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**Japan's Grand Strategic Shift:
From the Yoshida Doctrine to an Abe Doctrine?**

Christopher W. Hughes

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter argues that Japan's grand strategy—responding to evolving security pressures and material constraints—is exploring a shift from the old certainties of the Yoshida doctrine to an Abe doctrine characterized by a new level of military commitment and stronger integration of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

MAIN ARGUMENT

For most of the postwar period, Japan has opted for the Yoshida doctrine's minimalist defense posture and dependence on the U.S. as the best fit for navigating an uncertain regional security environment. Other debated options of neutralism, autonomy, and multilateralism have largely been rejected as lacking feasibility. Consequently, in the post-Cold War era, the Yoshida doctrine has been adapted to meet unfolding strategic needs while still delimiting defense commitments. However, the rise of China and uncertainties over U.S. power and commitment have forced Japanese policymakers to reconsider their grand strategy. The emerging Abe doctrine now commits Japan to move beyond minimalism in its national defense posture and to cease much of the hedging around the U.S.-Japan alliance. But the transition to the Abe doctrine is not yet complete, given residual domestic antimilitarism and potential strains to the U.S.-Japan alliance.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Japan is intent on shifting its grand strategy and fulfilling a greater commitment to the U.S.-Japan alliance. This presents opportunities for the U.S., with Japanese support, to strengthen its own strategic position in the region vis-à-vis rising challenges.
- The Trump administration may find Japan a responsive partner in its quest for greater burden-sharing among East Asian allies and should continue close U.S. engagement on strategic priorities.
- To avoid tilting the Abe doctrine toward traditions of autonomy, the U.S. needs to manage the alliance carefully, especially given Japan's recent concerns about abandonment and resurgent concerns about entrapment.

Japan's Grand Strategic Shift: From the Yoshida Doctrine to an Abe Doctrine?

Christopher W. Hughes

Japan's grand strategy and concomitant choice of military doctrines and capabilities have proved remarkably durable in the post-World War II era. This is the result of the strong confluence of, and careful mediation among, contending international structural factors and domestic ideational and material drivers. Japan's policymakers and citizenry, as a consequence, have defaulted pragmatically to the Yoshida doctrine as a grand strategy and largely avoided exploration of potential alternative or more radical options. Devised in outline by Shigeru Yoshida, who served as prime minister in 1946–47 and again in 1948–54, this doctrine advocates a minimalist defense posture and dependence on the U.S.-Japan security relationship.

Much of this chapter is devoted to explaining the reasons for the evolution, growing acceptance, and continued resilience of Japan's postwar grand strategy. Yet it also considers whether, given the gradual shifting of underlying international and domestic drivers, avenues are opening up for resultant shifts in this strategy overall. Specifically, this chapter argues that a changing mix of international security challenges, accompanied by domestic political upheavals, economic constraints, and, crucially, the resurgence of ideological intent in policy discourse, has given impetus to the emergence of the Abe doctrine as a new grand strategy. Put forward by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who began his second stint as prime minister in 2012, this doctrine might be cast in some of its features as just a more ambitious extension of the Yoshida doctrine. In other ways, though, the Abe doctrine could overturn the status quo in security policy and set Japan on a

new strategic direction—one that integrates Japanese and U.S. military efforts and ceases hedging, while taking a more independent line. It thus carries important implications for regional security relations and the development of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

This chapter builds on the previous two *Strategic Asia* volumes to explain how the interaction of Japan's material capabilities and strategic culture influences its grand strategy and military stance.¹ The chapter proceeds in four main sections. The first section outlines the key international and domestic strategic drivers throughout the postwar era and into the contemporary period that have shaped the formulation of Japan's grand strategy. The policy discourse around Japan's strategic choices, including the predilection for the Yoshida doctrine and emergence of the Abe doctrine, needs to be understood with reference to these parameters and baselines. The second section considers the principal strategic options—neutralism, autonomy, multilateralism, and the Yoshida doctrine—that have been pondered by Japanese policymakers at different stages in the postwar era. This section provides the context for the deeper examination in the third section of why Japan's policymakers and public have actively pursued, or at a minimum acquiesced in, the Yoshida doctrine as a grand strategy throughout most of the postwar era. In comparison with the other options debated, the Yoshida doctrine charted the most effective course for navigating international and domestic challenges and ensuring national security. Yet this section also demonstrates how Japan's shifting international and domestic parameters have opened the space for the emergence of the Abe doctrine and the potential displacement of the Yoshida doctrine. The fourth section of the chapter examines the durability of Japan's existing grand strategy, the possibility of strands of past options re-entering the debate on the country's strategic trajectory, and the transition from the Yoshida doctrine to the Abe doctrine. Finally, the conclusion considers the potential impact of the shift in Japan's grand strategy and military stance on regional stability and relations with the United States, especially with the advent of the Trump administration.

¹ See Michael Auslin, "Japan's National Power in a Shifting Global Balance," in *Strategic Asia 2015–16: Foundations of National Power in the Asia-Pacific*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis, Alison Szalwinski, and Michael Wills (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research [NBR], 2015), 56–88; and Alexis Dudden, "Two Strategic Cultures, Two Japans," in *Strategic Asia 2016–17: Understanding Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis, Alison Szalwinski, and Michael Wills (Seattle: NBR, 2016), 90–111.

Japan's Strategic Drivers and Culture: International and Domestic Challenges

Japan's external and internal strategic drivers, even though steadily evolving and subject to some fluctuation, during most of the postwar era have provided a consistent set of parameters for grand strategy and military policy. Japanese policymakers, in addition to encountering a difficult set of international security challenges, have experienced particularly stringent domestic constraints around security policy that have tended to inhibit discussion, let alone pursuit, of a full range of strategic options.

Regional Instability and Alliance Dilemmas

In terms of international structural drivers, throughout premodern history and the emergence of the modern state system, Japan's policy elites have traditionally perceived their nation as inherently vulnerable due to limitations in comprehensive national strength and strategic depth in terms of natural resources, geographic area, and population. These shortcomings are compounded by Japan's location at the juncture of a uniquely disadvantageous set of regional and global security flashpoints. With the onset of the Cold War after World War II, Japan's overall objective as a defeated power under the U.S.-led occupation was to recover national independence, reconstruct its economy, and navigate a generally hostile region. Japan's principal direct security challenge during the Cold War was the Soviet Union's conventional and nuclear threat, expanding by the 1980s to encompass even the risk of Soviet invasion of Japanese territory. The creation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a Communist regime, bouts of deep political instability in mainland China, and the procurement of nuclear weapons by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) posed some concerns for Japanese security but were perceived as secondary concerns. Similarly, although Japan's policymakers continued throughout the Cold War to be concerned about North Korea's military buildup and general instability on the Korean Peninsula, this threat was judged to be indirect and limited. In Southeast Asia, even though few direct risks were posed to Japanese security, concerns revolved around intrastate and interstate conflicts that might have an impact on wider regional stability and Japanese economic interests. Meanwhile, this hazard-strewn regional security situation was compounded by the legacy of Japan's own colonial history that predisposed many of the new regional states toward hostility. Japan was thus faced in this period with the need to find a foreign policy that would ensure its own security and help stabilize the region. Japanese policymakers' responses involved deeper diplomatic and economic

re-engagement with the region but necessitated difficult choices about the military aspects of grand strategy.

In the post–Cold War period, Japan’s international strategic drivers and overall objectives have exhibited a high degree of continuity. The country’s security situation had improved by the end of the Cold War through a combination of shifts in the international system and its own efforts but has gradually deteriorated since then. The Soviet threat has been increasingly substituted for by China’s rise in not entirely comparable, yet sometimes nearly as challenging, ways.² Japanese policymakers have expressed anxieties since the late 1990s about China’s growing defense expenditures and capacity for military power projection. Japan fears that China’s rising military power no longer is focused simply on access denial and the prevention of Taiwan independence but now is looking to pursue the longer-term goal of area control over the first island chain in the East and South China Seas by transgressing established international norms relating to freedom of navigation and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and gradually leveraging out the Japanese and U.S. naval presence. Moreover, in Southeast Asia the expansion of China’s naval power is now seen to pose a direct threat to Japanese sea lines of communication and economic interests. Hence, the threat from China has become direct and immediate, challenging both Japan’s territorial integrity and ability to function as a maritime nation.³

This threat is compounded by a host of other security challenges. Although North Korea is second to China in terms of the long-term threat it poses, the regime’s development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs over the last two decades presents a clear and present danger to Japan. North Korea’s frequent missile tests in 2017 as tensions with the United States have risen, including the reportedly successful launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile in July 2017 and the testing of intermediate-range missiles with trajectories passing over northern Japan in August and September of the same year, have only served to increase Japanese policymakers’ awareness of these dangers. The result is that North Korea has joined China in presenting new and direct security threats to Japan. Furthermore, in the post–Cold War period, Japan’s strategic horizons have expanded to include an increasing recognition of global concerns. The Gulf War of 1990–91 first indicated the potential impact of conflicts outside the Asia-Pacific on Japan’s own security, and Japanese awareness of the need to respond to new global security challenges was heightened further in the aftermath of the events

² Sheila A. Smith, *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); and June Teufel Dreyer, *Middle Kingdom and Empire of the Rising Sun: Sino-Japanese Relations, Past and Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

³ Dudden, “Two Strategic Cultures, Two Japans,” 99–103.

of September 11, 2001, and with the onset of the “war on terrorism.” Consequently, Japanese policymakers have started to acknowledge the new interdependencies of their own nation’s security with global security as a whole.

