives, the revision of the Fundamental Law of Education. In the section dealing with these changes below, I ask what the policy changes they affected revealed about their notions of collective identity and historical memory and ask how the public and civil society groups understood these changes.

In the final section of this chapter I provide the first scholarly analysis of the Article 9 Association movement in contemporary Japanese politics. In 2004, nine public figures launched the inaugural Article 9 Association (*Kyūjōnoka*), a group formed to organize civil society for counter-action against any attempt to revoke

or amend the antimilitarist plank of the constitution. Following the example of the original Article 9 Association (hereafter A9A), Japanese citizens spontaneously began forming their own groups organized in defense of constitutional antimilitarism, and within five years more than 7,000 autonomous A9A's were active around the country. In my analysis of the A9A movement I ask several questions. How have individual A9A's formed and what is their relationship to each other? What kinds of activities are A9A's carrying out? How do A9A members understand their activism as an organized counter-reaction to the revisionist program aimed at military policy and political culture? Finally, what evidence is there that A9A's are affecting public opinion toward the issue of constitutional revision?

### *Renewed Calls for Constitutional Revision in Political Society*

In order to explain why the public debate over revising the constitution re-emerged at the end of the twentieth century and intensified in the first decade of the twenty-first, it is necessary to understand the changes that occurred in Japanese party politics following the end of the Cold War. If scandals and the collapse of the bubble economy were responsible for the weakening of the LDP at the dawn of the 1990s, the dissolution of the Soviet Union had an impact on Japan's leftist parties, especially the JSP and DSP. As I argue below, the result was a changing opportunity structure favoring revisionists by the end of the decade.

For many, the end of the Cold War called into question the JSP's *raison d'être*. An early sign of this was the outcome of the 1993 House of Representatives election when the party lost 66 of its 136 seats. The following year Murayama Tomiichi, the first Socialist prime minister (1994-1996) since the occupation years, reversed over forty years of party policy by recognizing the constitutionality of the SDF and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in order to form a coalition government with the LDP.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Murayama accepted the legitimacy of *Hinomaru* and *Kimigayo* as the national flag and anthem. These concessions on political institutions *and* political culture further eroded JSP support. In 1994, the Diet passed electoral reforms that replaced Japan's old, multi-member electoral districts with 300 single-member constituencies plus 180 proportional seats chosen by the closed list system. As I will show below, this attempt at reform actually led to disproportionate power in the Diet for the LDP relative to its share of the popular vote. The following year the DSP dissolved to join in formation of the New Frontier Party, which would itself dissolve in 1998.<sup>3</sup> When the JSP's share of the House of Representatives fell to only 15 seat following the 1996 election, some of its remaining members defected to the DPJ, and the JSP reformed as the Social Democratic Party (SDP).<sup>4</sup> The LDP's gains in the same election resulted in the formation of a coalition government headed by

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<sup>2</sup> A nationwide public opinion poll conducted by NHK found that 38% of respondents approved of the SDP's policy change while 41% opposed it. The remaining 21% did not know or had no response. NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corp.), 1 December, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> 新進党 *Shinshintō*

<sup>4</sup> 社会民主党 *Shakai Minshutō*, often abbreviated to 社民党 *Shamintō*.

LDP Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō, re-establishing LDP control of the government for the next thirteen years.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time that the JSP and DSP were falling into disarray in the mid-1990s, the debate over whether or not to revise the constitution that had begun after the Gulf War gained steam. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* drew attention to the issue by publishing a proposed draft of a revised constitution in 1994. The following year, the paper reported that 50 percent of respondents in a national poll favored revision of the constitution while only 31 percent opposed such a move. Just four years earlier, in 1991, the paper had reported that 33 percent favored revision versus 51 percent against.<sup>6</sup>

With the JSP displaced as the main opposition party and with public opinion softening on the issue of revision, the DPJ established a Constitutional Research Group in 1998, and the following year New Komeito established a Constitutional Research Group of its own.<sup>7</sup> In 2000, Diet Constitutional Research Groups were officially launched in both Houses of the Diet, and the LDP published its “Basic Principles for Creating a New Constitution” which called for a recognition of Japan’s right to engage in collective defense under the UN.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In the 1996 House of Representatives election the LDP won 39 percent of votes cast resulting in 56 percent of the seats in the chamber.

<sup>6</sup> These figures pertain to the question of revising the constitution *in general* and not specifically to revising Article 9.

<sup>7</sup> Many of the DPJ’s members at the time, including future DPJ Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio, were former members of the LDP, and some of them, including Hatoyama, had supported the idea of revising Article 9. New Komeito’s interest in constitutional revision, however, was not centered on amending Article 9.

<sup>8</sup> The Harvard University’s Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies has an authoritative chronology of the debate on constitutional revision:  
<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rijs/crrp/chronology/index.html> (Viewed on 2.19.10).

Efforts at constitutional revision accelerated under Prime Minister Koizumi, especially after the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States. Speaking on the floor of the Diet the next month, Koizumi claimed that the SDF did, in fact, have military capabilities, a statement that ran counter to the official government interpretation of Article 9 at the time. The same month, the House of Representative's Constitutional Research Group announced that it had consulted with specialists endorsed by both the LDP and the DPJ and that there were calls for constitutional revision from both sides.

In 2004, the Policy Affairs Research Council of the LDP issued a report with recommendations such as explicit constitutional recognition of the SDF "as a national armed force responsible for national territorial defense and the support of international security", a statement on the duty of citizens to defend the country, unambiguous claims to the right of individual and collective self-defense, and a proposed Basic Law for National Defense that would eliminate the need for *ad hoc* legislative approval for overseas SDF dispatches. The following year, the LDP's Constitution Drafting Committee, the members of which were largely long-time proponents of constitutional revision, published a final draft revision that called for, among other things, the substitution of the word "security" for the words "renunciation of war" in the title of Chapter 2 of the constitution, the renaming of the SDF to the Self-Defense Military (*Jieigun*), and an explicit

statement asserting the military's role in international cooperation for the preservation of peace and security.<sup>9</sup>

It is important to note that at this time there was no broad, grassroots movement in favor of constitutional revision. Outside of political society, the most vocal call for constitutional revision at this time was from the Japanese business community. In December 2004, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's panel on constitutional revision released a report containing several proposals including "stating the necessity of military forces to defend the nation and restraints on excessive individualism".<sup>10</sup> Soon after, the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (*Keizai Doyukai*) released its own call for constitutional revision, one that criticized the present preamble as being "too pacifist".<sup>11</sup> The Japan Business Federation (*Nippon Keidanren*) soon followed suit with a proposal for revision of Article 9 that included recognition of the SDF and an explicit statement on Japan's right to engage in collective self-defense by taking part in military operations to defend its allies.<sup>12</sup>

In March 2005 the Constitutional Research Groups of both Houses issued their final reports on the issue of constitutional revision. The Lower House's report had the support of the LDP, DPJ, and New Komeito and called for constitutional recognition of the SDF, however the Upper House's report, reflecting a lack of consensus among its members, made no proposals on

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<sup>9</sup> Christopher W. Hughes, "Why Japan Could Revise Its Constitution and What It Would Mean for Japanese Security Policy," *Orbis* 50, no. 4 (Autumn 2006): 736.

<sup>10</sup> "Business Groups Seek Reform of Constitution", *The Daily Yomiuri* (Tokyo), 4 January, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> "Business Lobby to Back Amending Constitution", *Kyodo News* (Tokyo), 13 January, 2005

revision. The following month, the DPJ's Constitutional Research Group released its draft proposal for constitutional revision in which it called for an explicit "right to self-defense" and a provision permitting collective security measures under UN auspices.<sup>13</sup>

The results of the 2005 House of Representatives election further cleared the way for constitutional revision. As a result of the election, the LDP captured 61 percent of the seats and its coalition partner New Komeito captured another 6 percent, thus ensuring the two-thirds majority necessary to pass a constitutional amendment or to force through legislation rejected by the House of Councillors. In addition, the pro-revision DPJ captured another 24 percent of the seats. The only remaining parties of the Left, the SDP and JCP, captured less than 2 percent of the seats each.<sup>14</sup> McCormack has pointed out, however, that the governing coalition's strength in the chamber (67 percent of the seats) was illusory in terms of its public support since the LDP and New Komeito had actually won fewer than half of the votes cast.<sup>15</sup>

It is possible that LDP-New Komeito gains in the 2005 election led to overconfidence among constitutional revisionists, especially in the LDP. Much of Koizumi's appeal stemmed from the fact that he had cast himself as an uncompromising reformer by taking on his own party on the issue of postal

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<sup>13</sup> The Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies. Available online at: <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rijs/crrp/chronology/y1997-2006.html#y2005> (Viewed 2.19.10).

<sup>14</sup> Of the 480 seats contested, the LDP won 296, New Komeito won 31, the DPJ won 113, the SDP won 7, and the JCP won 9. Independents and candidates from other minor parties won 24 seats.

<sup>15</sup> Gavan McCormack, "Koizumi's Kingdom of Illusion", *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. Available online at: <http://japanfocus.org/-Gavan-McCormack/1924> (Viewed on 4.22.10).

privatization, not on the issue of constitutional amendment. Revisionists may have also been bolstered by the fact that the public's support for constitutional revision reached a postwar high of 65 percent in 2004, but support for revision of Article 9 was still below the 50 percent necessary to pass an amendment through the required national referendum process - 44 percent *for* revision of Article 9 and 47 percent *against* revision.<sup>16</sup> As I show in the last section of this chapter below, 2004 was the year that the Article 9 Association burst onto the Japanese political scene, and it is fair to say that revisionists were not prepared for the mobilization of civil society in support of maintaining Article 9 that followed.

Legislatively, the campaign to revise the constitution made progress in May 2007 when Prime Minister Abe's LDP-led government passed a national referendum bill in the Diet (effective 18 May 2010) establishing the legal procedures for revising the constitution, thus solving a logistical problem that had existed since 1947. Emboldened by the passage of the first law in sixty years to set out a procedure for constitutional revision and ignoring the fact that public opinion favoring revision had dropped to 46 percent, LDP Secretary-General Nakagawa Hidenao boasted that candidates elected to the House of Councillors in the up-coming national election set for July of that year would "invariably be involved in proposing a new constitution during their six-year term."<sup>17</sup> The main opposition Democratic Party of Japan would go on to win control of the House of

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<sup>16</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

<sup>17</sup> Nakagawa Hidenao quoted in "National Referendum Law", *Asahi Shimbun*, 15 May, 2007.

Councillors that summer, however, and public opinion favoring revision would continue to decline.

### *Advancing Militarization after 9-11*

At the same time that revisionists in the LDP were coming closer to realizing their long-held goal of amending the constitution, they also undertook new measures to advance militarization as a matter of policy. As with the constitutional revision issue, the political changes of the 1990s that had diminished the power of the JSP and DSP presented new opportunities for those in the LDP who wanted Japan to possess a “normal” military, one that was free from the constraints of Article 9. The 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. provided revisionists with a reason for advancing militarization without waiting for constitutional change, and as a result the government advanced several ad hoc measures. One month after the attacks, the Diet enacted the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law permitting logistical support for U.S.-led coalition forces, despite public opinion polls showing that those opposed to a law enabling the SDF to provide “rear-area support for the American military” outweighed those in favor of such a law, though by a close margin.<sup>18</sup> With passage of the law, the government dispatched the MSDF to the Arabian Sea. One year later, Koizumi took advantage of a number of defections from the DPJ to force through the dispatch of an Aegis destroyer despite objections from the coalition partner New Komeito, opposition parties, and even some within the LDP. The government,

remaining sensitive to public opinion, however, did not use the Aegis to assist in the March 2003 invasion of Iraq and redeployed it to Japan within nine months.<sup>19</sup>

Prime Minister Koizumi had long advocated revising Article 9 and in 2003 he argued that the SDF “should be identified as the nation’s army.”<sup>20</sup> Under his leadership in 2003 Japan and the U.S. agreed to cooperate on a ballistic missile defense system and Japan eased its arms embargo rules to allow exports of missile interceptors to the U.S. for joint-development of the system. That same year the LDP pushed the Law Concerning Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq through the Diet, thus preparing the way for the first-ever SDF deployment to an active combat region.<sup>21</sup> By the end of 2003, Air Self-Defense Forces were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar, preparing for the arrival of Ground Self-Defense Forces in Samawah, Iraq in early 2004. The SDF dispatch to Iraq was highly controversial as evidenced by strong disagreements between the political parties and even within the LDP about Japan’s involvement and because of public opinion that was “consistently and overwhelmingly” against the war.<sup>22</sup> Kambashima argues that one indication of the

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<sup>18</sup> Paul Midford, *Japanese Public Opinion and the War of Terrorism*, 23.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>20</sup> “Article 9, Iraq and Revision of the Japanese Constitution,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 3 November, 2003.

