Japanese nationalism in divergence: Contemporary expressions

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ABSTRACT

Many analyses have articulated the change in Japan's nationalist tone in militarist terms, categorising Japanese nationalism as a resurgence of prewar imperialist values. Nevertheless, the contemporary character of Japan's nationalist expressions is indicating a breakaway from its pacifist past and a tilt towards a more conservative virtue. A theoretically and historically informed examination of the most significant internal and external factors aims to explain Japan's current shift in nationalist tone. Critical applications of nominated frameworks seek to provide new understandings of contemporary Japanese nationalism beyond the pervasive militarist narrative. A more promising approach selectively draws on the rich literature on nationalism that has developed over the past three decades. Applied to Japanese nationalism, these theories and concepts offer a corrective to the militarist lens. This study employed theories of recurrent renovationist nationalism, relationalism and norm constructivism with the nation and nationalism conceived through notions of imagination and plural discourses. All these elements form the theoretical framework to analyse the salient features of Japanese nationalism. Research into contemporary Japanese nationalism reveals a new conservative strand of nationalism is challenging the pacifist orthodox and is being presented as a viable ideology in light of the prevailing atmosphere. Conservative nationalism is ascending and is seeking dominance in Japan's nationalist discourse.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I declare that this work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. All work is original, except where it is acknowledged according to conventional referencing guidelines.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The current discourse of Japanese nationalism is indicating a nation on the verge of a dramatic shift from its pacifist past. Shifts towards national assertiveness, largely articulated through a more assertive diplomatic and security posture, are becoming more notable. In 2004, prime ministerial visits to Yasukuni Shrine, a place commemorating Class A war criminals of World War II, received both national support as well as criticisms from abroad (Ryu, 2007). In 2010, the East China Sea collision between a Chinese fishing trawler and the Japanese Coast Guard engendered nationalist sentiments that called for a hardened stance towards China (Horiuchi, 2014). In 2014, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe signed an agreement to collaborate on submarine development with Australia (Barker, 2014). Similarly, Japan's Ministry of Defence approved exports of air-defence missile sensors and cleared a research project involving air-to-air missile technology in collaboration with Britain (Miwa & Sugizaki, 2014). Other signs of growing national assertiveness are expressed through proactive multilateralism, including Japan's audacious bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (Atanassova-Cornelis, 2011). Perhaps the most controversial of all, are the deliberate attempts to revise Article 9 of the Constitution – the legal framework that underpins Japanese pacifism (Soeya et al., 2011). The 'resurgence' of nationalism in Japan today is often seen in this light – a pathological reincarnation of nationalism from its imperial past that seeks to threaten international peace.

As Japanese nationalism can evoke memories of militarism, it is usually regarded as a destabilising factor in North-East Asia (Roy, 2005; Rozman, Hughes & Krauss, 2007, Berger, 2014). Certainly, International Relations often considers nationalism as a source of conflict, yet at the same time, deems nationalism as an integral factor that shapes international society (Mayall, 1990).

Within the domestic realm, nationalism is gaining salience as an influential force that sparks public debate and public discourse. For instance, Rose (2010) observes Japanese nationalism to be largely an inward response, which is designed, promulgated and consumed within the nation. However, contemporary surges of Japanese nationalism that demonstrate national pride and security proactiveness have stoked concerns within the region, leading to the deterioration of bilateral relationships with China and South Korea (Suzuki, 2015; Matthews, 2003). In addition to international opposition, there are still members of Japanese society that are ardent supporters of pacifism (Owada, 2008), which put them in direct contention with the nationalist movements promoted by the government.

An understanding that confines itself to a one-dimensional analysis suggests a host of problems concerning the nature of Japanese nationalism and its effects on relations both at the regional and global level. This study does not pursue a one-dimensional approach, which would locate nationalism purely as a source of aggression or regard it as an extreme political ideology. To that end, this study sets out to systematically explore both the internal and external factors that contribute to Japan's shift in nationalist tone to reveal an alternative perspective to contemporary Japanese nationalism.

The field of nationalism has experienced an academic renaissance since the 1980s, with unprecedented theoretical advancements that have been coming into prominence (McCrone, 1998). As a result, new empirical instances in different parts of the world sit alongside these new theories of nationalism; some of which, still need to be critically applied to the Japanese context. Moreover, while Japan is showing conservative predilections in its nationalist agenda, it would be inaccurate to accept that this rightward shift is assuming the same trajectory as its prewar expression and that Japanese nationalism is impervious to processes of change. Such simplistic assumptions negate the possibility to apply new nationalism theories in the current context of Japan.