In addition to these regional and global security threats, the other external constant influencing Japan’s strategic parameters has been the role of the United States. During the Cold War, Japanese policymakers were able to draw comfort from the United States’ hegemonic presence as an overall stabilizer of East Asian security. At the same time, their analysis of the costs and benefits of alignment and later an alliance with the United States was crucial. In evaluating their security options, Japanese policymakers calculated the risks both of entrapment if aligning too closely with the U.S. security orbit for protection and of abandonment if becoming too distant.⁴ In the post–Cold War period, Japan’s alliance with the United States has remained a constant and increasingly dominant external variable in shaping national security preferences. The perceived waxing and waning of the United States’ relative hegemonic power and commitment to Asia-Pacific security, and the rise of China as a potential pole in the international order, has caused Japanese policymakers to speculate at times on available security options. Similarly, the accompanying impulses to strengthen the military alliance with the United States have remained heavily conditioned by the strategic risks of entrapment and abandonment, especially as different U.S. administrations have seemed to fluctuate in their willingness to deter or accommodate China.

Domestic Political Fissures, Antimilitarism, and Material Factors

Regarding the internal drivers of Japan’s security strategy and military policy, domestic politics and economic development prospects have functioned throughout the postwar era to determine the policy parameters for responding to external challenges. In the post–Cold War period, domestic politics have possibly declined in significance as a constraint, while the role of economics has gradually increased. Japanese policymakers in the immediate postwar period had to negotiate their way through a party system characterized by deep cleavages over security policy. On the left of the political spectrum, the then electorally strong Japan Socialist Party (JSP) insisted on adhering to the so-called peace clause of Article 9 of the 1947 constitution. By contrast, conservatives in the eventually dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its mainstream factions were more willing to consider Japan’s re-engagement with issues of military power

⁴ Daniel M. Kliman, *Japan’s Security Strategy in the Post-9/11 World: Embracing a New Realpolitik* (Westport: Praeger, 2006), 12–14.

and international security. In a related fashion, policymaking institutions were decentralized and of limited effectiveness, given the policy divides and competition among central ministries and agencies, strong oversight of the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) by larger ministries such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and firm civilian control of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) by the JDA.⁵ These political and bureaucratic constraints both reflected and were reinforced by Japanese society's broader sentiment of antimilitarism, characterized by attachment to the principles of Article 9 and suspicion of the utility of military power for security ends.⁶

The political and bureaucratic obstacles to Japan mobilizing national resources for security were reinforced in the early post-Cold War period by the need to focus on economic reconstruction. As the Japanese "economic miracle" took hold from the 1960s to 1980s, Japan's massively enhanced material and technological potential enabled significant investment in the JSDF's capabilities, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and sparked discussions of the country moving to utilize its new economic superpower status to establish a commensurate position as a military superpower.⁷ But despite Japan's considerable material potential, the ability of policymakers to mobilize these resources remained constrained by the broader national security culture. Political leaders preferred modest defense budgets to reassure domestic and international opinion about Japanese military intentions and to utilize economic power for "comprehensive security" ends focused on resource procurement and the development and stabilization of the political economy of East Asia's emerging states.⁸

In the post-Cold War period, Japan's domestic political, institutional, and societal cleavages over security policy have become significantly less entrenched, reflecting greater fluidity in the party political regime. A result of this shift has been greater political instability, including the rapid turnover of administrations, but also greater space for discussions over future security policy. The LDP has largely dominated Japan politically from the Cold War into the contemporary period, but its competency to govern has been deeply challenged by Japan's relative economic malaise over the last quarter of a

⁵ Andrew L. Oros and Yuki Tatsumi, *Global Security Watch: Japan* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 47–70.

⁶ Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); and Andrew L. Oros, *Normalizing Japan: Politics, Identity, and the Evolution of Security Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

⁷ Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security* 18, no. 2 (1993): 55–70.

⁸ John M.W. Chapman, Reinhard Drifte, and Ian T. M. Gow, *Japan's Quest for Comprehensive Security: Defence, Diplomacy, Dependence* (London: Pinter, 1983); and Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Security Agenda: Military, Economic and Environmental Dimensions* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2004).

century, or “lost decades.”⁹ The consequence has been the LDP’s increasing orientation away from the mainstream toward the more radical elements of the party fixed on neoliberal economic remedies and revisionism in defense and security. The gradual collapse of the JSP and its successor, the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ), as the main opposition party enabled the LDP to see off one competitor. However, the LDP then encountered more serious opposition from the more center-right Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), even losing power to its rival from 2009 to 2012. The result for Japanese politics has been periods of relative stability during the long-running premierships of Junichiro Koizumi (2001–6) and most recently Abe, punctuated with rapid instability during the five years between 2006 and 2011 when the country was led by five prime ministers. In addition, the DPJ itself split and reformed as the Democratic Party (DP) in 2016.

Nevertheless, even in the midst of this political uncertainty, there has been the potential for a new convergence on security policy. LDP and DPJ members, although often at loggerheads over Japan’s precise security orientation, have strongly overlapped in perspectives at times and generally converged on the view that Japan should boost its security efforts.¹⁰ In turn, LDP and DPJ administrations have looked to reform domestic security institutions, enhance political control over the bureaucracy, and loosen heavy civilian control of the military. Japan’s citizenry has also broadly followed in the trail of its political leaders. For while residual antimilitaristic sentiment remains a potential obstacle, the public appears increasingly, if still grudgingly, accepting of the need for Japan to undertake greater efforts for the defense of its own territory and in support of U.S. and international security.¹¹ For instance, Cabinet Office opinion polls demonstrate over the long term the increase in support for the JSDF in the postwar period. In 1965, only 15% of respondents viewed the JSDF’s role as national defense compared to 40% who emphasized domestic disaster relief. But in 2015, not long after the March 2011 disasters, 74% of respondents acknowledged the JSDF’s national defense role, nearly as much as the 82% who recognized its role in disaster relief. Support for the U.S.-Japan alliance has also increased over time, with the percentage of respondents answering that the U.S.-Japan security treaty functions effectively for Japan’s security rising from 66% in

⁹ T.J. Pempel, *Regime Shift: Comparative Dynamics of the Japanese Political Economy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

¹⁰ Amy Catalinac, *Electoral Reform and National Security in Japan: From Pork to Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

¹¹ Paul Midford, *Rethinking Japanese Public Opinion and Security: From Pacifism to Realism?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 170–86; and Paul Midford, “The GSDF’s Quest for Public Acceptance and the ‘Allergy’ Myth,” in *The Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force: Search for Legitimacy*, ed. Robert D. Eldridge and Paul Midford (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 314–17.

1978 to 83% by 2015. Meanwhile, the same poll indicates that support for maintaining the JSDF and the U.S.-Japan alliance working in combination for Japan's security rose from 41% in 1969 to 85% by 2015.¹²

In contrast, if political barriers to Japan's security role have declined to some degree as a constant in setting parameters, then material factors have risen in policymakers' considerations.¹³ Japan's poor economic performance since the early 1990s, massive government pump-priming, and the racking up of a debt-to-GDP ratio of 250% by 2016, along with rising social and health budget demands, have constrained the finances available for defense expenditure.¹⁴ Similarly, Japan's demographic decline—with the population forecast to fall from 128 million in 2007 to 95 million in 2050—poses questions for the country's long-term standing as an economic superpower and the ability of the JSDF to recruit sufficient personnel.¹⁵ The relative shift of Japan's economic power vis-à-vis China as a key regional competitor is also noteworthy. In 2010, China overtook Japan to become the second-largest economy in GDP terms at \$6.1 trillion, compared with Japan's \$5.7 trillion. By 2015, China's GDP had increased to \$11.1 trillion, while Japan's had shrunk to \$4.4 trillion.¹⁶

Japan still has considerable economic, technological, and budgetary capabilities to expand its military power, but it increasingly needs to weigh such a move against other budgetary choices. Regardless, it would still fall far short of any expectations to match the resource inputs of the United States and the double-digit increases of China. Hence, even though the current Abe administration has increased Japan's defense budget, it has remained around 5% of the government budget, whereas social welfare and public works have expanded their share of total expenditure.¹⁷ The proportion of the defense budget available for the procurement of weapons systems has also fallen. Over the last twenty years up to 45% has been directed toward personnel and provisions (given rising salary and pension costs), whereas the proportion directed to equipment acquisition declined from around 23% of the budget in 1988 to around 16% in 2016.¹⁸

¹² "Jeitai boei ni kansuru yoron chosa" [Opinion Poll Regarding the JSDF and Defense], Naikakufu Daijin Kanbo Seifu Kohoshitsu, January 2017, <http://survey.gov-online.go.jp/h26/h26-bouei/index.html>.

¹³ Auslin, "Japan's National Power in a Shifting Global Balance," 59–67.

¹⁴ "IMF Warns of Higher Debt-GDP Ratio in Japan," *Japan Times*, April 16, 2015.

¹⁵ Lynann Butkiewicz, "Implications of Japan's Changing Demographics," NBR, October 10, 2012, http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/ETA/ES_Japan_demographics_report.pdf.

¹⁶ "Countries and Economies Data," World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/country>.

¹⁷ *Boei handobukku 2016* [Defense Handbook 2016] (Tokyo: Asagumo Shinbunsha, 2016), 283.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 285.

Japan's Strategic and Military Options: The Yoshida Doctrine by Process of Elimination

In seeking to respond to this complex mix of international and domestic challenges and parameters, Japan's policymakers and analysts have in the past considered a range of potential strategic and military options for ensuring national security. These options have jostled for policymakers' attention to different degrees throughout the postwar era and, as will be seen in later sections, have returned in modified form for consideration again in the contemporary period. However, during the Cold War, and in the process of setting the dominant grand strategy and security trajectory that largely continues to date, Japanese leaders rejected most of these options as lacking feasibility in their own right, although components did find their way into the dominant grand strategy. The exception, of course, was the Yoshida doctrine.