<sup>21</sup> With the opening line, “Major combat operations in Iraq have ended”, both the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted their “Outline of the Basic Plan regarding Response Measures Based on the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq” on their respective websites. ([http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/policy/2003/031209housin\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/policy/2003/031209housin_e.html) and [http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle\\_e/iraq/issue2003/law\\_o.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/iraq/issue2003/law_o.html))

<sup>22</sup> For an analysis of maneuvers aimed at overcoming disagreement within the Diet, see: Tomohito Shinoda, “Japan’s Top-Down Policy Process to Dispatch the SDF to Iraq,” *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 1 (April 2006): 71-91. For an analysis of public opinion opposing the U.S.-led war against Iraq, see: Paul Midford, *Japanese Public Opinion and the War on Terrorism*, 29-31.

public's opposition to the military use of the SDF was a marked drop in Koizumi's public approval rating following his cabinet's June 2004 approval of Japan's participation in the multinational force headed by the U.S., a shift away from his original rhetoric calling the SDF dispatch "neutral and humanitarian".<sup>23</sup>

In 2006, Japan and the U.S. agreed on the terms of a Defense Policy Review Initiative. According to Hughes there were several aspects of the agreement that further reinforced the public's perception that Japan was "moving towards the increased militarization of its security stance, and [...] emerging as a more assertive, 'normal' military power and reliable U.S. ally."<sup>24</sup> The impetus for the new understanding came from the U.S. which initiated the review process in 2002 and aimed to integrate Japan into the U.S.'s post-9/11 global military plans. One result of the initiative was an agreement on the realignment of U.S. bases in Japan, an issue that has proven more problematic than either side may have realized. At the time of this writing, the Hatoyama government, struggling to implement an agreement forged by the LDP, faces its most serious challenge as the DPJ prime minister vacillates on a plan to construct a new U.S. Marine base in Okinawa in the face of dwindling public opinion and rising popular protests against the plan (90,000 Okinawans rallied on 25 April 2010).<sup>25</sup> What is also controversial about the agreement, however, is that it changes the primary

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<sup>23</sup> Ikuo Kabashima, "Opinion Polls in 2004," *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, 5, no. 2 (November 2004): 335-337.

<sup>24</sup> Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation*, 12.

<sup>25</sup> Martin Fackler, "90,000 Protest U.S. Base on Okinawa", *New York Times*, 25 April, 2010.

function of the U.S.'s bases in Japan from defending its Pacific ally to carrying out its global military campaigns.

In a further sign of militarization, in January 2007 the government transformed the Defense Agency (*Bōeichō*) into the cabinet-level Ministry of Defense (*Bōeishō*). That same year, Prime Minister Abe, the maternal grandson of former Prime Minister Kishi and a longtime advocate of amending Article 9, arguing for the use of the military in collective self-defense, convened a 13-member government panel, including former officials of the Foreign and Defense ministries, tasked with reviewing the ban on collective self-defense in order to determine under what conditions and to what extent the government might use the military to aid an ally under attack. After its formation, the chair of the panel, former Ambassador to the U.S. Yanai Shunji, told the press that no member of the panel had commented negatively on Japan's use of the right of collective defense and that they were approaching their task on the understanding that "the security situation in Northeast Asia has changed dramatically."<sup>26</sup> The panel announced a November 2007 deadline for issuing its report on Japan's right to collective self-defense, but after the LDP's crushing defeat in the July House of Councillor election and Abe's resignation as prime minister in September, his successor, Fukuda Yasuo (2007-2008), shelved the report and downplayed the issue of constitutional revision altogether.

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<sup>26</sup> Yanai Shunji quoted in Hiroko Nakata, "Abe's Panel on Examining Collective Defense Kicks Off", *The Japan Times* (Tokyo) 19 May, 2007.

In an incident that caused the government much embarrassment in June 2007, the JCP unveiled internal GSDF documents showing that the Force's intelligence corps had engaged in monitoring citizen groups opposed to its activities, including those opposed to the dispatch of forces to Iraq, and surveillance of journalists and religious groups. The documents revealed that "a total of 293 organizations and individuals (including senior high school students) from 41 prefectures, were subjected to the GSDF surveillance."<sup>27</sup> The documents, which the GSDF admitted compiling, recorded "the times and places of anti-war meetings, the names of participants and details of what they said" as well as trends in the antiwar movement, photos of demonstrations and individuals, and graphs charting the numbers of demonstrations that took place as well as detailed descriptions of the activities of journalists accompanying SDF forces to Sawawah, Iraq, members of the Diet and local assemblies, and an unnamed reporter of the *Asahi*.<sup>28</sup> For those who opposed the government's call to revise Article 9 and its expansion of military powers, the leak reinforced their fears that the revision project was aimed at enhancing the government's powers in ways that resembled the power of the state in the imperial era.

As mentioned above, the government's decision to deploy the SDF to Iraq was never popular with the Japanese public, and one way citizens protested was by filing suits against the government for violating the constitution. In the first year of the ASDF dispatch alone, citizens filed dozens of suits in Hokkaido, Sendai,

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<sup>27</sup> "GSDF Monitoring Civic Group Activities", *Kyodo News* (Tokyo), 7 June, 2007.

Tochigi, Tokyo, Yamanashi, Shizuoka, Nagoya, Kyoto, Okayama, Kumamoto, and Osaka. In one strategy, citizens in Tokyo began filing one suit per day with the goal of filing 100 in total. Plaintiffs had no success with the legal approach until April 2008 when the Nagoya High Court ruled that the use of the ASDF to airlift combat troops from other countries into combat zones within Iraq violated the first paragraph of Article 9, but the Court rejected the plaintiffs' demands that the ASDF mission be terminated and that they receive compensatory damages. Although they effectively lost the case, the plaintiffs were bolstered by the ruling and by the judge's opinion that "the right to live in peace" is a fundamental guarantee of the constitution.

In May of the same year, over 30,000 people gathered in Tokyo for the Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War organized by a committee of 50 nongovernmental organizations and 50 individuals. The goal of the conference was to preserve Japan's "Peace Constitution" and promote it as a model for constitutional revision in other countries.<sup>29</sup> Simultaneous pro-Article 9 events were held in Hiroshima, Osaka, and Sendai.<sup>30</sup> As I show in more detail below, this event developed out of the larger Article 9 Association movement.

Despite growing signs of public disapproval and the capture of the House of Councillors by the DPJ, LDP-led governments under Prime Ministers Fukuda and

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<sup>28</sup> "GSDF Kept Files on Peace Groups", *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 7 June, 2007; Reiji Yoshida, "JCP: GSDF Unit Illegally Monitored Dispatch Foes", *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), 7 June, 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Since the conference venue only held 10,000 people, arrangements were made for the remainder to be accommodated outside so that they could watch the proceedings via video screens. (Author's interview with Peace Boat member Watanabe Rika on 9 July 2008.)

<sup>30</sup> "Thousands Convene for International Article 9 Conference," *Kyodo News Service* (Tokyo), 4 May, 2008.

Asō Tarō (2008-2009) continued to expand the role of the SDF under an un-amended Article 9. When the DPJ signaled that it would block the renewal of the MSDF's Indian Ocean mission under the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, the Abe government finally collapsed and the MSDF returned to Japan in November 2007. Using the LDP's two-thirds majority in the House of Representatives, however, Prime Minister Fukuda successfully overrode the DPJ-dominated Upper House's objection to a new MSDF mission and redeployed the MSDF at the start of 2008. Fukuda followed up in May 2008 by pushing legislation through the Diet allowing military use of Japan's civilian-controlled satellite network for purposes including surveillance by the SDF and participation in a missile defense shield with the U.S., effectively overturning the ban on the military use of space in place since 1969. At the same time, Fukuda prepared a permanent bill to permit SDF dispatches overseas for humanitarian activities and to take part in international peace keeping operations at any time, an effort that ultimately failed.

In terms of the effect that the dispatch of the SDF to assist in the U.S.-led war against Iraq had on public opinion, it has not fundamentally changed people's thinking about the primary purpose of the SDF. Even after several years of SDF participation in the U.S.-led war, people think of the SDF as an organization best suited for disaster relief and domestic defense. A January 2009 Defense Affairs Survey carried out by the Japanese government found that when asked "What do you think the SDF should put effort into?" the top three answers

were: 1) “Assisting at large-scale disasters” (73.8 percent), 2) “Maintaining the safety of the country” (60.1 percent), and 3) “Participating in international peacekeeping activities” (44.3 percent).<sup>31</sup> In addition, while revisionists continue to look for ways to expand the role of the SDF beyond its original purpose and to realize their long-held goal of constitutional revision, popular support for maintaining Article 9 continues to outpace opinion favoring its revision. In the following section, I analyze revisionists’ continued efforts to affect Japanese political culture in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

### *Toward a “Beautiful Country”*

In the preceding chapter I examined revisionists’ efforts to affect Japanese political culture through rehabilitation of Yasukuni Shrine and the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies in public schools. Here I analyze a series of official, revisionist projects that took place under the leadership of Prime Minister Abe. These changes were in line with Abe’s call to turn Japan into a “beautiful country” (*utsukushii kun*) and included the first revision of the Fundamental Law of Education since its adoption in 1947, a tightening of the government’s textbook screening process, and increased government control of students and teachers through changes to the School Education Law, the local education administration law, and the teacher licensing law. In this section I ask what the policy changes revealed about revisionists’ notions of Japanese

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<sup>31</sup> Respondents could choose more than one answer. Cabinet Office, Government of Japan - Defense Affairs Survey, poll conducted 15-25 January, 2009.

collective identity and historical memory sixty years after the re-founding of Japan, and examine public responses to those imaginings of the Japanese political community.

For the ten years preceding his selection as prime minister in 2006, Abe Shinzō served in the Diet as a reliably conservative member of the LDP. An outspoken supporter of Koizumi's Yasukuni Shrine visits, Abe allied himself with the most conservative ranks of the LDP, advocating revision of Japan's postwar institutions, especially the constitution, the military, and the education system. Three months before becoming prime minister in 2006 Abe publicized his thoughts on Japan's future in his book *Toward a Beautiful Country (Utsukushii Kuni E)*. In his book, Abe blamed the postwar education system for turning many Japanese against nationalism and argued that many had come to see nationalism as 'evil'. In Abe's vision for Japan, which he continued to promote in office, he announced that the country was ready to leave postwar history behind and enter "a new era" centered on values such as "culture, tradition, history, and nature" and demonstrating "respect for discipline" in order to provide leadership in the world.<sup>32</sup> Central to his vision was a revitalization of "patriotism", that is "love of country" among Japanese young people, a point that elicited memories of the imperial era.<sup>33</sup> In addition, two of his specific goals were revision of the education

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(<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h20/h20-bouei/index.html>) Viewed on 15 March, 2009.

<sup>32</sup> Abe Shinzō, Policy Speech to the 165th Session of the Diet, delivered September 29, 2006. Available online at: [http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/abespeech/2006/09/29speech\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/abespeech/2006/09/29speech_e.html) (Viewed 3.01.10).

<sup>33</sup> Gulick reports being told by a Mr. Kamada that the Meiji era had produced, for the first time in Japanese history, "Patriotism, that is to say love of country - not merely of fief - and readiness to sacrifice everything for its sake." Special thanks to Willis O. Shay for bringing this text to my

system and the passage of legislation outlining the procedure for amending the constitution. In his one year in office, he was able to achieve both.

In addition to their goal of amending the constitution, revisionists had long sought changes to the 1947 Fundamental Law of Education, Japan's postwar "Education Constitution" (discussed in chapter three). In 2000 a private advisory body to the office of the Prime Minister, The National Commission on Educational Reform, recommended revision of the FLE, and the Central Council for Education issued a report titled "Redesigning Compulsory Education for a New Era" in 2003 that spelled out specific objectives of the revision process. In conjunction with the council's recommendations, the LDP and New Komeito convened the "Ruling Parties Conference for Amendment of the Fundamental Law of Education" to study the issues involved in amending the law. The Ministry of Education advanced the revision process in 2006 by establishing a "Fundamental Law of Education Reform Promotion Headquarters", the purposes of which were to stake out the parameters of the debate in the Diet and to engage in public relations to promote revision.