Neutralism

The first of Japan's security options that was considered but essentially discarded early in the Cold War period was a stance of neutralism, echoing General Douglas MacArthur's initial recommendation at the time of the occupation in 1950 that Japan should be akin to a "Switzerland of the Far East." The JSP was the principal advocate of unarmed neutralism (*hibuso churitsu*), which it viewed as congruent with the interpretation of Article 9 as prohibiting even the right of self-defense.¹⁹ In line with this view, the JSDF is unconstitutional, and Japan instead should seek to provide for its security through regional diplomacy and economic cooperation, eschewing any form of alignment with the United States or involvement in Cold War politics. The Japan Communist Party (JCP) promoted a variant of neutralism, again refusing alignment with the United States or embroilment in Cold War tensions, but supported Japan's maintenance of its own limited conventional armed forces.²⁰ Although Japan's consideration of neutralism appears unorthodox today, given the 65-year history of the U.S.-Japan security treaty, for the parties on the left of the political spectrum during the Cold War years it appeared to be a viable means to resolve Japan's defense *problématique*. Neutralism was thought to offer Japan a means to recover its autonomy, reassure its East Asian neighbors over its intentions in the aftermath of colonialism, enable concentration on economic recovery, avoid exacerbating the emerging Cold War security dilemmas in the region, and

¹⁹ Glenn D. Hook, *Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan* (London: Routledge, 1996), 31–4.

²⁰ *Boei handobukku 2003* [Defense Handbook 2003] (Tokyo: Asagumo Shinbunsha, 2003), 762–64.

escape entrapment dilemmas involved with alignment toward either side of the bipolar divide.²¹

Nevertheless, even though many policymakers from other parties acknowledged similar risks in Japan's international position to those pointed out by the JSP and JCP, and the broader Japanese public was not entirely unsympathetic, neutralism was rejected as a credible national policy. The JSP was never able to gain sufficient political strength to challenge the LDP's grip on power, and the majority of conservative politicians and government bureaucrats did not view neutralism as an appropriate policy for addressing the realities of the Cold War, given the lack of potential partner states in East Asia and the requirement for a superpower sponsor.

Japanese Autonomy and Revisionism

At the other end of the spectrum of strategic options, from the early Cold War period onward a significant caucus of Japanese conservative policymakers argued for full remilitarization as a feasible route to autonomy and security. These "Gaullists" or "revisionists" advocated that Japan should revise Article 9, which was an alien imposition constraining its national identity.²² Instead, these thinkers advocated that Japan should rearm, re-enter great-power politics, form shifting alliances, play the international balance of power, and reject the presence of foreign troops on Japanese territory.²³ Figures such as Hitoshi Ashida, Ichiro Hatoyama, and Nobusuke Kishi (Abe's grandfather), and later Yasuhiro Nakasone and Shintaro Ishihara—anti-mainstream representatives of the LDP—argued that only in this way could Japan free itself of foreign domination and protect its national interests. They also argued that rearmament would stimulate the economy. In the latter stages of the Cold War, Japanese Gaullists were also comfortable proposing the procurement of an indigenous nuclear deterrent to fully guarantee Japan's autonomy.²⁴ Moreover, many of these Gaullists espoused the need for Japan to revisit

²¹ Ivan Morris, "Japanese Foreign Policy and Neutralism," *International Affairs* 36, no. 1 (1960): 7–20.

²² Japan's revisionist or neo-autonomist strategic thinkers share similarities with, and were to an extent inspired by, the tradition of Gaullism in France. This tradition is characterized by a strong state, reliance on realpolitik rather than internationalist principles, the avoidance of reliance on allies and multilateral security frameworks if not coinciding with national interests, and the development of a strong military posture, including an independent nuclear deterrent. For more detail on the Gaullist tradition in Japan, see H.D.P. Envall, "Transforming Security Politics: Koizumi Jun'ichiro and the Gaullist Tradition in Japan," *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, July 20, 2008, <http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/2008/Envall.html>.

²³ Mike M. Mochizuki, "Japan's Search for Strategy," *International Security* 8, no. 3 (1983–84): 166–68; and Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 30–31.

²⁴ John Welfield, *An Empire in Eclipse: Japan in the Postwar American Alliance System* (London: Athlone, 1988), 364–8.

and ultimately cast off historical judgments on its colonial past in order to exercise freedom of action in the international arena rather than submitting to pressure from China and other East Asian states on historical issues.

Gaullism struggled to gain full traction in Japan during the Cold War. This option was rebuffed as highly expensive in terms of the expenditure on armaments and likely to provoke security dilemmas with the Soviet Union, China, and even the United States, as well as counterreactions in East Asia over concerns of Japanese revanchism. All the same, Japan's conservatives never fully abandoned consideration of Gaullism. As will be seen in later sections, this view was able to once again penetrate and influence the mainstream LDP and Yoshida doctrine after the Cold War.

Multilateralism, Regionalism, and Internationalism

Japan's third traditionally debated option—although arguably only emerging as a potential option in its own right toward the end of the Cold War—has revolved around a multilateral, regional, and liberal internationalist approach. Japan has always declared a strong internationalist bent in its security policy. The 1957 Basic Policy on National Defense stated as its first objective cooperation with the United Nations for the realization of world peace and as its fifth objective security cooperation with the United States until such a point that the United Nations can take on responsibility for preventing aggression.²⁵ Japanese policymakers and analysts have thus advocated fuller UN cooperation in various forms, including proposals for the Cold War deployment of a UN police force in Japan as a deterrent against international aggression and for early post-Cold War participation in support of UN collective security and peacekeeping operations.²⁶ In addition, Japan has been thought to have opportunities to work with its East Asian neighbors to stabilize regional security by cooperating on economic issues, building regional multilateralism, and acting as a “civilian power.”²⁷

However, for most of the Cold War, these liberal internationalist approaches failed to enter Japan's policy mainstream given the perceived ineffectiveness of the United Nations and the depth of regional political and security divisions. As noted in later sections, it was not until the end of the Cold War that elements of the DPJ were able to articulate more fully multilateral and East Asia-oriented security plans.

²⁵ *Boei handobukku 2003*, 88.

²⁶ Sakamoto Yoshikazu, *Kaku jidai no kokusai seiji* [International Politics in the Nuclear Age] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982), 3–29.

²⁷ Yoichi Funabashi, “Japan and the New World Order,” *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1991/92, 58–74.

The Yoshida Doctrine

Instead, during the Cold War and into the early stages of the post–Cold War period, it was the LDP mainstream that came to dictate and implement Japanese security policy through the fourth strategic option, the Yoshida doctrine, which at that point was alone capable of reconciling Japan’s array of international and domestic challenges.²⁸ Prime Minister Yoshida and the other “pragmatists” or “political realists” of the eventual LDP mainstream, although committed to restoring Japan’s position among the ranks of the great powers, rejected ideological positions, military spending increases, and large-scale rearmament as unfeasible given the generally precarious state of the Japanese economy and political opposition from the JSP and JCP. The pragmatists instead perceived that the reconstruction of the civilian economy and technological prowess were future prerequisites for ensuring national autonomy, and that national wealth would be rebuilt through maritime trade and regaining markets in the United States, Europe, and, most crucially, East Asia. The pragmatists did not reject altogether the role of military power in ensuring national autonomy. They were prepared to contemplate more significant rearmament and Japan’s re-emergence as an autonomous military power in the future once economic strength had been restored.²⁹

To implement this highly expedient new grand strategy, known initially as the “Yoshida line,” Prime Minister Yoshida chose the mechanism of alignment—although not necessarily alliance—with the United States by seeking and signing the 1951 Security Treaty between the United States and Japan, concurrent with the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty. The bilateral security treaty initiated an implicit grand strategic bargain between Japan and the United States. In line with the treaty, Japan was obliged to provide the United States with bases to enable the projection of U.S. power onto continental East Asia. In separate agreements, Japan committed itself to assume some responsibility for national self-defense through light rearmament and eventual foundation of the JSDF in 1954. In return, it gained effective guarantees of superpower military protection, including forward-deployed forces and the deterrence provided by the extended U.S. nuclear “umbrella.” In accepting these security arrangements, Japan further gained U.S. assent for ending the occupation and thus the restoration of its independence (although the United States would retain administrative control of Okinawa Prefecture until 1972). Additionally, Japan’s postwar

²⁸ J.W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878–1954* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 371–77; and Richard J. Samuels, *Machiavelli’s Children: Leaders and Their Legacies in Italy and Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 203–11.

²⁹ Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan Rising: The Resurgence of Japanese Power and Purpose* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), 230.

alignment with its former principal adversary brought economic security guarantees in the form of special economic dispensations by the United States, including access to the U.S. market, financial aid and international economic institutions such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and technology transfers. Hence, through U.S. sponsorship, Japan was able to regain its place in the international community and, equipped with U.S. military protection, was free to pursue economic reconstruction. As well as meeting the challenges of the nation's postwar international vulnerabilities, Yoshida's decision to largely entrust military security to the United States enabled the suppression and management of domestic controversies over Japan's military stance. Left-wing Japanese still objected to the U.S.-Japan security treaty but were robbed of significant political leverage by the avoidance of large-scale rearmament; and the revisionists acquiesced in Japan's more gradual rearmament, seeing the U.S.-Japan security treaty as necessary for reviving national economic strength.³⁰

The Sustainability of Japan's Grand Strategy

Consolidation of the Yoshida Doctrine as Grand Strategy

The choices of Yoshida and the LDP mainstream were able to set Japan's long-term strategic direction, and indeed evolve from a "line" (*Yoshida rosen*) to an approximation of a full doctrine (*Yoshida dokutorin*), partly because of Yoshida's own farsighted leadership but mainly due to the doctrine's remarkable capacity to satisfy competing strategic, political, and economic demands and constituencies.³¹ The doctrine enabled Japan in the early Cold War period to largely marginalize domestic political and ideological concerns over security and to instead focus on the expedient task of economic reconstruction while relying on U.S. security guarantees.

As the Cold War developed, the Yoshida doctrine was further consolidated as a grand strategy, again partly due to the political and diplomatic skills of Yoshida's successors in the LDP mainstream who were able to focus the Japanese polity on economics rather than on entangling security issues. Fundamentally, this was a result of the doctrine's ability to accommodate changing security demands. Japan's security situation, as noted in earlier sections, became more complex as the Cold War wore on, with the persistent rise of the Soviet threat and increasing U.S. pressure

³⁰ Michael J. Green, *Japan's Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 14–15.

³¹ Soeya Yoshihide, "Yoshida Rosen to Yoshida Dokutorin—Jo ni kaete" [The Yoshida Line and Yoshida Doctrine: Changing to an Order], *Kokusai Seiji* 151 (2008): 6–10.

on Japan to undertake more responsibility for its own defense and share the burden of security obligations. Consequently, the Yoshida doctrine underwent a number of adjustments to enable an expansion of security responsibilities. The revised “mutual” 1960 security treaty made more explicit U.S. obligations to defend Japan under Article 5, as well as indicating the importance of the treaty for the wider peace and security of East Asia in Article 6. Moreover, as noted earlier, the JSDF undertook a major quantitative and qualitative expansion of capabilities in response to the Soviet buildup and began to explore for the first time bilateral military coordination with the United States under Article 6 to contribute to its own and wider regional security through the formulation of the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines in 1978. In 1981, for the first time in the 30 years since the signing of the treaty, Japan’s leaders began to refer to the U.S.-Japan security arrangement as an “alliance.”³²

Even if stretching the Yoshida doctrine, Japanese policymakers nevertheless preserved its essential tenets through carefully managing the demands of the international security environment and the developing U.S. alliance against the constant dilemmas of abandonment and especially entrapment. They proved highly adept at hedging security obligations to continue a minimalist defense stance while at the same time staying strategically close to the United States. The JSDF concentrated on developing capabilities that were designed solely for the defense of national land and sea space, including large numbers of Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) advanced destroyers, Air Self-Defense Force interceptors, and Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) main battle tanks. Although these capabilities could help act as a defensive shield for U.S. forces projecting power from bases in Japan, they were not integrated tactically or in command and control with the U.S. military and were highly limited in their own power projection so as to avoid involvement in U.S. expeditionary warfare.

Japan’s hedging through complementary but essentially separate forces with those of the United States was reinforced by the range of constitutional prohibitions and antimilitaristic principles derived from Article 9 of the constitution that helped simultaneously to minimize international and alliance security obligations and reassure the domestic political opposition and public over the military’s intentions. Japan promoted an “exclusively defense-oriented policy.” Most crucially, from 1954 to 2014, it held to the interpretation that while it possesses the right to collective self-defense as a sovereign nation under the UN Charter, the exercise of this right was prohibited by Article 9 of the Japanese constitution as exceeding the

³² Akihiko Tanaka, *Anzen hoshō: Sengo 50-nen no mosaku* [Security Policy: 50-Year Exploration in Postwar Japan] (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shimbunsha, 1997), 265–304.

necessary use of force for self-defense and instead only the right of individual self-defense was permitted. Japan was thus barred from using armed force to assist its U.S. ally or other states outside its own territory. Similarly, Japan has expounded the “three non-nuclear principles” (not to produce, possess, or introduce nuclear weapons) since 1967, a complete ban on the export of military technology (with the exception of a limited number of technological projects with the United States) since 1976, the “peaceful” use of outer space since 1969, and a 1% GNP limit on defense expenditure since 1976. Individually and in combination, these principles made for a highly restrained military stance during the Cold War period, although none of them, despite originating from the spirit of the Japanese constitution, were legally binding so as to maximize policymakers’ future strategic freedom.³³

International and Domestic Challenges

The Yoshida doctrine thus proved extraordinarily flexible and resilient throughout the Cold War. In the post-Cold War period, however, the doctrine has come under increasing stress as Japan’s security challenges, both regional and global, have mounted and its domestic politics and economy have begun to transform. Japan’s grand strategy and security policy still demonstrate considerable continuity, reflecting the adaptability of the doctrine. But questions have now arisen as to whether a revamped or “post-Yoshida consensus” may emerge, or even whether other past strategic options might return that lead to a more radical direction in security.³⁴

The first set of challenges to the traditional strategic pathway emerged in the wake of the Gulf War of 1990–91 as Japan was confronted with global security issues that it had previously been largely shielded from by the United States. Japanese policymakers now perceived a demand from the United States and the international community to provide a “human contribution” to the war effort in the form of an overseas dispatch of the JSDF. In the end, Japan only provided a financial contribution—totaling \$13 billion—to support the coalition forces. The Gulf War reopened domestic fissures in the debate over national security, with the SDPJ working to block LDP plans to dispatch the JSDF to the Gulf on noncombat logistical support missions. After the cessation of hostilities, Japan was able to dispatch MSDF minesweepers to the Gulf in 1991, but a full-scale domestic debate still ensued on the country’s future international security role. Japan eventually passed a new International

³³ Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan’s Re-emergence as a “Normal” Military Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 31–35.

³⁴ Richard J. Samuels, “Japan’s Goldilocks Strategy,” *Washington Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2006): 111–27.

Peace Cooperation Law in June 1992 to allow the dispatch of the JSDF on noncombat UN peacekeeping operations for the first time.

The Japanese consensus over grand strategy was shaken further by a second set of global security challenges associated with the war on terrorism. Japanese policy elites perceived the need to demonstrate solidarity with the United States and international community to expunge the threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, and to do so through the dispatch of the JSDF. Moreover, despite risks of entrapment in U.S.-led expeditionary coalitions in the Indian Ocean and Gulf regions, policymakers feared that if Japan did not show a sufficient response, there was an even higher risk of abandonment as an unreliable ally.

Japan's concerns over regional security in the post-Cold War period have proved to be the third major test of policymakers' previous confidence about grand strategy. These concerns were focused originally on North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs but then far more on China's rise and military modernization. The North Korean nuclear crisis of 1993–94 provided a key reality check for Japanese policymakers in exposing the U.S.-Japan alliance's inability to respond to regional contingencies. Concentration on Article 5 rather than bilateral cooperation under Article 6 of the 1978 U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines meant that Japan was unprepared to respond to U.S. requests for military logistical support in the event of a conflict on the Korean Peninsula. The specter was thus again raised of abandonment as an unreliable ally.³⁵ Continuing fears of abandonment have compounded Japan's growing concerns over North Korea since the mid-1990s. The principal anxiety is that the United States might not fulfill its security guarantees to Japan in the event that North Korea acquires a nuclear strike and blackmail capability against U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific or the U.S. homeland (a scenario of whether Washington would sacrifice Los Angeles for Tokyo). China's rising power has only exacerbated Japan's concerns over the offense-defense balance starting to swing in China's favor. Japan fears becoming caught in the middle of Sino-U.S. strategic competition or, even more dangerously, being left exposed in the event that the United States does not maintain the military capability or political will to provide security guarantees.

³⁵ Sheila A. Smith, "The Evolution of Military Cooperation in the U.S.-Japan Alliance," in *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), 69–93.

Stretching the Doctrine

As Japanese policymakers have debated and responded to these challenges, the prime impulse has been to further stretch the Yoshida doctrine in the direction of Japan's becoming a "normal" military power rather than fundamentally revisit the doctrine's continued utility. Japan's mainstream discourse has shifted to ensuring the normalization of the country's security role—involving stronger measures not only for the defense of the homeland but also for a range of "international peace cooperation activities," encompassing more active support regionally and globally for the United States as an ally and engagement in UN and other international security operations.

Japan's renewed seriousness of purpose in the defense realm has been demonstrated by the establishment in 2004 of the Japan Ministry of Defense, replacing the former Japan Defense Agency that had been created in 1954. The JDA had already been very much under the domination of the other ministries in the formulation of security policy, but its elevation to full ministerial status provided it with greater autonomy and a place alongside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and U.S. Departments of State and Defense in managing the alliance in the bilateral "2+2" Security Consultative Committee.

Japan's revision of its security policymaking structures has facilitated important changes in doctrines and capabilities. The National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), the document that sets out doctrine and necessary capabilities, has been revised four times since its inception in 1976. Although, as with most developments in Japanese security policy, change has been incremental so as to obscure overall trajectories, the versions of the NDPG from the mid-1990s onward have moved to essentially overturn many elements of the postwar doctrine. The 2010 NDPG abandoned the previous doctrine of the Basic Defense Force and instituted a new Dynamic Defense Force concept.³⁶ This latter concept moved away from the minimal defense posture of the Basic Defense Force concept, which was designed to help repulse a Soviet land invasion. Mindful of the North Korean and Chinese threats, the new concept stressed a more proactive JSDF posture in and around Japanese territory, with increasing deployments of forces southward and the capability of power projection. In turn, the accompanying midterm defense programs that lay out military procurement priorities have emphasized for the JSDF the characteristics of readiness, flexibility, sustainability, versatility, and jointness. In practice, this has meant continuing to reduce the number of main battle tanks and artillery in the GSDF and switching to investments in lighter,

³⁶ Ministry of Defense (Japan), "National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2011 and Beyond," December 17, 2010, http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/d_policy/pdf/guidelinesFY2011.pdf.

more mobile and technologically advanced forces capable of responding to regional contingencies.

The Air Self-Defense Force has sought to slow any adverse movement in the balance of air defense power by investing in fifth-generation fighters to trump China's current fourth-generation inventory. Japan's decision in December 2011 to procure 42 F-35As with stealth capabilities indicates that it is interested not only in restoring its traditional superiority in air interception but also in adding air defense penetration to strike against North Korean missile bases and even the Chinese mainland in a contingency. After the United States, Japan now deploys the most sophisticated ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities in the Asia-Pacific, as well as contemplating deterrence by denial through the use of F-35As and the possible acquisition of a cruise missile capability.