In his first policy speech delivered to the Diet in 2006, Prime Minister Abe elaborated on his government's plan to revise the FLE and claimed that he would re-orient education policy toward "nurtur[ing] people who value their families, their communities, and their country."<sup>34</sup> To carry out this vision, the House of

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attention. Sidney L. Gulick, *Evolution of the Japanese: A Study of Their Characteristics in Relation to the Principles of Social and Psychic Development* (NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1903), 50.

<sup>34</sup> Abe Shinzō quoted in Adam Lebowitz and David McNeill, "Hammering Down the Education Nail: Abe Revises the Fundamental Law of Education", *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*

Councillors soon passed three bills that “expanded official education goals to include ‘nurturing public spirit,’ fostering ‘an attitude that loves the nation,’ and leading students to ‘a correct understanding’ of Japan’s history.”<sup>35</sup> When the revised FLE came into law with passage in the Diet in December of that year, it also placed renewed emphasis on moral education.

Just as the call for constitutional revision had attracted support from the business community, so did the revision of the FLE. Soon after the Diet amended the law, the Japan Business Federation, the largest corporate lobbying body in the country, released a report titled “Country of Hope” on New Year’s Day 2007. In addition to calling for corporate tax breaks, the report also called for revision of Article 9, suggested that “education on Japan’s traditions, culture and history should be promoted, and that it is important to nurture young people’s love of country and respect for the national flag and anthem.”<sup>36</sup> The report’s prescription was concerned about more than young people, however, calling on “government entities and private-sector companies [to] fly the *Hinomaru* national flag on a daily basis and have employees sing *Kimigayo*, the national anthem.”<sup>37</sup>

Moves to amend the FLE drew opposition from the JTU, the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, the Japan Society for the Study of Education Law, the Japan Society for the Study of Adult and Community Education. These groups and others opposed the recommended revisions on the grounds that they

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(July 9, 2007). Available online at: <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Adam-Lebowitz/2468> (Viewed on 4.19.10).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Nagata Minoru, “Keidanren Report Pushes Patriotism”, *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 3 January, 2007.

would undermine the emphasis on individual rights in education, force nationalistic morals on students, and further enhance the centralized control of education by the state. They also saw the revision of the FLE as part of a larger program to undermine the constitution and advance constitutional amendment.

Lebowitz and McNeill provide a point-by-point analysis of the revised FLE. In particular, they point out that the revised FLE changed the first word of the law - the generalized grammatical subject from whom the law emanates - from *Warera* (“We” in the sense of “citizens of a constitutionally based body politic”) to *Warera Nihon Kokumin* (“We Japanese nationals”, suggesting a “mystic vision of nationality” experienced by “national subjects”). In addition, they note the replacement of the original FLE’s emphasis on education as a means of realizing the ideals inscribed in the constitution with a new emphasis on “tradition” (*dentō*), which they argue is suggestive of the development of “inherent inner Japanese-ness”. They also point out the removal of the reference to fostering students’ “independent spirit” (*jishuteki seishin*) from Article 1 (“Aims of Education”) and its replacement by the fostering of “public spirit” (*kōkyō no seishin*) in the preamble. Another change was the new FLE’s inclusion of specific “objectives of education”, including “to respect Japanese traditions and culture, [and to] love the country and homeland that nurtured them”. As Lebowitz and McNeill note, the concept of homeland (*kyōdo*) is akin to the concept of *heimat* in German and was used in the Education Ministry’s “homeland education” (*kyōdo kyoiku*) curriculum in the 1930s. They argue that its tone “suggests that the amended education law views

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

students as future subjects rather than citizens”. In sum, Lebowitz and McNeill argue that, in its revised form, the FLE reads not as a legal document of a democratic and law-driven society but rather as an authoritarian edict that privileges the state over the individual.<sup>38</sup> Elsewhere, Lebowitz has noted that “policy documents containing words like ‘culture,’ ‘tradition,’ and ‘homeland’... are potentially problematic for two reasons: they are not legal terms and therefore can be defined by whomever is in power.”<sup>39</sup> Of course, this is true for the “morals” in “moral education” (*dōtoku*) as well.

Following the earlier success of re-establishing mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies, the revision of the FLE resulted in calls by revisionists for an increased focus on national patriotism in Japanese schools.<sup>40</sup> Three months after the revised FLE went into effect, the Education and Science Ministry issued its New Curricular Guidelines for primary and junior high school students in February 2007. Among other features, the Guidelines emphasized patriotic education, “national morals” (*kokutei no tokumoku*), singing the national anthem, teaching junior high school students that the SDF’s missions overseas are “contributions to the international community”, and “raising consciousness of being Japanese, loving the nation, and contributing to cultural development as recipients of *superior tradition* (*sugureta dentō*)”.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Adam Lebowitz in a response posted to: Peter Cave, “Morality, Patriotism, and Japan’s New Curricular Guidelines”, *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* (27 September, 2008) Available online at: <http://japanfocus.org/-Adam-Lebowitz/2908> (Viewed on 4.19.10).

<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that there was no grassroots movement calling for increased patriotism at the time.

<sup>41</sup> Emphasis mine for clarification.

Tawara Yoshifumi, Secretary General of the civil society group *Children and Textbooks Japan Network 21* argues that changes like these have serious political implications in terms of the continued viability of constitutional antimilitarism. As he put it, “To enable the nation to participate openly in warfare necessitates not only ‘reforming’ Article Nine and the Constitution but having people willing to join the army and sacrifice their lives on the battlefield.”<sup>42</sup> Those who oppose the revised FLE and the New Curricular Guidelines, like those who oppose prime ministers’ visits to Yasukuni Shrine and the mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies, see the values and imaginings of the political community that they promote as the return of the national imaginings of the imperial era.

In May 2007 the LDP-New Komeito coalition government passed three laws aimed at increasing the government’s control of students and teachers through changes to the School Education Law, the local education administration law, and the teacher licensing law. The DPJ, JCP, and DSP joined together in opposing the legislation, accusing the ruling coalition of trying to force the revisions through before the Upper House elections scheduled for July of that year. The changes followed in the mold of the revised FLE and included a provision for mandating the development of “public spirit” and “the attitude of loving your country and hometowns” as goals of public education from kindergarten to the university level. In addition, the laws introduced procedures by which schools could introduce two new, official posts - vice principal and chief

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<sup>42</sup> Yoshifumi Tawara, “The Hearts of Children: Morality, Patriotism, and the New Curricular Guidelines”, *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* (August 25, 2008). Available online at:

teacher - in order to enhance school management. Another key aspect of the change was the introduction of a requirement that teachers renew their licenses once every ten years, thus doing away with the tenure system. Reflecting popular suspicion of the laws, *The Japan Times* editorialized that the bills would “result only in more state control of education, imposition of the government’s own interpretation of the nation’s history and culture on students, and regimentation of teachers leading to deprivation of their autonomy and creativity.”<sup>43</sup>

The opposition’s concerns over a return of values associated with the imperial era, especially those evocative of compulsory patriotism, also extended to a concern over the re-writing of Japan’s history. In March 2007 the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (hereafter MEXT)<sup>44</sup> instructed publishers of high school history textbooks to rewrite descriptions of the Battle of Okinawa so that they would no longer describe how the army forced civilians to kill themselves, sometimes by holding and detonating hand grenades, rather than be taken prisoner by U.S. forces. Civic groups in Okinawa responded with demonstrations and a petition-drive that collected 100,000 signatures within three months. By late June, thirty-six of the forty-one municipal assemblies in Okinawa had unanimously adopted resolutions calling for MEXT to reverse its order. The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly followed suit by unanimously adopting a resolution calling on the the government “to retract the instruction and to

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<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Adam-Lebowitz/2860> (Viewed on 4.19.10).

<sup>43</sup> “Education Reform for What?” *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), 23 June, 2007.

<sup>44</sup> In January 2001, the former Ministry of Education (*Monbushō*) and the former *Science and Technology Agency* (*Kagaku-Gijyutsuchō*) merged to become the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (*Monbu-Kagakushō*) or MEXT.

immediately restore the description in the textbooks so the the truth [...] will be handed down correctly and a tragic war will never happen again.”<sup>45</sup>

In response to these protests, the Cabinet issued a position paper acknowledging that while some Okinawans have been regarded as victims of the military, textbook screeners would continue to give “appropriate opinions on textbook expressions that might trigger misunderstanding over the Battle of Okinawa”.<sup>46</sup> The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly countered the Cabinet’s announcement by adopting a second resolution against the history textbook instructions. On 29 September 2007, over 100,000 people demonstrated in Okinawa against the government’s textbook policy, the biggest demonstration there since the U.S. returned Okinawa to Japan in 1972. Bowing to popular outrage over the policy, MEXT reversed its earlier position by announcing that it would allow textbooks to refer to the military’s involvement in civilian mass suicides during the Battle of Okinawa.<sup>47</sup>

Two other challenges to the postwar understanding of pre-surrender history were occurring at the same time as the Okinawa textbook conflict. The first, which attracted relatively little notice, was the decision of the Japanese Geographical Survey Institute (JGSI) to change the official name of “Iwo Jima” to “Iwo To” - the name that residents of the island had colloquially used in reference

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<sup>45</sup> “Okinawa Slams History Text Rewrite”, *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), 23 June, 2007.

<sup>46</sup> “Gov’t Admits Some Okinawans Died Under Military Orders, But Will Delete Textbook References”, *Kyodo News* (Tokyo), 4 July, 2007.

<sup>47</sup> The Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies. Available online at: <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rijs/crrp/chronology/y2007.html> (Viewed 4.18.10).

to the volcanic island before the war.<sup>48</sup> Critics claimed that the timing of the name change -- following the success of two films by Clint Eastwood, *Flags of Our Fathers* (2006) and *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) -- was further evidence of revisionists' desires to control the narrative of Japan's pre-surrender history. They found further evidence for this claim when 100 LDP lawmakers denounced the Nanjing Massacre ("The Rape of Nanking") as a fabrication of the Chinese government, and LDP lawmaker Toida Toru demanded that Chinese war memorials no longer display photographs portraying the Japanese in a negative light.<sup>49</sup>

In a sign that there were limits to the party's revisionist tendencies, however, the LDP refused a request for endorsement in the 29 July Upper House election from Tōjō Yuko, the granddaughter of the executed wartime Prime Minister Tōjō. Forced to run as an independent, Tōjō vowed to "help redeem Japan's honor and pride", expressed support for Prime Minister Abe's ambition to break away from the "postwar regime", claimed that Japan "fought a 'right' war", called for an amendment of Article 9 so that Japan could have full-fledged armed forces, and injected herself into the controversy over Yasukuni Shrine by arguing that Abe should visit there since "it is quite natural to express our sorrow and sympathy for those who sacrificed their lives for the country."<sup>50</sup>

Despite the revision-oriented legislative success Abe's government enjoyed

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<sup>48</sup> "Japan Changes Name of Iwo Jima", *The Associated Press* (Tokyo), 20 June, 2007.

<sup>49</sup> "'No Massacre in Nanking,' Japanese Lawmakers Say", *The Associated Press* (Tokyo), 19 June, 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Tōjō Yukio quoted in Mayuko Tokita, "Tojo Rising", *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 14 July, 2007.

during his one-year term in office, the July 2007 House of Councillors election resulted in the LDP's loss of the chamber to the DPJ.<sup>51</sup> While the media and DPJ framed the election more as a test of the LDP's responsibility for the mismanaged national pension system rather than as a referendum on the party's revisionist program, Abe included a promise for "constitutional revision within three years" in his party's "Beautiful Japan" election platform. Abe's continued call for constitutional revision ignored the fact that the *Yomiuri's* annual public opinion poll on the constitution conducted in the spring showed that support for revision (46.2 percent) had dropped below 50 percent for the first time since 1997 and was rapidly trending downward from its postwar high of 65 percent in 2004.<sup>52</sup> As I show in the section that follows, the public's change of opinion on constitutional revision was occurring in tandem with the rise of an increasingly mobilized segment of the public focused squarely on defending Article 9. In the three years preceding the election, more than 6,000 independent Article 9 Associations had sprung up across the country.

### *Democratic Antimilitarism and the Rise of the A9A's*

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<sup>51</sup> Tōjō Yukio lost her bid for a seat while Marutei Tsurunen, a Finn who became a naturalized Japanese citizen in 1979 at the age of 39, won re-election as the sixth-highest vote getter on the DPJ's party list.

<sup>52</sup> McCormack argues that the LDP alienated the electorate by railroading through the legislation on revision procedures two months before the election. See: Gavan McCormack, "'Conservatism' and 'Nationalism': The Japan Puzzle," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, June 22, 2008. Available at: <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Gavan-McCormack/2786> (Viewed on 2.19.10).

On 10 June 2004, nine prominent Japanese citizens publicly announced the formation of the Article Nine Association (*Kyūjōnokai*, hereafter A9A).<sup>53</sup> In the A9A's inaugural communiqué, "An Appeal from the 'Article Nine Association'", the founding members stated that the Japanese Constitution was facing its greatest challenge in the postwar period and identified several specific threats to it. These threats included the efforts of domestic actors, especially Diet members, to push for revision of the constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education, the *de facto* violation of Article 9 by deploying the SDF abroad and allowing its use of force, and armed intervention in regional conflicts by the United States and its major allies since the end of the Cold War.

Rejecting both the government's "diplomatic stance that only prioritizes a military alliance with the United States" and proponents of constitutional revision who "intend for Japan to follow the United States and change into a 'war-waging country'", the A9A called instead for Japan to "engage its partner nations in peaceful diplomacy while respecting their various positions, and collaborate with them in the fields of economy, culture, science and technology."<sup>54</sup> With the twin goals of preventing the revision of Article 9 and of creating a Japanese peace culture as prescribed by the constitution, the A9A concluded the appeal thus:

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<sup>53</sup> The founding members of the Article Nine Association were author Inoue Hisashi, philosopher Umehara Takeshi, author and Nobel laureate Ōe Kenzaburō, constitution scholar Okudaira Yasuhiro, author Oda Makoto, the critic Katō Shuichi, author Sawachi Hisae, philosopher Tsurumi Shunsuke, and Miki Mutsuko, representative of the UN Women's Society and widow of the late Prime Minister Miki Takeo.

<sup>54</sup> Official website of the Article 9 Association. Available online at: [http://www.9-jo.jp/en/appeal\\_en.html](http://www.9-jo.jp/en/appeal_en.html) (viewed on 02.16.10).

“To that end, each and every citizen, as sovereign members of this country, needs to personally adopt the Japanese constitution, with its Article Nine, and reaffirm their belief in it through their daily actions. This is a responsibility that the sovereign members share for the future state of their country. Thus, in the interest of a peaceful future for Japan and the world, we would like to appeal to each and every citizen to come together for the protection of the Japanese constitution: You must begin making every possible effort to thwart these attempts at ‘constitutional revision,’ and you must begin today.”<sup>55</sup>

In liberal democracies like Japan it is not unusual for small groups of concerned citizens, be they prominent or not, to join together and take a stand on pressing political issues of the day. The A9A’s rhetorical appeal for citizens to “come together for the protection of the Japanese constitution”, however, resulted in something that is much more unusual, something that indicates the degree to which Japanese citizens felt a sense of attachment and loyalty to their constitution - and especially to Article 9 – nearly sixty years after its adoption. Once the original A9A announced itself to Japan in 2004, citizens across the country spontaneously began forming their own A9A’s.

On 10 June 2006, two years to the day after the initial announcement and appeal, the A9A network held its first “national exchange meeting” in Tokyo attended by over 1,500 activists from all forty-seven prefectures. Those in attendance represented 800 local and occupational A9A’s out of a total of 4,700 groups that had registered with the A9A Secretariat (the inaugural Article Nine Association) at that time. When the network held its third annual national exchange meeting on 24 November 2008, the number of A9A’s nationwide had

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

climbed to 7,294 – a number considerably greater than the number of municipalities in Japan at that time: 1,820.<sup>56</sup>

According to the *'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News*, each A9A forms according to the discretion of its own members, and those members need not belong to any particular political party. In an effort to avoid the kinds of political schisms that have marked Japanese politics in the past, membership in A9A's is open even to those who believe that the SDF and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty are constitutional. The only requirement for membership is that those forming or joining an A9A oppose constitutional revision of Article 9.<sup>57</sup> While there has not been any attitudinal survey of A9A members to my knowledge, the publicized activities of the A9A's indicate a strong valorization of Article 9 and an ethos of antimilitarism.

Katō Shuichi, one of the nine founding members of the initial Article Nine Association, elaborated on the A9A's position on the peace plank of the constitution during a speech at the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Exchange Meeting held in Tokyo on 24 November 2007. Addressing an audience of 1,020 A9A members from across Japan, Katō said,

“There are two types of positive involvement with Article Nine. One is to defend Article Nine and the other is to make use of Article Nine. The first

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<sup>56</sup> Since 2006, Katsuyuki Nara and Sarah Brock of the group New English Teachers' Association (*Shineigokyōiku Kenkyūkai*) have published the English version of *'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News* online at: [http://www.9-jo.jp/en/news\\_index\\_en.html](http://www.9-jo.jp/en/news_index_en.html). In total they have translated and posted sixty-five issues through December 2009. I cite the *Bulletin and News* throughout this work according to the issue number and date of publication of the Japanese originals. *'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News*, No. 118, November 27, 2008.

<sup>57</sup> *'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News*, No. 99, December 6, 2007.

type of involvement means to oppose express revision of the constitution, while the second is opposed to arbitrary interpretation of Article Nine in favor of government policy.”<sup>58</sup>

In this statement, Katō clearly articulates the A9A’s categorical opposition to revision of the constitution. As mentioned above, this is the fundamental tenet of all A9A organizations. In addition to demarcating the A9A’s central principle, Katō posits a second “positive involvement” in regards to A9A activism, namely opposition to existent government policy that violates the letter of the law. The shift in Katō’s statement from an emphasis on political principles to an emphasis on political practice signals one of the long-standing critiques of Japanese citizens who valorize Article 9, that revisionist state actors want to change the constitution so that it unambiguously sanctions existent policies – policies that can only be deemed constitutional according to “arbitrary interpretation” - rather than changing existent policies to adhere *unambiguously* to the constitution.<sup>59</sup>

Since their emergence in 2004, A9A’s have formed all over Japan and their organizational structure varies greatly. In general terms, however, the majority of A9A’s refer to themselves as either “local” or “occupational”. Local A9A’s range in scale from those formed by single families to those that represent

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<sup>58</sup> Katō Shuichi quoted in “Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 98, November 28, 2007.

<sup>59</sup> Tanaka Yuki, a scholar at the Hiroshima Peace Institute put it this way: “[T]he constitution is not formulated in order to reflect existing conditions of our society, but to serve as an *ideal norm* [sic] for rectifying faults and building a better society. If the reality does not mirror Article 9 of the Constitution, it is our moral responsibility as Japanese citizens to reform the reality in accordance with the letter of this article specifying that ‘land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained,’ that we ‘forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.’” Yuki Tanaka, “Hiroshima and the Peace Constitution: Building on Our Past,” *Hiroshima Research News* 8, no. 2 (November 2005): 1.

schools, college campuses, religious institutions, neighborhoods, municipalities, etc. Occupational A9A's are typically those formed nationwide by people who share a profession or vocation. Some of the recognized occupational A9A's include: Scientists' A9A, Agricultural and Fisheries A9A, Film Makers' A9A, Haiku Poets' A9A, Architects' A9A, Mass Media A9A, Prose Writers' A9A, Mariners' A9A, Musicians' A9A, Fine Artists' A9A, and Sportspersons' A9A. Occupational A9A's have formed networks at the sub-national level as well. In 2007, for example, doctors, nurses, and clerical staff in Kanagawa Prefecture formed A9A's at thirty-one clinic cooperatives and coordinated their activities in defense of Article 9 as an occupational network.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to the local and occupational A9A's, other networks that have formed regionally and nationwide include Women's A9A, Mother & Children's A9A, Disabled Persons' A9A, and Persons of Faith A9A. These groups are made up of local chapters that meet periodically at regional or national conferences. Again, the size of the individual groups can vary greatly. When the prefecture-wide Fukuoka Women's A9A held its inaugural meeting on 8 December 2006, more than 300 women showed up including sixty-one attorneys (80% of the women practicing law in the prefecture).<sup>61</sup> A Women's A9A in Kochi Prefecture reported 1,200 members by the fall of 2008.<sup>62</sup>

Another important phenomenon in regards to the organization and membership of the associations is the emergence of A9A's formed by local public

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<sup>60</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 89, June 20, 2007.

<sup>61</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 81, December 28, 2006.

officials. On 21 November 2006, nine incumbent and former prefectural assembly members inaugurated an A9A in Nara Prefecture.<sup>63</sup> The fact that the group was made up of political independents as well as members of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party and the left-wing Japan Socialist Party and Japan Communist Party indicates the degree to which constitutional patriotism and antimilitarism can, at times, trump political partisanship.

Some local public officials active in A9A's have asserted that the maintenance of Article 9 is a necessary condition for Japanese citizens to continue to live in peace. A statement by Kawai Sadakazu, a former mayor of Shiroishi City and member of the LDP, exemplifies this stand. Speaking for the Municipal Heads' Group of A9A, which ten former mayors founded in Miyagi Prefecture, Kawai stated, "We incumbent and former municipal heads should take responsibility for leading the campaign to defend the article, to help protect the peaceful lives of the citizens."<sup>64</sup> The claim that Article 9 plays a direct role in preserving peace in Japan was pronounced even more explicitly through a statement that Kawai's group issued on 8 February 2008. That statement read,

"Dear citizens, mayors of every city, town and village in Miyagi,

We municipal heads, working across party lines, have taken the first step toward the grand goal of defending Article 9, with the principle 'one step by 100 not 100 steps by one.' We mayors are charged with improving residents' welfare and quality of life. To that end we have made strenuous efforts to maintain residents' safety. Currently in Japan, there exist

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<sup>62</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 117, November 4, 2008.

<sup>63</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 81, December 28, 2006.

<sup>64</sup> Kawai Sadakazu quoted in "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 104, March 11, 2008.

attempts to revise the peace constitution, especially Article 9. Since the proposed changes will threaten a safe and peaceful life for everyone, we have determined to foil these attempts and protect the article.

We believe that firm establishment of local governments will lead to building a stable and peaceful country in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We believe that any amendment of Article 9 will return our nation to a gloomy, abhorrent age, illustrated by the national mobilization law of prewar days. We should try to stem such runaway politics by the central government.

We keenly feel in our daily work the difficulty in preventing the rising tide of attempts to revise the Constitution in a way which is against the will of the people.

Under these circumstances, more than 6,000 A9A groups around the country and about 100 groups in Miyagi have been carrying out many activities to preserve Article 9.

We, being proud of the role of Article 9 for world peace, call on every citizen to stand for the defense of the article.”<sup>65</sup>

In this statement, the Municipal Heads’ Group of A9A of Miyagi Prefecture advanced the claim that preservation of Article 9 is a necessary condition for the continued safety and peace of the Japanese people. In other words, the group claimed that safety for the Japanese comes not through the maintenance of an army or other military potential but rather through adherence to constitutional antimilitarism as defined by Article 9. Furthermore, the group’s letter promoted the idea that local governments have a responsibility to oppose any policies of the national government that threaten Article 9. In addition, the letter conveyed the assertion that Article 9 is the only institutional safeguard against the logic of state military power, a logic that could lead to the kind of militarism that devastated Asia and ultimately Japan in the first two decades of the Shōwa era.

The mayors' reference to the "national mobilization law" was meant to warn citizens about the economic and social consequences of that same militarism. The Diet adopted the National Mobilization Law, (*Kokka Sōdōin Hō*) in 1938, and it provided the legal framework for government control of the Japanese economy and society, including complete co-optation of civic associations and the media.