The MSDF, however, has embarked on the most significant buildup of capabilities, many of which are designed to negate both China's access-denial and blue water naval strategies. The MSDF under the 2010 NDPG increased its submarine fleet by more than 30% from 16 to 22 boats.³⁷ It maintains 48 destroyers and continues to introduce helicopter destroyer warships (DDH). The MSDF has taken delivery of two 20,000-ton Hyuga-class DDHs, with a regular complement of four helicopters but the capability to carry up to eleven. It has further procured two 27,000-ton Izumo-class DDHs, which are capable of carrying up to fourteen helicopters. MSDF DDHs are the largest vessels built for the service in the postwar period and are light helicopter carriers in all but name. Their prime function is to provide a very powerful antisubmarine warfare capability, clearly aimed against China's access-denial strategy. But Japan's venture back into carrier technology is resonant of a possible carrier arms race between China and Japan. The suspicion of analysts is that the MSDF might eventually attempt to operate fixed-wing aircraft from the Izumo-class DDHs, such as the maritime variant of the F-35. Japan's maritime air and antisubmarine warfare capabilities have been further strengthened through an indigenously developed P-1 patrol surveillance aircraft, procured to replace the P-3Cs, that is able to sweep over an 8,000-kilometer range and thus deep into the South China Sea.

Japan's transformation of its national defense doctrines and capabilities has been accompanied by significant shifts in its external military commitments. The exposure in the mid-1990s of the lack of interoperability in the U.S.-Japan alliance to respond to regional contingencies has led to attempts to consolidate bilateral military cooperation. Japan and the United States revised the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation from 1996 to 1997,

³⁷ Ministry of Defense (Japan), *Defense of Japan 2012* (Tokyo, 2012), 115, http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2012/21_Part2_Chapter2_Sec2.pdf.

thereby clarifying the extent of Japanese rear-area logistical support for the United States in a regional contingency under Article 6.

U.S.-Japan cooperation has been further promoted through Japan's response to global security issues. In order to support the U.S.-led international coalition in Afghanistan after September 11, the Diet passed an Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, which enabled the dispatch of the MSDF to conduct noncombat refueling operations for coalition ships in the Indian Ocean from 2002 to 2009. Furthermore, in response to expectations for allied support in the U.S. intervention in Iraq, Japan passed an Iraqi Reconstruction Law that enabled the dispatch of the JSDF on noncombat logistical and reconstruction missions in southern Iraq from 2004 to 2008.

Finally, Japan's experimentation with enhanced bilateral cooperation with the United States outside traditional geographic and functional parameters has opened the way for new external commitments with other U.S. allies and partners. Japan, for example, has forged closer cooperation with Australia through the announcement in 2007 of a Joint Security Declaration, and the conclusion in 2010 of a bilateral acquisition and cross-servicing agreement to provide logistical support in peacetime operations.³⁸ Japan has also sought to strengthen military ties with South Korea, India, and the states of Southeast Asia. Japan has also maintained its first overseas base in the postwar period through the stationing of MSDF patrol aircraft and the GSDF Central Readiness Force personnel in Djibouti on the Horn of Africa since 2011.

Japan's security policy in the post-Cold War period thus has been far from immutable and has shifted considerably from the initial baselines of the Yoshida doctrine toward assuming a normal military role and military realism.³⁹ Nevertheless, despite the expansion of military capabilities and the functional and geographic scope of alliance cooperation, the intent has often been to maintain the evolution of security policy within the essential tenets of the Yoshida doctrine. Hence, in undertaking U.S.-Japan security cooperation, Tokyo has been careful to maintain its hedging tactics where possible. In the case of regional contingencies, Japan was anxious to ensure that the JSDF's role under the revised Defense Guidelines of 1997 remains one of logistical support. Policymakers have been careful not to specify the exact geographic extent of this support, preferring to stress a "situational" rather than a strict geographic definition of the scope of the U.S.-Japan security treaty. Their reason for doing so was to avoid a commitment to provide support in particular contingencies such as the Taiwan Strait that might drag Japan into a conflict with China. Similarly, in the case of the

³⁸ Corey J. Wallace, "Japan's Strategic Pivot South: Diversifying the Dual Hedge," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 13, no. 3 (2013): 488–95.

³⁹ Mochizuki, "Japan's Search for Strategy," 168–75.

Indian Ocean and Iraq dispatches, Japan was careful to ensure that the JSDF missions were noncombat and time-bound by different sets of legislation to delimit operations and avoid problems of entrapment.⁴⁰

In addition to seeking to still utilize the Yoshida doctrine to satisfy international security demands, policymakers have remained attached to the doctrine in order to cope with domestic political and economic pressures around security. Japanese administrations have been quick to stress to domestic audiences that security policy changes over the last two decades have been implemented within the same constitutional and legal frameworks put in place in the postwar era. Hence, Japan has remained committed to an exclusively defense-oriented posture—one that eschews the exercise of collective self-defense and maintains most of the antimilitaristic prohibitions. These prescriptions have enabled the LDP to defuse most domestic political criticism of its security policy, including from its dovish coalition partner Komeito; reassure the public; and also cut military policy to the cloth of a constrained defense budget. Indeed, even the SDPJ allowed itself to be co-opted into supporting the doctrine in essence. By agreeing to join a coalition government with the LDP from 1993 to 1996, and in return for its leader Tomiichi Murayama (1994–96) assuming the premiership, the SDJP agreed to accept the constitutionality of the JSDF and the U.S.-Japan security treaty.

It seems, therefore, that the genius of the Yoshida doctrine in governing Japanese security policy is its sheer resilience, adaptability, and ability to reassure domestic and international audiences.⁴¹ However, as the next section argues, the convergence of ever more challenging international security drivers and changing domestic political forces suggests that the doctrine may be reaching the limit of its flexibility. As a result, Japan may need to reconsider past options or strike out in a more radical direction from the current foundations of its security practice.

Japan's Reconsideration of Strategic Options and the Emergence of the Abe Doctrine

Japan's security situation since the late 2000s onward, as noted above, is perceived to have entered a new stage of peril. North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and China's rise have remained constants influencing Japan's security behavior but have seemingly ramped up in intensity. In particular,

⁴⁰ Hughes, *Japan's Re-emergence as a "Normal" Military Power*, 126–36.

⁴¹ Paul Midford, "The Logic of Reassurance and Japan's Grand Strategy," *Security Studies* 11, no. 3 (2002): 1–45.

Sino-Japanese security tensions have reached an unprecedented level since the Japan Coast Guard's seizure of a Chinese trawler in late 2010 around the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and China's subsequent diplomatic reaction and alleged economic embargo on rare earth materials, resulting in heightened maritime activities by both sides. Japan's policymakers and broader society have read these developments as manifestations of China establishing itself as a power genuinely capable of challenging for regional dominance, and even more worryingly as now intent on pursuing its territorial claims by force if necessary.⁴²

Japanese security concerns centered on North Korea and China have been compounded by new uncertainties in the old constant of the U.S. security commitment to Japan and the Asia-Pacific. Policymakers have drawn comfort from the strong cooperation that the U.S. military offered to Japan through Operation Tomodachi in the aftermath of the triple disasters in March 2011—the Great East Japan Earthquake, tsunami, and meltdown of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant—and from the Obama administration's policy of the “rebalance” of diplomatic, economic, and military power to the region.⁴³ Japan has also managed to extract more reassurances from the United States regarding Article 5 as encompassing defense of the Senkaku Islands. Nevertheless, nagging doubts remain, not only regarding potential entrapment in any struggle for regional dominance between China and the United States but more likely regarding abandonment by a United States that is no longer equipped with the material and military capabilities and political will to defend Japan, especially over an issue of relatively minor U.S. strategic importance such as the Senkaku Islands.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, Japan's sense of a shifting international landscape has been accompanied by renewed domestic regime changes, encouraging a review of strategic options. Koizumi represented the resurgence of the LDP's revisionist wing and was followed by two even stronger revisionists, Abe and Taro Aso (2008–9), with the more mainstream Yasuo Fukuda (2007–8) in between. The DPJ's displacement of the LDP from 2009 to 2012 further opened up room for fundamental strategic debate. Abe's return to power placed the LDP firmly in the grip of the party's revisionist wing, whose members were prepared

⁴² Christopher W. Hughes, “Japan's ‘Resentful Realism’ and Balancing China's Rise,” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 9, no. 2 (2016): 109–50.

⁴³ Richard J. Samuels, 3.11: *Disaster and Change in Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 94–99.

⁴⁴ Magosaki Ukeru, *Fuyukai no genjitsu: Chugoku no taikokuka, Beikoku no senryaku tenkan* [The Uncomfortable Truth: China's Rise to Great Power, the U.S.'s Strategic Change] (Tokyo: Kodansha Gendai Shinsho, 2012), 130–34.

to reject the expediency and limited ambition of the Yoshida doctrine and reinject Japan's security stance with a new sense of political ideology.

In totality, therefore, changing international and domestic parameters have started to transform the parameters of Japan's strategic trajectory and accompanying security policy. Japanese policymakers of all stripes, even if differing over the precise policy prescriptions, have become increasingly conscious of the need for Japan to enhance its own defense efforts, consider the appropriate degree of security cooperation with the United States, and participate in international and multilateral cooperation to respond to diverse threats. All this has raised questions about the Yoshida doctrine's continued ability to meet new security challenges.

No Mileage in Alternatives?

If the Yoshida doctrine is matched against the other long-considered main strategic options, then no serious competition now arises from the arguments of the political left and neutralism. As noted earlier, the SDPJ had essentially accepted the status quo of the doctrine by the mid-1990s and the compromise of its pacifist principles led to its eventual decline as the largest opposition party. Similarly, the JCP's arguments have failed to gain hold beyond its traditional electoral core. Moreover, despite the continuing misgivings of large sections of the Japanese public about the utility of military power and risks of Japan's involvement in military conflicts, there is an increasing recognition of the international security threats posed to Japan, acquiescence in the need to strengthen the JSDF, and acceptance of arguments both that the alliance has contributed to Japan's security and that Japan as an advanced industrial democracy has international security interests and responsibilities.⁴⁵ All of this spells no easy return to considerations of pacifism and neutralism as strategic options. The Cabinet Office opinion polls in 2015 found that only 3% of respondents supported this option.⁴⁶

The most serious alternative to the Yoshida doctrine emerged briefly in the mid to late 2000s from the DPJ, particularly its center-left elements, with its revival of regional and multilateral options for security. The DPJ has often been mistakenly portrayed as weak on national security issues or as opposed to the U.S.-Japan alliance. This perception was reinforced by the initial tussles of Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama (2009–10) with the Obama administration over the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station within Okinawa Prefecture and the seemingly pro-China stance reflected in his

⁴⁵ Andrew L. Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance: New Policies and Politics for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 154–58.

⁴⁶ "Jieitai boei ni kansuru yoron chosa."

talk of the creation of an East Asian Community that excluded the United States. In fact, under Hatoyama and his successors Naoto Kan (2010–11) and Yoshihiko Noda (2011–12) the DPJ continued to pursue similar policies to those of the LDP. These aimed to strengthen Japan's national defense capabilities and the U.S.-Japan alliance, even though many of the party's key members did differ from the LDP in their analysis of the evolving international security environment and the most feasible response.⁴⁷ While predominantly vested in its center-left groups and even drawing in more conservative elements, the DPJ increasingly concluded that Japan was confronted by a fundamental transformation in the international system characterized by the United States' relative decline and China's concomitant rise. The party realized that Japan risked the ground shifting under its feet in this emerging multipolarity if it became overreliant on the United States. Thus, the country needed to not only expand its support for the U.S. presence in East Asia but also engage China more actively. Japan's attempts to restore a degree of autonomy and to rebalance ties as a trilateral arrangement in turn indicated that it should promote regional frameworks for diplomacy and cooperation such as the East Asia Summit, multilateral security dialogues, and UN peacekeeping operations.⁴⁸

In the end, however, the DPJ's pursuit of this regional and multilateral strategic option quickly foundered due to its falling outside the parameters of what was possible, both domestically and internationally. The administration's plans collapsed due to its own domestic political incompetence, the United States' intransigence over the Futenma issue and flat rejection of any strategy that might risk diminishing alliance ties (even if this was not the DPJ's actual intent), and ultimately the Sino-Japanese confrontation over the Senkaku Islands. The latter demonstrated that China could not become a viable security partner but rather posed a threat to Japan's territorial integrity. The result was that Hatoyama's successors cleaved even more strongly toward the alliance. Japanese policymakers' hopes to promote multilateral regional security dialogues and peacekeeping operations clearly continue from the past into the current LDP administration. But the ending of the DPJ's alternative vision of foreign and security policy almost as soon as the administration had begun, followed by the party's own electoral demise, demonstrated that this type of strategy was unlikely to ever serve as a full stand-alone option and would more likely only supplement other options.

⁴⁷ Jeffrey Hornung, "With a Left Like This, Who Needs the Right?" Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), February 11, 2011, http://csis.org/files/publication/110211_Hornung.pdf.

⁴⁸ Christopher W. Hughes, "The Democratic Party of Japan's New (but Failing) Grand Security Strategy: From 'Reluctant Realism' to 'Resentful Realism?'" *Journal of Japanese Studies* 38, no. 1 (2012): 113–19; and Paul O'Shea, "Overestimating the 'Power Shift': The U.S. Role in the Failure of the Democratic Party of Japan's 'Asia Pivot,'" *Asian Perspective* 38, no. 3 (2014): 435–59.

At the other end of the spectrum of strategic options, Japanese Gaullism and revisionism have seen a degree of revival, but again not as a full-fledged, or fully revealed, movement. The China threat and concerns over U.S. security commitments have encouraged “neoautonomists” to advocate casting off the past constraints of history and a minimalist military stance that have limited Japan’s strategic freedom. According to this view, Japan should no longer be encumbered by the need to apologize for the colonial past that has made it subservient in the face of U.S., Chinese, and East Asian pressure. Instead, it should reject the postwar constitution and Article 9, which have deprived the country of its true national identity as a great power, and seek full rearmament commensurate with its economic standing in order to once again engage in the international balance of power. The JSDF should be recast as a normal national military with the complete panoply of power-projection and, if necessary, offensive capabilities, and even a nuclear *force de frappe* to deter North Korea and China.⁴⁹

This neoautonomist or revamped Gaullist stance still has limited traction given that it is not seen as providing any easy solutions to extant security challenges. The majority of Japanese still believe that full autonomy would only worsen security dilemmas with China and North Korea and invite the United States to see Japan as a destabilizing security presence. Japan’s major rearmament would also be extremely costly and divert budgetary resources required for other economic and social priorities. An indigenous nuclear deterrent might be technologically feasible, although Japan is thought to lack the strategic depth for anything other than a submarine-deployed deterrent that would require a massive budgetary commitment. Most importantly, the political barriers to Japan’s possession of nuclear weapons remain high, given the three non-nuclear principles and the legacy of the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Policymakers and the public might only contemplate such a move in the direst of security situations.⁵⁰ In 2015, Cabinet Office opinion polls suggested that only 7% of respondents considered Japan’s assumption of full responsibility for its own security as feasible.⁵¹

Abe and the Revisionists’ Capture of the Yoshida Doctrine

While Gaullism and neoautonomism cannot function as full strategic options, they have played a crucial role in the repurposing of the Yoshida

⁴⁹ Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 120–23.

⁵⁰ Richard J. Samuels and James L. Schoff, “Japan’s Nuclear Hedge: Beyond ‘Allergy’ and Breakout,” in *Strategic Asia 2013–14: Asia in the Second Nuclear Age*, ed. Ashley J. Tellis, Abraham M. Denmark, and Travis Tanner (Seattle: NBR, 2013), 233–64; and Mark Fitzpatrick, *Asia’s Latent Nuclear Powers: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan* (London: Routledge, 2016), 65–125.

⁵¹ “Jieitai boei ni kansuru yoron chosa.”

doctrine in new directions by Abe and the revisionists of the LDP. This resurgence has thus far been depicted by these leaders and many analysts as a further evolution of the Yoshida doctrine rather than as a break with it.⁵² However, the evidence suggests that Abe and his revisionist supporters, while not breaking entirely free of the Yoshida doctrine and still using it as a vehicle to reassure domestic and international audiences, hope to refashion it into an Abe doctrine. This doctrine would provide a new strategic option and look to eventually remove past security constraints. Indeed, it is arguable that for Abe and his supporters, the Yoshida doctrine cannot be allowed to stand, given that it was a strategy formulated by a defeated power to deal with the conditions of defeat and has perpetuated this lowly status for Japan into the post–Cold War era.

The Abe doctrine's first departure from the Yoshida doctrine is its view that the rise of China does indeed presage the possibility of multipolarity and a diminishing ability to count on the U.S. commitment to Japanese and East Asian security. As Abe has noted, the risk is that China may reduce the influence of the United States and turn the South China Sea into "Lake Beijing."⁵³ This view is not entirely divorced from the analyses of the neoautonomists and even the DPJ. Abe's diagnosis of the necessary response to China's rise is, however, different from the Yoshida doctrine in that it implies that Japan should shift the emphasis of its China policy away from engagement and toward active power balancing. Such a shift would involve a degree of diplomatic "soft balancing" but entail increasing internal and external military "hard balancing."⁵⁴ In turn, Abe's prescription to respond to the changing balance of power is for Japan to invest more heavily in supporting the continuation of U.S. hegemony and accept that the country's security is increasingly indivisible from that of its alliance partner. Abe and his supporters are now talking more than ever before—and certainly in ways that were never envisaged by the originators and proponents of the Yoshida doctrine even up until the mid-2000s—about the nature of contemporary

⁵² Linus Hagström and Jon Williamsson, "Remilitarization, Really? Assessing Change in Japanese Foreign Security Policy," *Asian Security* 5, no. 3 (2009): 246–59; Adam P. Liff, "Japan's Defense Policy: Abe the Evolutionary," *Washington Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (2015): 79–99; and Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 128–29.

⁵³ Shinzo Abe, "Asia's Democratic Security Diamond," Project Syndicate, December 27, 2012, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/a-strategic-alliance-for-japan-and-india-by-shinzo-abe>.