A third A9A organized by public officials, the Akita Municipal Mayors' Association for Defense of Article 9, echoed the Miyagi group's fears of a return to militarism should Article 9 be revised. Made up of twenty-six incumbent and former mayors from Akita Prefecture, the group released a declaration of its own on 5 August 2008 warning that revision of Article 9 could "lead to a mandatory conscription system and war, and our local governments will be forced to act as 'subcontractors' for the central government within a war policy."<sup>66</sup> As with the mayors' A9A from Miyagi Prefecture, the mayors' A9A from Akita Prefecture claimed a role for local governments in preserving Article 9, stating, "Our mission is to promote residents' welfare, and defend residents' livelihood and peace from constitutional revision."<sup>67</sup>

Another important claim that A9A's have publicized and that is included in the Municipal Heads' Group of A9A's letter reproduced in full above, is that Article 9 has played a role not just in keeping Japan safe but also in promoting world peace. This claim about Article 9's place in the world supports two separate arguments articulated by the A9A's. The first claim is that Article 9 has

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<sup>65</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 103, February 13, 2008.

<sup>66</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 113, August 16, 2008.

contributed to world peace by preventing a former, militaristic major power (Japan) from engaging in war, and the second claim is that Article 9 serves both as an inspiration to the people of the world and as a concrete example to them of a constitutional mechanism through which they, too, could outlaw the militarism of their own governments.

The notion that the citizens of other countries could implement their own constitutional prohibitions against war and militarism was a central theme of the Global Article 9 Conference held in April 2008. Attracting over 30,000 participants from all over the world, the organizers of the three-day conference, held simultaneously at venues in Tokyo, Osaka, Hiroshima, and Sendai, noted the potential applicability of Article 9 elsewhere in the world by claiming,

“Article 9 is not just a provision of the Japanese law; it also acts as an international peace mechanism towards reductions in military spending, promotion of nuclear-weapon-free zones, ending violence against women, supporting conflict prevention, and mitigating the negative environmental impact of the military.”<sup>68</sup>

The above statement and the conference motto “Spread Article 9 to the World” indicated the organizers’ emphasis on the use of Article 9 as a model for constitutional antimilitarism elsewhere, but a main goal of the event was to demonstrate to the Japanese government the extent to which Japanese citizens

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<sup>67</sup> “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 113, August 16, 2008.

<sup>68</sup> Global Article 9 Campaign website: <http://www.article-9.org/en/about/index.html> (Viewed on February 18, 2010).

continued to valorize constitutional antimilitarism at home.<sup>69</sup> While the occurrence of the Global Article 9 Conference and the rapid rise of the A9A's reflect valorization of the peace constitution and an ethos of antimilitarism among a large and mobilized segment of the Japanese public, they also occurred despite and in reaction to efforts by revision-minded lawmakers in the Diet to push for amendment of the constitution, especially Article 9.

As mentioned above, in the lead-up to the July 2007 Upper House election, Prime Minister Abe included “constitutional revision within three years” as part of his “Beautiful Japan” platform. With the LDP’s loss of control of the House of Councillors in that election, maneuvers within the Diet for constitutional revision quickly ground to a halt. For example, on 7 August 2007 both Houses of the Diet established Deliberative Councils on the Constitution, but council chairs and members were not selected because of a boycott against their functioning by the DPJ and other opposition parties. Therefore, the Councils were effectively rendered inoperable. While some opposition DPJ lawmakers agreed with LDP demands for constitutional revision, they were a minority within their party and therefore could not advance legislation that would lead to amendment despite their party’s new advantage in the Upper House. Furthermore, following the election a poll of Upper House lawmakers showed that only 48 percent of new members and 53 percent of members of the chamber overall supported constitutional amendment, the first time since the Lower House election of 2003

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<sup>69</sup> Personal interview with Watanabe Rika, a member of the NGO “Peace Boat,” conducted at the organization’s headquarters in Takadanobaba, Tokyo on 9 July, 2008.

that support for revision had dropped below two-thirds in either chamber.<sup>70</sup> It is hard to determine what effect, if any, A9A activists and unaffiliated Article 9 supporters within the electorate had on the election outcome in the summer of 2007, but it is clear that revisionists in parliament understood, even before the election, the obstacle that the A9A network posed to their plans for amending the constitution.

Realizing that a decisive shift in public opinion in their favor would be necessary for constitutional revision to succeed, Diet members who had coordinated since 1955 as the Diet Members' League for Establishing an Independent Constitution (*Jishi-kempō Seitai Giin Dōmei*) re-branded themselves as the Diet Members League for Establishing a New Constitution (*Shin-kempō Seitai Giin Dōmei*) under the leadership of former Prime Minister Nakasone in March 2007. Made up of 167 lawmakers from the LDP, 14 from the DPJ, and 57 from other parties, the group explicitly publicized its intention to target the A9A network. In a speech announcing the formation of the alliance, its secretary general, LDP lawmaker Aichi Kazuo stated, "We will work to oppose the A9A, which has regional organizations all around the country. We should form regional

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<sup>70</sup> "Among Upper House members elected in July [2007], 91 percent of LDP and 67 percent of its junior coalition partner New Komeito support [constitutional] change. In Minshuto [DPJ], now the largest party in the Upper House, 41 percent said they were against a revision, exceeding the 29 percent who are in favor. All those elected on tickets of the Japanese Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party and New Party Nippon said the Constitution 'should not be amended.' It was the first time that less than 40 percent of Minshuto members were supportive of a change." "Support Dwindles on Issue of Revision", *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 8 August, 2007.

organizations in the same way, to oppose the A9A. This will be the highlight of the league in the future.”<sup>71</sup>

The fact that hundreds of Diet members would join together and publicly announce their intention to counter-act the efforts of the A9A movement indicates the seriousness with which they took the influence of the citizens’ grassroots network. There is an important distinction between the two groups, however. The Diet Members’ League was the self-organization of state-level actors joining together to neutralize the influence of thousands of civil society groups organized to defend Japan’s fundamental law. By contrast, the formation of the original A9A by non-elected public figures was a citizen-to-citizen appeal aimed at checking state-level actors’ rhetorical and legislative maneuvers toward constitutional revision. Another distinction, and perhaps the most important, is that while the A9A’s appeal to the public resulted in continuous growth in the number of member groups, the League has not resulted in a movement among the citizenry in favor of constitutional amendment. In addition, that Abe’s successor as prime minister, Fukuda Yasuo (2007-2008), resigned from his post as the League’s vice-chairperson in November 2007 was a blow to the group and an indication of a cautious approach to constitutional revision in the face of popular opposition. While the Diet Members’ League continues on, it has not succeeded in mobilizing the public for revision. Its main activities have consisted of introducing multiple resolutions calling for the initialization of the Deliberative Councils on the Constitution in both Houses – still with no success at the time of this writing.

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<sup>71</sup> Aichi Kazuo quoted in “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no.104, March 11, 2008.

As compared to the activity of the Diet Members' League for Establishing a New Constitution, since 2004 the A9A's have multiplied into the thousands across Japan and engaged in a wide variety of activities. Examining the records of the A9A network as recorded in several dozen issues of the *'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News*, I identify four main types of activity: educative, social and cultural, publicity-oriented, and those that fall under the rubric of political organizing and lobbying. In order to show the variety of activities undertaken by A9A's, I provide an overview of these activities along with specific examples of each type.

One of the main purposes of the A9A's has been to educate members and the public on Article 9 and perceived threats to its maintenance. General examples of educative programs include lectures in public halls, constitution study groups and salons, visits to WWII battle sites, lectures by war and atomic bomb survivors, and public street lectures. As with the size of A9A member groups in general, the number of people attending educative meetings varies greatly. For example, while many of the local A9A's hold frequent study meetings for their own members, a lecture meeting held on 9 May 2006 in Saitama Prefecture drew 3,500 citizens. The meeting featured lectures by three of the original A9A founders, Nobel Prize laureate Ōe Kenzaburō, critic Katō Shuichi, and writer Sawachi Hisae, each of whom delivered comments on Article Nine. Following the lectures Ōe remarked that "[E]ach group is independent. They have neither leaders nor regulations. Very liberal groups have been formed on the

basis of a common idea of ‘defending Article Nine’.<sup>72</sup> Ōe’s comments underscore both the spontaneous, grassroots nature of the A9A’s as self-organizing units and the common mission of the groups.

Examining the announced themes of lectures, seminars, and study groups is useful insofar as they indicate the narrative with which A9A members construct and convey their core beliefs and concerns. Examples of meeting topics include: “The New Cabinet and the Constitution”, “Let’s Talk about the Constitution – Toward a No-War World”, “Solution of International Disputes through the Power of Article 9”, and “Article 9 Creates Peace”. The first of these topics, “The New Cabinet and the Constitution”, was the theme of a study meeting held in Tokyo following the formation of a new government by Prime Minister Abe in the fall of 2006, the purpose of which was to inform the 180 attendees about the new government’s intentions regarding constitutional revision. The other meeting topics mentioned above are more typical and convey the notion that Article 9 is the source of peace, both for Japan and potentially for the world. The claim that “Article 9 Creates Peace”, for example, is a bold declaration of A9A members’ belief in the article’s power over militarism and war.

Following the “Lehman Shock” of 2008, A9A’s increasingly connected the renunciation of war and militarism to constitutional social welfare guarantees. Meetings with themes such as “Peace and Livelihood United”, “Unite Articles 9 & 25”, and “Live as Humans Should... Article 9 & 25” are examples of this phenomenon. Article 25 is the provision in the Constitution of Japan that

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<sup>72</sup> Ōe Kenzaburō quoted in “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 71, July 5, 2006.

enumerates both the right to a minimum standard of wholesome and cultured living and the duty of the state to promote social welfare and public health. Connecting the two principles, antimilitarism and a wholesome and cultured existence premised on social welfare, is a common thread in Japanese academic discourse on the constitution. As Kawakami Akihiro, a professor at Hiroshima City University, put it to me, "...it is necessary not only to renounce war, but also to work towards achieving true peace through securing people's lives, their right to maintain a wholesome and cultured existence, and their individuality."<sup>73</sup> What is notable, in the analysis of A9A's, however, is that the connection between the two principals emerged and increased in frequency with the onset of the global financial crisis in the fall of 2008. Rather than signaling a shift in attention away from Article 9, the rhetorical inclusion of Article 25 in the A9A narrative indicates the intention of Article 9 activists to use their network to advance other constitutional guarantees in pursuit of the right to live in peace.

In addition to holding meetings meant to educate members and the public on Article 9, A9A's have also held social and cultural activities related to the constitution. These events have included, art and photo exhibitions, film screenings of movies critical of war, firefly watching,<sup>74</sup> song presentations, festivals, etc. A few examples of these events reveal the variety of cultural expressions that citizens have produced in support of Article 9. One event of note

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<sup>73</sup> Email correspondence from Kawakami Akihiro to the author on 29 July, 2008.

<sup>74</sup> The activity of firefly-watching is a performative allusion to "Grave of the Fireflies" (*Hotaru no Haka*), a popular animated film with an antiwar theme that was written and directed by Isao Takahata. Released in 1988, television networks often broadcast the film in August to mark the

was the performance of a “Constitution Musical” written by lawyers, performed by local members of the Tama A9A (Tokyo), and attended by over 6,000 people during four performances in November 2008.<sup>75</sup> Another event, “Peace Night 9”, was a gathering of thirteen students’ A9A groups in Tokyo. Held on 16 November 2007, the students rallied under the slogan “Say No to Article 9 Revision”. One college student in attendance penned a short ‘love letter’ to Article 9, which read, “Dear Article 9, I cannot sleep soundly at night because I’m always thinking of you, vulnerable one.”<sup>76</sup> Additionally, in 2007, the Sportspersons’ A9A planned a meeting around the theme, “Sports as a Culture for Peace and Nonviolence”. Finally, the nationwide A9A network raised money from its member groups to produce the movie “The Blue Sky of Japan,” a cinematic account of the origins of the postwar constitution released to mark the sixtieth anniversary of its adoption. All of these activities reveal, implicitly or explicitly, the regard that A9A activists have for Article 9 and its place in cultural expression.

Another role that A9A’s have played is as publicists for both Article 9 and for the activities of member groups. One means by which they have produced this publicity is through the online publication, in Japanese and English, of the national ‘*Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News* and through local print newsletters. While the circulation for print newsletters varies, some localities report distributing up to 13,000 copies monthly.<sup>77</sup> Local A9A’s and their members

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anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as Japan’s surrender and the end of the war.

<sup>75</sup> “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 117, November 4, 2008.

<sup>76</sup> “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 99, December 6, 2007.