⁵⁴ Bjørn Elias Mikalsen Grønning, "Japan's Shifting Military Priorities: Counterbalancing China's Rise," *Asian Security* 10, no. 1 (2014): 1–21; Jeffrey W. Hornung, "Japan's Growing Hard Hedge against China," *Asian Security* 10, no. 2 (2014): 97–122; Jeffrey W. Hornung, "Japan's Pushback of China," *Washington Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2015): 167–83; and Yomiuri Shimbun Seijibu, *Abe kantei vs Shu Kinpei: Gekika suru Nicchu gaiko senso* [Prime Minister Abe's Administration Versus Xi Jinping: Intensifying the Sino-Japanese Diplomatic War] (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2015).

military technologies and regional and global threats as posing security challenges that can only be solved collectively.⁵⁵

Abe's program of reshaping Japanese strategy is also far more ideologically driven than Yoshida's was, which essentially preached expediency above all as the means to pursue national interests. Abe and the revisionists, in the same way as the Gaullists and neoautonomists, are intent on freeing Japanese security policy from the postwar constraints of history and the constitution to ensure Japan's place as a "tier one" nation, whereas the Yoshida doctrine accepted a more lowly status for Japan.⁵⁶ Abe has exhibited a willingness to shelve his ideological stance on historical issues in the name of pragmatism after the initial diplomatic faux pas of visiting the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013 that invited criticism from East Asia and the United States. His statement in August 2015 on the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II and the agreement in December 2015 between Japan and South Korea over the "comfort women" issue demonstrated a degree of adherence to the Kono Statement of 1993 and Murayama Statement of 1995. Yet although Abe's statement attempted to avoid stirring historical tensions, it in essence conceded nothing with respect to his revisionist historical perspective that Japan's colonialism had not been exceptional in nature and that the country should no longer be bound by this legacy.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, he has sought to tackle historical legacies domestically by revising the Basic Law on Education in 2007 to restore a sense of national patriotism and by moving toward attempts to revise Article 9 of the constitution from 2018 onward. Finally, on top of this historical revisionism, Abe has propounded a "values-oriented diplomacy." The administration has argued that Japan should promote liberal market democracy and the rule of law, in implicit contradistinction to China's set of illiberal values. It should thus seek to forge new bonds among Japan, the United States, and other partners such as Australia and India.

This ideologically charged strategy has provided the Abe administration thus far with the resilience and the dynamism to implement substantive changes to security policy that have moved beyond the core tenets of the Yoshida doctrine. It has moved rapidly to overcome much of the fragmentation of security policymaking that characterized the postwar period, finally bringing to fruition plans for the establishment of Japan's National Security Council (NSC) in December 2013 to serve as the "control tower" for security

⁵⁵ Cabinet Secretariat (Japan), "Cabinet Decision on Development of Seamless Security Legislation to Ensure Japan's Survival and Protect Its People," July 1, 2014, http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/gaiyou/jimu/pdf/anpohosei_eng.pdf.

⁵⁶ Shinzo Abe, "Japan Is Back" (speech presented at CSIS, Washington, D.C., February 22, 2013), http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/pm/abe/us_20130222en.html.

⁵⁷ Shinzo Abe, "Statement by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe," Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, August 14, 2015, http://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201508/0814statement.html.

policy and concentrating crisis management among the four key positions of the prime minister, chief cabinet secretary, and foreign and defense ministers. The creation of the NSC has also enabled the JSDF to attain a greater formal role in military planning and thus represents another diminution of the strict civilian control of the postwar era.⁵⁸ The NSC was then able to release Japan's very first National Security Strategy in December 2013.⁵⁹

Abe's reform of Japan's security institutions has been accompanied by further extension of the JSDF doctrines and capabilities. The revised 2013 NDPG modified the Dynamic Defense Force to produce the concept of a Dynamic Joint Defense Force, which this time emphasized the need for improved joint operations between services. The 2013 NDPG and Medium-Term Defense Program were notable for increasing the number of MSDF destroyers from 48 to 54, and stating that the GSDF would for the first time acquire a full amphibious capability for the retaking of remote islands. This force will consist of around three thousand personnel, equipped with the GSDF's first 52 amphibious armed personnel carriers, and Japan will further procure seventeen MV-22 Osprey transports, which are used by the U.S. Marine Corps. Under Abe, Japan also appears more willing than in the past to fund this defense buildup.⁶⁰ Shortly after taking power, Abe initiated the first, if modest, rise in national defense spending in over a decade. The defense expenditure of the Ministry of Defense has since increased at rates of 1%–2% over the last five years.⁶¹

Abe's administration has subsequently worked to further erode Japan's antimilitaristic principles, many of which have remained in place for most of the postwar period. The 1% GDP limit on defense expenditure has remained broadly intact as a military constraint, although it was overtly breached with the JSDF's buildup in the mid-1980s and, depending on how it is calculated, has been consistently breached by small margins since then. However, Abe announced in the National Diet in March 2017 that his administration had no intention of suppressing defense expenditure below 1% of GDP and that in fact no such budgetary policy ceiling existed.⁶² He also moved to abandon fully the 1976 total ban on the export of military technology.

⁵⁸ Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 133–37.

⁵⁹ Kokka Anzen Hosho Kaigi, "Kokka anzen hoshou ni tsuite" [Concerning National Security], December 17, 2013, <http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/siryou/131217anzenhoshou/nss-j.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Ministry of Defense (Japan), "National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2014 and Beyond," http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/agenda/guideline/2014/pdf/20131217_e2.pdf.

⁶¹ Ministry of Defense (Japan), "Waga kuni no boei to yosan: Heisei 28nendo gaisan yokyu no gaiyo" [Japan's Defense and Budget: Outline of the Budget Request for 2016], August 2015, <http://www.mod.go.jp/j/yosan/2016/gaisan.pdf>.

⁶² "Boeihi '1% ni oiaeru kangaekata nai'" [Defense Spending "Not Thought to Be Restrained to 1%"], *Asahi Shimbun*, March 3, 2017.

The Noda administration had already made plans to overturn this ban in 2011 in order to help sustain Japan's defense industrial base under pressure from constrained JSDF budgets and develop economies of scale and access to export opportunities.⁶³ Japan has reverted to a policy akin to the original 1967 ban, which permitted military exports on a licensed basis to states not involved in conflicts or Communist in nature, and is already exploring the export of equipment to Southeast Asia and India as well as basic military technology exchange agreements with the United Kingdom and France.

As for the three non-nuclear principles, these were consistently breached from the 1960s onward with the United States' transport of nuclear weapons on ships transiting Japanese ports. Japan has long maintained, in fact, that the acquisition of nuclear weapons is constitutional if it is undertaken for defensive purposes. As prime minister, Abe has steered clear of commenting on Japan's nuclear status, although in the past he publicly toyed with the need to reconsider this stance in the face of North Korea's nuclearization and China's military modernization.⁶⁴ Tomomi Inada, minister of defense until August 2017, has also called in the past for Japan to investigate the benefits of possessing nuclear weapons but argues at present that there is no need for an indigenous deterrent.⁶⁵ Hence, for Abe and the revisionists, the three non-nuclear principles are not the main obstacle to the acquisition of a nuclear deterrent; instead the question revolves more around military necessity than the need to pay lip service to these principles.

In addition to strengthening national military capabilities, the other crucial aspect of Abe moving beyond and starting to discard the central tenets of the Yoshida doctrine concerns the U.S.-Japan alliance. As noted above, Abe has diverged from Yoshida in no longer seeing the security relationship with the United States as one of expedience; instead, he now sees it as a full-fledged alliance based on indivisible interests and values. Consequently, the administration's 2015 revision of the Defense Guidelines greatly expanded—far beyond that of the 1978 and 1997 versions—the range of Japanese support for the United States in contingencies. First, the functional range of support was increased to specify intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; BMD; protection of maritime security assets; joint use of facilities; peacekeeping operations; humanitarian

⁶³ Christopher W. Hughes, "The Slow Death of Japanese Techno-Nationalism? Emerging Comparative Lessons for China's Defense Production," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34, no. 3 (2011): 451–79.

⁶⁴ Christopher W. Hughes, "North Korea's Nuclear Weapons: Implications for the Nuclear Ambitions of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan," *Asia Policy*, no. 3 (2007): 77–85.

⁶⁵ Reiji Yoshida, "Japan's New Defense Chief Dodges Questions on Yasukuni, Reverses Position on Nuclear Weapons," *Japan Times*, August 4, 2016, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/04/national/politics-diplomacy/japans-new-defense-chief-dodges-questions-on-yasukuni-reverses-position-on-nuclear-weapons/#.WOY9qGd1rDA>.

assistance and disaster relief; and now defense activities in cyberspace and outer space. Second, the revised guidelines stress “seamless cooperation,” removing the previous rigid separation of bilateral cooperation into “Japan” and “regional” contingencies. The intention is that military cooperation will operate more smoothly across all potential scenarios and levels of conflict escalation. Third, the revised guidelines emphasize that bilateral cooperation should be global and not necessarily be restricted geographically, as in past formulations, to Japan or the surrounding region. Fourth, and most significantly, the revised Defense Guidelines outline the areas where the JSDF can now use force to defend U.S. operations, such as the protection of shipping lanes, interdiction of illegal shipments, deployment of BMD, and provision of logistical support during conflicts.⁶⁶ This revision is designed to interlink with the breach of the ban on the exercise of collective self-defense.

Indeed, the most important element of the Abe doctrine for changing the nature of U.S.-Japan security cooperation and shifting radically from the Yoshida doctrine has been the breach on the ban of collective self-defense. In July 2014, the Abe government issued a cabinet decision formally contravening the near 60-year-old ban and enabling a “limited” form of collective self-defense. In the face of considerable political and public opposition, Abe then pushed on to pass a raft of security bills in the National Diet in September 2015. The Law on Response to Contingencies enables Japan’s exercise of the right of collective self-defense under “three new conditions”: where an attack on another state in a close relationship with Japan poses a clear danger to overturning the Japanese people’s right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; where there is no other appropriate means to repel an attack; and where the use of force is restricted to the minimum necessary to repel the attack. The Law to Ensure Security in Contingencies Significantly Affecting Japan replaces the 1999 Regional Contingencies Law and is designed to boost Japanese noncombat logistical support for the United States and now other states regionally and even globally. The International Peace Support Law removes the need to enact separate laws for each JSDF dispatch that provides logistical support to multinational forces; and revisions to the International Peace Cooperation Law enable the JSDF to use force during UN peacekeeping operations in pursuing certain duties rather than just defending JSDF personnel. The GSDF peacekeeping operation in South Sudan had this collective self-defense element added to its mission from late 2016 until early 2017, although the right was never exercised.

⁶⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Japan), “The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation,” April 27, 2015, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000078188.pdf>.

The Abe administration argues that the three new conditions still significantly circumscribe the likelihood and extent of military actions to exercise collective self-defense in support of the United States. However, these constraints appear to be largely hollow in reality. The Abe administration has consistently avoided defining in detail the actual conditions that might constitute a clear danger to Japan's existence and trigger a military response (potentially even encompassing economic threats). It also has not made clear what the threshold is for deciding when there is no alternative to military action, nor has it clarified what might constitute the minimum use of force. The government has thus retained considerable flexibility to interpret the need for military action as it sees fit when responding to U.S. calls for assistance.⁶⁷

In this way, by finally breaching the ban on collective self-defense and presenting a blueprint for operationalizing military action in support of the United States through the revised Defense Guidelines, the Abe administration has largely abandoned the cautious hedging and minimalist military commitments embodied in the Yoshida doctrine from its inception until the early 2000s. Japan under Abe has indicated a new resolve to function as a more capable and willing U.S. ally, in the sense of being willing not just to provide support but now even in certain contingencies to fight alongside its ally. In this sense, Abe and other revisionist security policymakers, while building on the Yoshida doctrine, have also hijacked it in their determination to redress the balance of power in the region, gain greater status alongside the United States, exercise collective self-defense, and increasingly unfetter Japanese military power. By doing so, they have sought to transform the Yoshida doctrine into a full Abe doctrine and new strategic option.⁶⁸

Implications for Regional Security

The triumph of the Abe doctrine over the Yoshida doctrine is not yet complete or entirely certain, but it does appear relentless in its progress. The Abe administration still has to contend with a degree of domestic opposition and residual antimilitarism. The Japanese public has only grudgingly

⁶⁷ Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Strategic Trajectory and Collective Self-Defense: Essential Continuity or Radical Shift?" *Journal of Japanese Studies* 43, no. 1 (2017): 93–126; and Bryce Wakefield and Craig Martin, "Reexamining 'Myths' about Japan's Collective Self-Defense Change: What Critics (and the Japanese Public) Do Understand about Japan's Constitutional Reinterpretation," *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, September 8, 2014, <http://apjif.org/-Bryce-Wakefield/4803/article.html>.

⁶⁸ Hugo Dobson, "Is Japan Really Back? The 'Abe Doctrine' and Global Governance," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 47, no. 2 (2016): 199–224; and Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Foreign and Security Policy Under the 'Abe Doctrine': New Dynamism or New Dead End?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

accepted reforms such as collective self-defense, as was underscored by the large-scale protests in the late summer of 2015, and remains suspicious of Abe's revisionism and often strong-arm methods of advancing his security agenda. Abe furthermore must contend with increased opposition from Okinawa Prefecture against his plan to move ahead with the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma facility within the prefecture. In addition, the LDP must continue to negotiate around any limits imposed on security policy by its coalition partner, Komeito, while Abe has been challenged by his critics within the party both on the right and within the former mainstream.

Nonetheless, his agenda will not be easily derailed domestically. Despite public disquiet over security policy, Abe has proved in his second administration to be a master of "bait and switch" by timing elections to avoid security controversies and then utilizing the renewed National Diet mandate to forge ahead with reforms. But even then, he has demonstrated resolve in overriding public and political opposition, as with the issue of collective self-defense.⁶⁹ Abe has continued with plans for relocating the Futenma air station, despite stiffening prefectural opposition. The LDP-Komeito coalition has stood strong during these security controversies, and, barring an unforeseen domestic political scandal fully taking hold, Abe may be able to remain as prime minister until 2021. This would make him the longest-serving Japanese prime minister in postwar history and enable him to continue to remold Japanese security policy and possibly even achieve his ultimate goal of revision of Article 9. In any case, even if Abe were to fall, there is no guarantee that the LDP would spring back to the mainstream on security, given that the party is increasingly dominated by leaders of a similar revisionist ilk to Abe. Abe's agenda also does not seem likely to encounter serious opposition outside the governing parties, given the DP's lack of credibility.

In the international environment, moreover, there are few signs that Abe and the revisionists will need to slow or diverge. North Korea's raising of the security ante in its recent ballistic missile tests, coupled with China's relentless rise and provocative actions in the East and South China Seas, is only likely to force Japan to up its security game and follow the trajectory set by Abe, as few other options appear palatable. The advent of the Trump administration has thrown a potential wildcard into Japanese and East Asian security. On the one hand, the quixotic nature of the new administration might pose issues of entrapment for Japan, as the United States now seems more willing to confront China over the South China Sea and North Korea, and perhaps

⁶⁹ Robert J. Pekkanen, Steven R. Reed, and Ethan Scheiner, "Introduction: Take a Second Look at the 2014 Election, It's Worth It," in *Japan Decides 2014: The Japanese General Election*, ed. Robert J. Pekkanen, Steven R. Reed, and Ethan Scheiner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 2.

even Taiwan. On the other hand, the Trump administration's "America first" policies, determination to push U.S. allies on increasing their own defense budgets and contributions to burden-sharing, and discussion of scenarios in which Japan and South Korea possibly possess their own nuclear deterrents hint at a policy of offshore balancing and potential abandonment of Japan.⁷⁰ President Donald Trump's jettisoning of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has also not instilled confidence in the United States' engagement in the region and capability to counter China's rising influence, given that the TPP was a major plank in the U.S. rebalance.

Japan's Gaullists and strongest revisionists might be encouraged to see space opening up to attain greater autonomy in security policy. However, the Abe administration looks set to continue a similar but even more assertive line in seeking above all to avoid abandonment by moving ever closer to the United States. Abe's early visits to the United States to meet with Trump in November 2016 and February 2017, their agreement on a tough stance toward North Korea, and his talk of enhancing Japan's commitments under collective self-defense all suggest a continuation of the Abe doctrine. This is not to say that Japanese policymakers are entirely sanguine and have ruled out strategic adjustments and other options. Since the start of the Trump administration, reports from the LDP and Japanese policy think tanks have argued that Japan, while needing to strengthen the alliance where possible as a *sine qua non*, should also look to supplement its position by building up more autonomous counterstrike capabilities against North Korea, such as through the procurement of cruise missiles.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the revisionists still see Japan's most feasible security option as developing greater capabilities to work alongside the United States.

Moving beyond the Yoshida doctrine and into the realm of an Abe doctrine carries important implications for the United States and regional security. Japanese policymakers' new readiness to expand the scope of alliance cooperation functionally and geographically, to make more definite security

⁷⁰ "Tainichi hatsugen shingi wa" [Truth and Falsehoods of Statements Regarding Japan], *Asahi Shimbun*, February 6, 2017; and "Amid North Korea Threat, Tillerson Hints That 'Circumstances Could Evolve' for a Japanese Nuclear Arsenal," *Japan Times*, March 19, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/03/19/national/amid-north-korea-threat-tillerson-hints-circumstances-evolve-japanese-nuclear-arsenal/#.WOjEGFfw-b8>.

⁷¹ Henbo Suru Beikoku Shakai to Rejiriento na Nichibei Kankei Purojekuto, "Teigen hokokusho rejiriento na Nichibei kankei kochiku ni muketa teigen" [Proposal Report for Creating Resilient U.S.-Japan Relations], Seisaku Shinkutanku PHP, January 2017, <http://thinktank.php.co.jp/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/resilient170118.pdf>, 18, 28–29; Japan-U.S. Alliance Study Group Report, "The Trump Administration and Japan: Challenges and Visions for Japan's Foreign and Security Policy in the New Era," Institute for International Policy Studies, January 2017, <http://www.iips.org/en/research/usjr2017en.pdf>; and "Kichi kogeki noryoku no kento, teigen, Jimin, taikitchosen Minshin 'jijitsujo no kaiken'" [LDP Proposal to Investigate Base Counterstrike Capability, DP "De Facto Constitutional Revision"], *Asahi Shimbun*, March 30, 2017.

commitments, to exercise collective self-defense, and if necessary to balance against China makes Japan a far more cooperative ally for the United States. The Abe administration has also shown a willingness to work with other key U.S. partners in the region to buttress the U.S.-led alliance network and security system. Japan thus still remains the key to the U.S. security presence in the Asia-Pacific and to the prospects for wider regional stability.

However, this emerging security doctrine and the relationship with the United States require careful management on all sides. Japan's more capable military stance is probably a reassurance for many U.S. allies, if supporting a steady U.S. policy toward the region. For potential U.S. adversaries, though, a resurgent Japanese military, undergirded by strong revisionism, could either restore the security balance in Asia or fuel new security dilemmas. For U.S. allies, partners, and adversaries alike, however, a stronger Japan that is less engaged with the United States or is working in tandem with a more unpredictable U.S. administration is of equal concern.

The Trump administration thus needs to work carefully to manage security ties with Japan, while reassuring external observers that the alliance is not one of pairing revisionist states looking to upset the security balance in the region. Secretary of Defense James Mattis's visit to the region in early 2017 struck the right tone.⁷² In addition, the Trump administration must surely pay close attention to managing the internal politics of the alliance. Japan's principal alliance dilemma focuses on abandonment by the United States, and it is this fear that would be most likely to fuel revisionism and lead to a swing away from the Abe doctrine toward full-blown Gaullism. The Trump administration would thus do well to continue to reassure Japan on U.S. security commitments while still reining in Japanese revisionist ambitions.

⁷² "Mattis Wraps Up Japan Visit with U.S. Pledge to Maintain Alliance 'For Years to Come,'" *Japan Times*, February 4, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/02/04/national/politics-diplomacy/inada-says-hopes-mattis-visit-strengthens-regional-security-ties-south-korea/#.WOjFQVfw9PM>.