<sup>77</sup> “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 97, October 23, 2007.

have also placed opinion ads and editorials in support of the constitution in local newspapers. For example, the Sanjo A9A in Niigata Prefecture placed an ad in their local newspaper that featured the signatures of 1,108 local citizens and the title, “We Are Against Constitutional Revision”.<sup>78</sup> Other groups have produced posters in support of the constitution.<sup>79</sup> The Osaka Persons of Faith A9A, for example, produced a poster displayed at temples and churches in the area with the message, “Military forces cannot preserve peace. Persons of religion support Article 9.” Still other groups have erected signboards in their communities, often near railroad stations or other heavily trafficked locations, with messages such as “Thank you, Article 9. Defend peace forever.” (Niigata), “World Peace Starts with Article 9” (Shiga), “Article 9 is Humanity’s Treasure” (Yamanashi), and “Spread the Network of Article 9 – World Treasure” (Osaka). Again, these messages show that there is a strong belief among A9A activists that it is Article 9 rather than military force that safeguards their peace and that Article 9, and consequently Japan, holds a place of distinction in the world for its explicit renunciation of war and militarism.

The fourth activity undertaken by A9A activists is political organizing and lobbying. As mentioned above, one way this has occurred is through the establishment of A9A’s by local politicians. The spontaneous organization of local

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<sup>78</sup> “‘Article 9 Association’ Bulletin and News” no. 95, September 19, 2007.

<sup>79</sup> In addition to the A9A’s, the Japan Communist Party has also produced a number of posters in support of Article Nine. During visits to Japan in 2006, 2008, and 2009 I saw these posters displayed throughout Japan, usually on the property of JCP members. The text of the JCP poster I saw most often read, “Protect Article Nine of the Constitution” in large, bold characters and “Withdraw the SDF from Iraq and Afghanistan” in smaller characters below. At the bottom of the poster was the name of the party in a red circle within the outline of a white dove.

public officials in defense of Article 9 can send a powerful message to both their constituents and to state-level actors. For their constituents, the existence of these groups tacitly legitimates and sanctions the activities carried out in defense of Article 9 by local citizens. Knowing that public officials are also organizing around the issue, especially when those officials represent different political parties, may reassure Article 9 activists that they are in the political mainstream. In addition, it is plausible that national office holders view the formation of local office holders' A9A's as an indication of broad grassroots opposition to constitutional revision. Put another way, the organization of local public officials signals to members of the Diet, where the revision process must formally begin, that defense of Article 9 is an issue of central concern to a large part of the electorate.

Petition drives have been another political organizing activity carried out by the A9A network. Focused on gathering the signatures of eligible voters, petitions indicate to local and national officials the degree to which the electorate supports Article 9 and opposes constitutional revision. Since the formal process for constitutional amendment requires passage by two-thirds in each House of the Diet as well as the approval of more than half of voters in a national referendum, the degree to which local A9A petitions demonstrate public disapproval of revision sends a clear message to local and national office-seekers. As reported in the *'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News*, several local A9A's have succeeded in collecting signatures from more than half of the

eligible voters in their districts. As just one example, a local A9A in Gifu Prefecture collected 5,472 signatures in Tsukechi District – more than half of the eligible voters there.<sup>80</sup>

There is no doubt that the rapid growth in A9A's demonstrated broad public support for the preservation of and adherence to Article 9. Following the example of the single Article Nine Association inaugurated by nine prominent public figures in June 2004, citizens across Japan have joined together to form their own A9A's. In the first year, the number of grassroots A9A's grew to 1,072. By 2006 the number topped 4,700. By early 2007 the number had climbed to 6,020, and by November 2008 it stood at 7,294.<sup>81</sup>

While it is a relative straight-forward task to document the growth and activities of the A9A's, the question of the network's effects on Japanese politics remains to be answered.<sup>82</sup> While I have suggested that popular attitudes in support of the constitution factored into the defeat of the LDP in the House of Councillors' election of 2007 and that state-level actors took the A9A movement seriously as demonstrated by the formation of the Diet Members' League for Establishing a New Constitution just before the election, it is through an examination of public opinion that the possible effects of activism centered on Article 9 are most suggestive.

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<sup>80</sup> "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" no. 81, December 28, 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Figures reported in "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News". No figure was reported in 2009.

<sup>82</sup> Steve Leeper, Chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, told me that he thought that the emergence of the A9A movement was the most significant factor in bringing the renewed push for constitutional revision to a halt in the Diet. Steven Leeper, Chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, interview by author, 9 August 2009, Nagasaki, Mayors for Peace Conference.

At the end of the Cold War, Japanese public opinion was decidedly against constitutional revision. For example, in 1991 the *Yomiuri* reported that only 33 percent of respondents favored constitutional revision while 51 percent opposed it.<sup>83</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, Japan's decision to provide financial rather than military support for the 1991 war on Iraq, however, sparked a public debate about the SDF's role in the post-Cold War world. It was in the context of that debate that LDP governments began negotiating new security arrangements with the U.S. and expanding the role of the SDF to include overseas missions under the PKO bills. As noted above, the public came to accept a role for the SDF in international peacekeeping operations while the "willingness to fight" indicator on the World Values Survey rose by 25 percent over the course of the 1990s (from 20.3 percent in 1990 to 25.1 percent in 2000) though in 2000 that figure was nearly a third below the affirmative response measured in 1980 (34.2 percent) and still well below the contemporaneous rates for South Korea (74.6 percent in 2001) and the U.S (72.7 percent in 1999) and markedly below the rate for Germany (47.7 percent in 1999).

At the same time that the public was coming to accept a new role for the SDF, public opinion was also shifting on the question of general constitutional revision. Already by 1993, 50 percent of the public supported constitutional revision (with 33 percent opposed to revision).<sup>84</sup> While support for revision fell to

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<sup>83</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), 31 March, 1991.

<sup>84</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), 30 March, 1993.

47 percent in 1996,<sup>85</sup> it then climbed to its peak of 65 percent by 2004, the year in which the initial A9A formed.

In Figures Three and Four, I chart changing public opinion on the issues of revision of the constitution in general and revision of Article 9 in particular against the growth in the number of A9A's.<sup>86</sup> As both figures indicate, the steep increase in the number of A9A's occurred at the same time that support for revision was decreasing and opposition to revision was increasing. While this data does not prove a causal link between the emergence of the A9A network and changes in public opinion on the issues of revising the constitution and Article 9, the correspondence between the growth of A9A's and increased opposition to revision suggests that the grassroots network may have had an effect on public opinion. The argument is bolstered by the fact that support for constitutional revision reached a peak of 65 percent in 2004 before falling to 42.5 percent in 2008, a figure below the 43.1 percent of the public opposed to revision that same year and the first reversal in the proportion of those supporting and opposing constitutional revision in seventeen years. Public opinion regarding Article 9 shows a similar pattern. As the number of A9A's increased, especially after 2005, the percentage of poll respondents in support of revising Article 9 dropped from 44 percent (2005) to 31 percent (2008) over three years. At the same time,

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<sup>85</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), 27 March, 1996.

<sup>86</sup> Attitudes toward constitutional revision compiled from nationwide, annual public opinion surveys carried out by *Yomiuri Shimbun*. Growth of A9A's compiled from data produced in Japanese and English versions of "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News". (The *Yomiuri Shimbun* and "Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News" bear no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.)

the percentage of respondents opposed to revising Article 9 climbed from 46 percent in 2005 to 60 percent by 2008.<sup>87</sup>

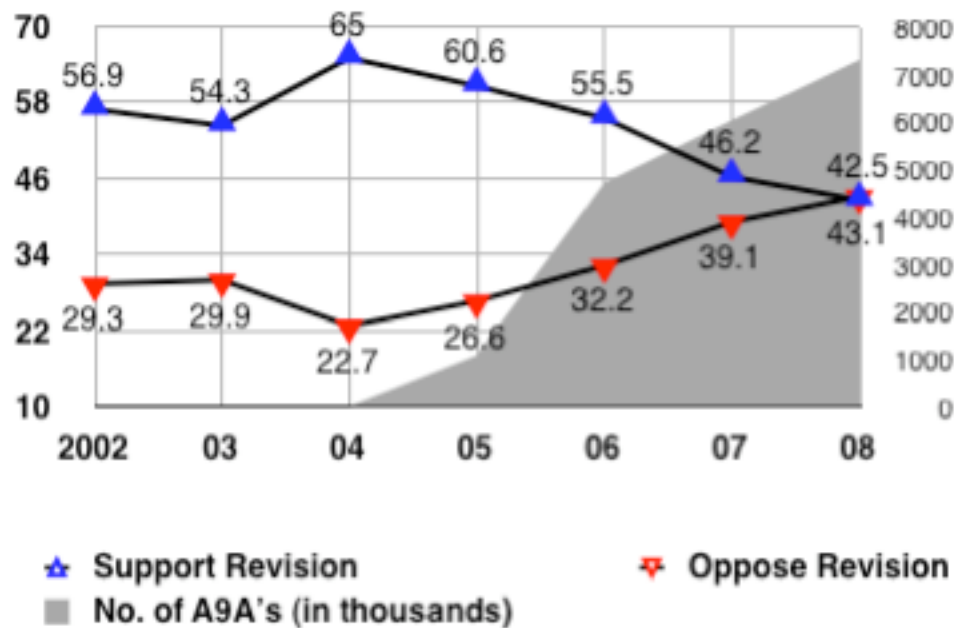
While it is not possible to conclude decisively that the increase in the number of A9A's directly affected public opinion regarding revision of the constitution and Article 9, the swing in public opinion gave the A9A network a sense of political efficacy. When the *Yomiuri* announced the results of its annual poll on the constitution in 2008, the '*Article 9 Association*' *Bulletin and News* was quick to claim that the A9A network played a role in the shift. Noting that the number of those opposing revision of Article 9 in particular was nearly twice that of those in favor of revision, the *Bulletin and News* reported that "[t]hese newest results imply that grass roots campaign of A9A has strongly affected public opinion about the Constitution [sic]."<sup>88</sup>

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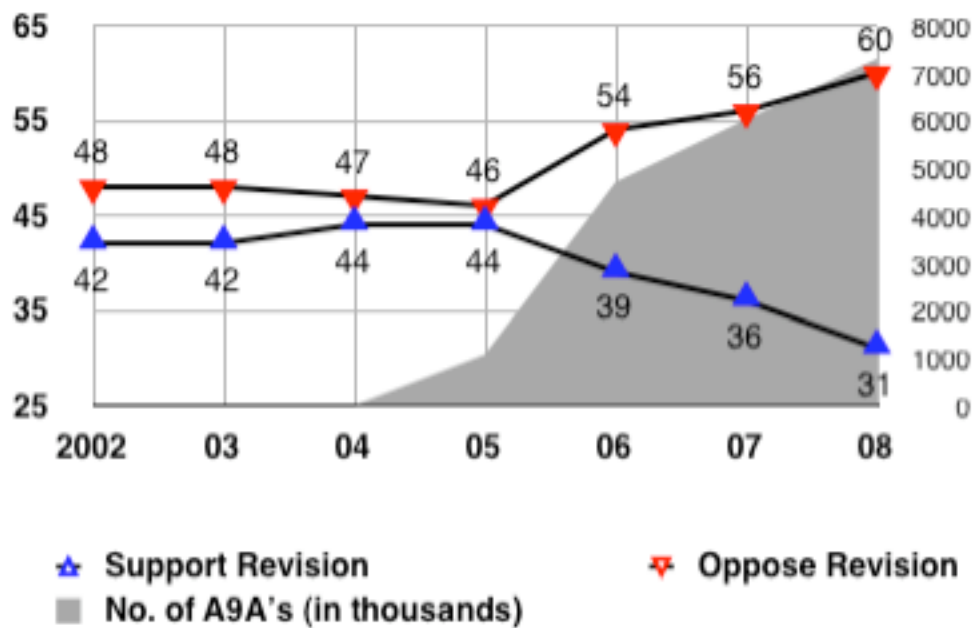
<sup>87</sup> Data from a May 2008 national public opinion poll conducted by the *Asahi Shimbun* showed an even wider gap between supporters and opponents of revision: 66 percent opposed to revision and 23 percent in support of the idea. "The Constitution Today", *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 3 May, 2008.

<sup>88</sup> "'Article 9 Association' Bulletin and News", no. 106, April 5, 2008.

**Figure Three: Attitudes Toward Constitutional Revision Vs. Growth of A9A's**



**Figure Four: Attitudes Toward Revising Article 9 VS. Growth of A9A's**



The shift in opinion concerning constitutional revision was also evident in the attitudes of Japanese young people. An opinion poll of 12,286 students at 148

high schools in 28 prefectures conducted in 2009 revealed that 60.9 percent of respondents opposed revision of Article 9 and only 11.5 percent favored its revision. While the percentage of those in favor of revision was statistically unchanged from an identical poll of high school students conducted the previous year (11 percent in favor of revising Article 9), the percentage of respondents who opposed revision of Article 9 that year (60.9 percent) was a jump from the 43.9 percent who opposed its revision in 2008. When students who opposed revising Article 9 were asked why they opposed revision, the 2009 poll showed that 73.2 percent selected “[revision] could open the way to war,” while 14 percent chose “Article 9 is something [Japan should] boast about to the world.”<sup>89</sup>

In a poll of national public opinion conducted in March 2010, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported that 43 percent of respondents surveyed supported constitutional revision versus 42 percent opposed. Again, the percentage of those who support revision has exceeded the percentage who oppose revision, although statistically there is not much difference between the two figures. On the question of revising Article 9, on the other hand, there has been a marked drop in the percent of people against revision; the 2010 poll found that 32 percent are in favor of revising Article 9 versus 44 percent against such a move.<sup>90</sup> Although the percent in favor of revising the Japanese constitution’s “peace plank” remains quite low, there has been a considerable softening of opposition to its revision since 2008.

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<sup>89</sup> “Over 60% of High Schoolers Against Altering Article 9 of Constitution”, *Kyodo News* (Tokyo), 23 April, 2009.

Whether or not the A9A movement can maintain its considerable presence in the public debate over revision of Article 9 remains to be seen. The LDP's defeat in the House of Representatives election of August 2009 led to the formation of the first DPJ-led government in the fall of that year, thereby removing the long-ruling LDP from power. Now that the most vocal revisionists in the LDP are out of power, the tangible threat of revision may decrease for some A9A members. In addition, although the DPJ's two top officials, Prime Minister and party President Hatoyama Yukio and Secretary General Ozawa Ichirō, have both been vocal proponents of revising Article 9 in the past, at the time of this writing the DPJ is not pushing for constitutional revision.

Before concluding, it is important to note the significance of the A9A movement in the postwar debate over constitutional revision. Whereas the struggle to preserve the constitution and Article 9 in the early postwar years was spearheaded by the parties of the Left, the power of those parties in Japanese politics had greatly diminished by the beginning of the twenty-first century. Indeed, when the inaugural Article Nine Association announced itself to the country in 2004, the JCP and SDP combined held only 15 out of 480 seats in the House of Representatives and 28 out of 247 seats in the House of Councillors. By comparison, the JSP and JCP combined held 167 out of 467 seats in the House of Representatives and 88 seats out of 250 in the House of Councillors in 1959 when Japan saw its largest political demonstrations in history against Prime Minister Kishi's government and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. What is

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<sup>90</sup> "Poll: Public Split over Amending Constitution", *Yomiuri Shimbum* (Tokyo), 9 April, 2010.

remarkable about the A9A movement, then, is that it is a spontaneous uprising of civil society that is independent of any political party or parties. As mentioned above, the only requirement for membership in an A9A is for participants to oppose any revision of Article 9. The fact that one of the founding members of the Article Nine Association is the widow of a former LDP prime minister and that legislators' A9A's contain LDP members attests to the fact that it is essentially a non-partisan movement with wide public appeal.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have examined the movement and counter-movement for constitutional revision in the last ten years of the current reactive sequence. As I argued, the end of the Cold War led many to call into question the *raison d'être* of the parties of the Left, especially the JSP and DSP. In addition, while there was no active popular movement for constitutional revision in the 1990's, by mid-decade an increasing percentage of the public supported the idea of amending the constitution in general terms, though the number opposed to revising Article 9 continued to surpass the number in favor of its revision. The decline in influence of the parties of the Left and the shift in Japanese public opinion coincided with new calls for constitutional revision by the LDP, New Komeito, and the DPJ, and they took active measures to push for revision, setting up constitutional revision committees within their parties and within both Houses of the Diet. The LDP led the calls aimed at revising Article 9 and proposed recognizing the SDF as

Japan's military and establishing a legal basis for engaging in collective defense. As noted, the most vocal supporters of the LDP's plans were several Japanese business groups which echoed the party's proposals with plans of their own. By 2008, the LDP-led government succeeded in establishing the legal framework for revision by passing a law on the national referendum process required by the constitution.

At the same time that the movement for constitutional revision was underway in political society, LDP governments continued to expand the role of the SDF through ad hoc measures, especially after the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. In the eight years following those attacks, LDP governments dispatched the MSDF to the Indian Ocean under the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law, dispatched the ASDF and GSDF to Iraq under the Law Concerning Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance, hammered out a new agreement with the U.S. on the use of its bases in Japan in its global military campaigns, and changed its long-standing policy on the militarization of space. In addition, they transformed the Defense Agency into a cabinet-level Ministry of Defense, further eased their military-related export ban, and agreed to participate with the U.S. on a ballistic missile defense program. Some even began calling for a debate on allowing Japan to possess nuclear weapons. Those opposed to these policies protested against the government and took to the courts, filing dozens of lawsuits against SDF dispatches on the grounds that they violated the right to live in peace and Article 9.

In addition to taking legislative steps to set the groundwork for constitutional revision and expanding the role of the SDF, revisionists simultaneously carried out programs aimed at affecting Japan's political culture. As noted in the previous chapter, in the first decade of the twenty-first century this included the project to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine. Although no LDP prime minister after Koizumi found it politically expedient to visit the shrine, Prime Minister Abe launched a "beautiful country" campaign in 2006 aimed at mandating the teaching of "love of country" in the public schools and centered on values such as tradition, history, and discipline. In his drive to increase patriotism, Abe succeeded in revising the Fundamental Law of Education, a dream of revisionists for over sixty years. The LDP-led government followed revision of the FLE by passing several laws aimed at increasing centralized government control of the education system, including the addition of management positions in the schools and the elimination of the tenure system for teachers. Finally, MEXT issued textbook guidelines that called for a re-writing of the history of the Imperial Japanese Army's treatment of Okinawan civilians in the closing months of the war, and LDP politicians claimed that the "Rape of Nanking" was a fabrication. These moves were met by protests, and the textbook guidelines were reversed after the largest demonstrations in Okinawa in over thirty-five years.

The momentum for constitutional revision was clearly in the favor of revisionists by the early years of the new century. The traditional defenders of

Article 9 and the constitution in political society, the parties of the Left, declined in influence after the Cold War and all but the JCP would disappear or reorganize by the time the Diet was seriously considering revision. With no major opposition party in the Diet to organize resistance to constitutional revision in society and the unions greatly weakened since the pitched battles of the first reactive sequence in the 1950s, nine public figures announced the formation of the Article Nine Association in 2004 and called on their fellow citizens to defend the “peace plank” of the constitution. Responding to their appeal, thousands of citizens began forming their own A9A’s and within just four years there were over 7,000 autonomous A9A’s leading a national movement against amendment of Article 9. Representing local communities, occupations, and regional and national affinity groups, the A9A’s launched programs of education, social and cultural production, publicity, and lobbying. Whether or not and the degree to which they affected elections and public opinion is debatable, but their rise coincided with a marked decline in public support for the revision of the constitution and Article 9 and an increase in opposition to such moves. Finally, the quick expansion of this movement of constitutional patriots preceded the LDP’s loss of the House of Councillors in 2007 and their loss of the House of Representatives in 2009. Following the DPJ’s capture of the Upper House in 2007 it changed course on revision and boycotted the Diet committees set up to move amendment legislation through the chambers. Since it formed a coalition government in 2009, there has been no legislative movement related to amendment and no further

calls by the party for revision. At the time of this writing, the legislative program for constitutional revision is moribund. Stopped in its tracks by the A9A movement.

## Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The Constitution of Japan is the only constitution in the world that guarantees “the right to live in peace” (Preamble), renounces “war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes”, and prohibits the maintenance of “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential” (Article 9). In this work, I have examined the functioning, maintenance, and interpretation of that constitution, especially the aforementioned antimilitarist provisions, during the past sixty-four years. In many ways, the story of postwar politics in Japan is the story of the debate over Japan’s re-founding under the “Peace Constitution”. Indeed, the central role of the peace question in Japanese postwar politics is evident in political party contestation from before the establishment of the “1955 system” until well after its demise and in contentious politics between civil society and the state. This contestation has turned on institutional questions related to state power (especially policing and war-making powers) as well as questions of political culture (especially collective identity and historical memory).

In this work I have argued that Japan continues to maintain its 1947 constitution, and especially Article 9, in un-amended form because of popular identification with the values and political arrangements it established, namely democratic antimilitarism. In summary, the premises to this conclusion are as follows:

- 1) The re-founding of Japan after 1945 occurred as a critical juncture in which a handful of actors made decisions about political institutional arrangements, especially those related to the military and war-making, that have patterned and constrained state-level actors' behaviors for more more than sixty years.
- 2) The Japanese public largely accepted those institutional arrangements and the values they embodied, namely popular sovereignty, democratic rights, and antimilitarism, through a process facilitated by official campaigns aimed at undermining militarism and promoting democracy. This also resulted in a gradual re-orientation of the public away from nationalism and toward constitutional patriotism.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) During the occupation, Japanese officials who wanted to revise the constitution refrained from attempting to do so with the hope of bringing a quick return of sovereignty. This provided a period of structural persistence during which the public and civil society groups generally came to accept the institutional arrangements as beneficial, i.e., in their interest.
- 4) Despite the openings that the "reverse course" and Japan's return to sovereignty (1952) provided to revision-minded officials, their reactive attempts to amend the constitution through both *ad hoc* and parliamentary means resulted in significant counter-reactions from civil society. The establishment of the SDF and the revision of the U.S-Japan Security Treaty resulted from the

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<sup>1</sup> Especially insofar as nationalism is premised upon the belief in the transformation of fatality, that is self-sacrifice, into continuity (of the nation). I expand on this point below.

first reactive sequence, but actors in political and civil society prevented revisionists from amending the constitution and demonstrated the degree to which they valorized democratic antimilitarism.

- 5) The outcome phase of the first reactive sequence was characterized by a turn away from constitutional revision by LDP governments and gradual, official consensus on a “minimal military posture”. Although revisionists attempted to affect political culture through education policy (targeting the content of history textbooks) and the legislative move to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine, both of which were met with popular opposition and the latter of which failed, as a matter of policy they pledged Japan to the three non-nuclear principles, the non-militarized use of space, a 1 percent limit on military spending, and restrictions on military exports.
- 6) A second reactive sequence began at the end of the 1970s as successive LDP governments undermined the minimal military consensus and Article 9 by loosening the three non-nuclear principles, testing the 1 percent limit, and eventually dispatching the SDF overseas. At the same time, revisionists engaged in projects aimed at reviving nationalism through mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies and the cultural rehabilitation of Yasukuni Shrine.
- 7) After the Cold War, the parties of the Left lost their major opposition status in the Diet and campaigns within political society to revise the constitution resumed. While LDP-led governments expanded the use of the SDF, especially after the terrorist attacks on the U.S. in 2001, and revised the

Fundamental Law of Education, the grassroots A9A movement emerged after 2004 to prevent revision of Article 9.

With this overview of the argument in mind, I want to elaborate on three important themes that this work has brought to the fore: the meaning of Japan as an antimilitarist democracy, sacrifice and nationalism, and the role of historical memory in Japanese identity formation.

### *The Meaning of Japan as an Antimilitarist Democracy*

First, as my research helps to show, the changes that occurred in Japan after its defeat in World War II are evidence not just of a successful transition from authoritarianism to democracy but also of a transition to a particular kind of democracy, namely an antimilitarist democracy. One necessary condition for such a democracy is a strict institutional check on state-level actors' war-making abilities; in the Japanese case this takes the form of a fundamental law that outlaws war and prohibits the maintenance of a standing army.<sup>2</sup> A second necessary condition, one that Japan exemplifies, is a citizenry that generally does not recognize the government's right to engage in war and resists expansion of the military's accepted usage, even in the face of changing international circumstances. In addition to these two conditions, an antimilitarist

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<sup>2</sup> I would propose as a general rule that an antimilitarist democracy is one that has either outlawed or disbanded the standing army or has proven capable of effectively limiting its use through means such as neutralism as official foreign policy. Costa Rica and Iceland are exemplars of the first method, Switzerland of the second.

democracy is one in which there is evidence that state-level actors, even those who oppose constitutional restraints on their war-making ability and their use of military power, acknowledge the rule of (antimilitarist) law and its public valorization by limiting claims-making in regard to war and the military. Evidence of this third condition in the Japanese case is the fact that government leaders and Ministry of Defense officials still do not refer to the SDF as a military nor do they, as a matter of policy, claim for Japan the right to engage in collective self-defense to which it is entitled under the U.N. Charter.

To be sure, Japan's transition from authoritarianism to an antimilitarist democracy came about as a result of its defeat in World War II and the exogenous effect of the U.S.-led occupation. However, the fact that antimilitarist democracy continues to exist more than sixty years later indicates that the citizen-sovereigns of Japan have generally accepted the 1947 Constitution as their own, especially its peace plank - Article 9. Substantiating this claim is the fact that a majority of public opinion has never favored revision of Article 9 despite over a half-century of overt and covert attempts by Japanese and U.S. governments to re-orient society away from the values enshrined in the "Peace Constitution".

In a way, the popular acceptance of antimilitarist democracy in Japan has been too successful for the U.S. postwar political establishment. After the brief window in time closed between the end of World War II and the start of the Cold War -- when the constitution came into effect -- the outlawry of war was inimical

to official U.S. geopolitical and economic aims. Simply put, the U.S. political establishment wanted armed allies in order to counter the perceived Soviet threat, and it wanted markets for the U.S. military-industrial complex. The U.S. government's pursuit of these aims has contributed, in part, to the erosion-through-interpretation of Article 9 by postwar Japanese governments.

It goes without saying that Japan's antimilitarist democracy does not exist today as it did at its inception. The Japanese government spends nearly \$50 billion maintaining a 150,000-member SDF with one of the most powerful navies in the world.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the government effectively has the power to use space for military purposes, acquires weapons systems that are primarily offensive in nature, dispatches the SDF overseas, coordinates with the U.S. on the development of ballistic missile defense, and assists and subsidizes the U.S. in its global military campaigns. On the other hand, Japan still has relatively strict regulations on military exports, does not claim the right to possess nuclear weapons, returned to limiting military spending to 1 percent of GNP, and, does not permit the SDF to engage in combat overseas, and, as mentioned above, does not claim the right to engage in collective self-defense permitted by the U.N. Charter.

An often overlooked consequence of Japan's constitutional antimilitarism is the fact that since Japan does not have a constitutionally recognized military, there is no military law in Japan; as mentioned earlier in this work members of

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<sup>3</sup> The SDF's armaments include 600 battle tanks, 47 destroyers, 16 submarines, and nearly 300 fighter planes. Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation*, 152.

the SDF who are accused of crimes are tried in civilian courts. Put another way, because there is no military law, there can be no military tribunals. The absence of military law precludes the possible usurpation of judicial authority by the military that has occurred not only in authoritarian regimes, for example Chile and Argentina, but also in democracies like the United States.<sup>4</sup> Simply put, adherence to the rule of antimilitarist law greatly restricts the availability of means by which state-level actors can use organized violence against society.

A final implication of constitutional antimilitarism, one to which I turn in the following section, is that there are no constitutional grounds by which the Japanese government can order its citizens to die for the country.

### *Sacrifice and Nationalism*

The fact that the Japanese government has no constitutional grounds by which it can call on citizens to die for the country has important implications for Japanese collective identity and historical memory as I have suggested throughout this work. The role of blood sacrifice is a central, if under-theorized, facet of nationalism. Anderson, however, observes continuity in the role of sacrifice from the time of hierarchical dynasties based on cosmological imaginings into the modern period, an age in which the nation is “the most universally legitimate value in political life”.<sup>5</sup> Whereas in sacred cosmology

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<sup>4</sup> Pereira, for example, shows that the United States military’s usurpation of judicial authority after 2001 has been greater than the Brazilian military’s usurpation of judicial authority during the period of authoritarian military government there during the 1960s and 1970s. Anthony W. Pereira, *Political (In)Justice* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 3.

individual fatality is transformed into continuity by the supernatural negation of death's finitude, in nationalism individual fatality, namely sacrificing one's life for the nation, is transformed into the continuity of the nation.<sup>6</sup> According to Anderson, in the nationalist imaginary, self-sacrifice is regenerative, a link between the dead and the not-yet born. Put another way, in the modern age self-sacrifice for the nation serves the same role of overcoming the arbitrariness of death and providing a means for continuity that paradise and salvation did in the hierarchical dynasties of the not-so-distant past.

In terms of the Japanese case, modern, prewar Japan was a fusion of a hierarchical dynasty of imagined cosmological origins with the imagined community of the nation. The emperor system and the *kokutai* imagining of the "national essence" provided the state with its logic for ordering subjects to their deaths - for the emperor-centric nation - and subjects with their logic of self-sacrifice - for deification at Yasukuni Shrine and a role in regenerating and protecting the emperor-centric nation. According to Gulick's contemporaneous observation of Meiji Japan, "The heroes lauded by the Japanese to-day [sic] are those who have proved their loyalty by the sacrifice of their lives."<sup>7</sup> Or to recount the words of Tanaka, "when dying on the battlefield we call, 'Long live the Emperor!' and gladly meet our end without hesitation. Judging from this fact, you can understand that in the real heart and blood of the people is latent the *Kokutai*

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<sup>6</sup> Anderson poses the question: why would one sacrifice his life for such limited imagining?

<sup>7</sup> Sidney L. Gulick, *Evolution of the Japanese*, 249.

sense.”<sup>8</sup> The emperor, as the embodiment of the sacred, could call on his subjects to realize their essence by sacrificing themselves for him, and their deification at Yasukuni would confirm the triumph over death, not just of the subject but of the sacred community. In the same way, he who speaks for the nation may command the nationals to lay down their lives for *its* regeneration.

What are the implications, then, of a political community that renounces “war as the sovereign right of the nation” as fundamental law? One important implication is that the nation, that is officials of the state who would claim to speak for the national interest, have no constitutional grounds upon which to order Japanese citizens into war. It is not even clear that this could occur in the case of invasion since the constitution does not spell out Japan’s right to individual self-defense, a minimum goal of constitutional revisionists. I would argue that this has contributed greatly to the pronounced unwillingness of Japanese to fight for their country.

As noted above, World Values Survey data dating back to 1981 for Japan indicate that the percentage of respondents willing to fight for their country in war has not exceeded 34.2 percent (1981) and has remained at between 20 and 25 percent thereafter. In addition, polling data gathered by the Japanese government eleven times (every three-to-four years) between 1975 and 2006 indicate that when respondents were asked what their “expected personal response to an invasion of Japan” would be, the percentage who answered, “Join the SDF and fight” has *never* reached 10 percent. In comparison, the response,

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<sup>8</sup> Chigaku Tanaka, *What is Nippon Kokutai*, 99.

“Offer no resistance” has exceeded “Join the SDF and fight” in every survey, hovering around 10 percent, and the response, “Resist by non-armed means” has fluctuated between 15 and 25 percent.<sup>9</sup>

What does this data reveal about Japanese collective identity? When we consider that a majority of Japanese have *never* favored revision of Article 9 in the postwar era despite concerted efforts by the long-ruling LDP to do just that, one conclusion that we might draw is that Japanese collective identity, in general terms, is characterized by a strong vein of constitutional patriotism as opposed to nationalism. In other words, citizens have generally valorized the principals of the constitution, perhaps especially Article 9, as inviolable, opposed its revision, and have mobilized to make government policy adhere to the letter and spirit of the law rather than to amend the constitution in order to legally sanction current policies that they deem unconstitutional. The Article Nine Association movement that began in 2004 embodies these characteristics. On the other hand, the will to sacrifice definitive of nationalism is pronounced only by its diminution in Japan. In political terms, Japanese citizens have all but abandoned the *kokutai* (national essence) imaginary and have come to identify, instead, with the *seitai* (political essence) of postwar constitutional arrangements. As I have suggested above, revisionist, nationalist politicians have actively tried to counter this postwar identity, both through their policies and through their campaigns to affect Japanese political culture, particularly historical memory.

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<sup>9</sup> Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation*, 160.

*The Role of Historical Memory in Japanese Identity Formation*

Historical memory operates primarily through narrative. It is one kind of story that a community tells itself about itself. Narratives of historical memory situate the community, in this case the political community, in time, providing a sense of continuity that outlasts the life of any individual member of that community. The stories that make up the corpus of historical memory often include stories that explain the community's origins, hark back to a "golden age" or idealized past, or situate the community relative to others over the course of time as a means of collective self-valuation. In addition, those who possess or seek to possess disproportionate power relative to other members of the community sometimes use those stories to obtain more power or to justify the power they possess as authoritative and legitimate. When those with power act to monopolize the telling of stories about the past and discount narratives that run counter to "official" memory, the use of historical memory is a hegemonic practice.<sup>10</sup> As mentioned above, the hegemonic practice of story-telling about a community's past explicitly or implicitly posits present social arrangements as "natural", "reasonable", or "inevitable". In other words, narratives of historical memory suggest that the past determines the present and that the present cannot be, therefore, other than it is.

In imperial era Japan, the "official" memories of state served to legitimate the authority of the emperor and the authoritative power of state institutions as

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<sup>10</sup> Davis's work is exemplary of this phenomenon. Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Memory in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

instruments of his will. Publicists of this view traced the origins of this “line of unbroken authority” back to the emperors’ divine ancestry and posited that all Japanese descended from the imperial family. This was the story of the political community as sacred community and the leader of that community as coeval with heaven and earth.<sup>11</sup> It was also the story of the Japanese *kokutai*, the national essence. The ubiquitous symbols of that community, the *Hinomaru* flag and the anthem *Kimigayo* served as reminders of the divine history of the nation, and mandatory ceremonies transformed the concepts of an ancient past into the performative practices of the present. At the same time, deification of the war dead at Yasukuni Shrine demonstrated the community’s triumph over the fatality of death and sanctified official orders to die for the emperor-centric nation. In other words, the historical memory of the nation was deadly serious.

The postwar re-founding of the Japanese state was a trail by fiat of the imperial era and the historical memories upon which those with authority justified their legitimacy. Although the 1947 Constitution did not eliminate the emperor, it completely revoked his sovereignty by making of him a symbol. In this New Japan, the founding of which was the dawn of “liberated history”, the constitution replaced subjects with citizens, voided the nation’s right to wage war, established democratic rights, and supplanted divine rule with secular pluralism.

In a new age in which the political sovereignty of citizens and their constitution displaced national sovereignty, those who wanted extra-constitutional

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<sup>11</sup> Hardacre shows how the state privileged *Shintō* over Buddhism between 1868 and 1945 as an allusion to a pure Japanese spiritual essence pre-dating the arrival of Buddhism from China, in

power, especially the right to use war as a means of national policy and the right to establish an army in order to do so, discounted the narrative of “liberated history” as no more than “occupied history” and appealed to the historical memories that informed Japanese national identity in the imperial era. As noted above, in order to do so, state-level actors attempted to increase their control over the textbook adoption process in order to control the historical memory of pre-surrender Japan. In addition, they attempted to rehabilitate Yasukuni Shrine, first through legislative means (the *Yasukuni hōan*) and later through prime ministers’ visits to the shrine even after it interred the spirits of executed Class-A war criminals. Finally, through the re-introduction of mandatory flag and anthem ceremonies and their legalization as national symbols in the Diet (1999), state-level revisionists brought symbolic and historical reminders and practices of the imperial era into Japanese schools.

That civil society reacted to all of the aforementioned moves with vigorous protest indicates something about the imagining of Japanese collective identity in the postwar period. In particular, it demonstrates the contested nature of Japanese political identity. But this is not the story of competing Japanese nationalisms. Instead, I would argue that it is the story of nationalism versus constitutional patriotism. Protests against each of these campaigns to rehabilitate imperial historical memory have appealed to the postwar re-founding of Japan on citizen-sovereignty and the rule of law, a law that negated the *kokutai* imaginary

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other words a “golden age”. Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*.

and all of its political implications, including the necessity of sacrificing oneself for a thing of such limited imagining as the nation.

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