For instance, much of the literature on Japanese nationalism does not directly deal with the unique contention between pacifism and nationalism. Conventional treatment of pacifism often concludes that pacifism itself is the antithesis of nationalism and is not regarded as a particular type of nationalism.

This notion created the illusion that nationalism had disappeared in Japan's postwar era, with only recent resurrections becoming conspicuous (Brown, 1955). Nevertheless, due to the theoretical advancements within the field, various explanatory models have the power to revisit pacifism and its evolving interaction with nationalism, and provide a new perspective on this relationship. The proliferation of many other sub-fields also occurred. Of note, is the increased attention given to identity literature where scholars have drawn from perspectives of psychology, sociology and anthropology to explain the formation of national identity in International Relations (Ashizawa, 2008). The topic of Japanese nationalism, however, as it drifts further away from the Japanese Imperial era, has often been overlooked or mistreated with only recent interest due to perceived surge in nationalistic acts and policies, as the exception. Nevertheless, alternative perspectives from key scholars of Japanese nationalism have renewed the literature. McVeigh (2004), Yoshino (1992) and Shimazu (2006), for instance, argue for the constant engagement of an assortment of nationalisms that represent Japan's national discourse. Furthermore, an increasingly growing aspect to nationalism studies is the focus on national identity. Many identity scholars tend to discuss Japanese identity *vis-à-vis* a significant 'Other'[1], namely the US and China (Horiuchi, 2014; Suzuki, 2015; Hagström & Gustafsson, 2014). This relational approach of constructing the 'Self' through processes of 'othering' is often perceived to be in conflict with the norm constructivist approach to national identity formation.

Norm constructivists such as Katzenstein (1996a) and Oros (2008), on the other hand, view national identity as domestically constructed, which in turn, constituted national interests and therefore behaviour. However, in 2014, Oros admits that 'future work may productively utilize insights from both approaches to provide a clearer picture of how Japanese identity is both challenged and then evolves in relation to an outside actor' (p. 158). When often regarded as an IR anomaly – Japan consistently defies conventional IR theories, especially with respect to foreign policy – material factors cannot exclusively determine

[1] Capitalisation of the words 'Other' and 'Others' denotes a collective title given to nations that share significant interactions with the referent 'Japan' also known as the 'Self', and will be used within the context of the relational approach. Likewise, 'Self' will also be capitalised. Quotations marks will be omitted in subsequent appearances, unless required.

behaviour; ideational constraints and identity factors also come into play (Roy, 2000). Indeed, there is a growing group of scholars that draws on identity theory to explain Japan's unusual behaviour (i.e. when Japan approved dispatch of Self-Defence Forces [SDF] to Iraq in 2003, but did not approve dispatch for the Gulf War in 1991) and attribute this changing behaviour to perceptions and ideational factors (Rozman, 2002; Catalinac, 2007; Oros, 2008; Katzenstein, 1996b; Hagstrom & Gustafsson; 2014). Therefore, complementary utility of both the relational approach and the norm constructivist approach suggests an appropriate attitude to the analysis of Japan's contemporary shift in nationalist tone, with particular focus on the contention between pacifism and nationalism. This is where my thesis will be situated within the broad spectrum of nationalism literature.

In this context, this thesis will contribute to the body of knowledge by providing insights as to why and how Japan is withdrawing from the country's long-standing pacifism by taking active steps towards security proactiveness in the twenty-first century. Beyond illuminating the key factors that explain this new assertive nationalism, this thesis provides an understanding of how these factors form the contours of national identity that affect behavior. Moreover, the construction of a theoretical framework crafted from the theoretical advancements in the field will contribute to theory development. For example, while the relational approach and the norm constructivist approach, separately, have been given significant consideration, a survey of the literature revealed that the simultaneous use of both of these approaches to the study of Japanese nationalism has yet to be considered.

Furthermore, this study will also outline the implications of Japan's changing nationalist expression. Given the current regional landscape, Japan must make pragmatic decisions to protect its national interests and escape from protracted economic stagnation without deliberately antagonising its neighbours. This is important for Japan if it wishes to become a prominent global player against the backdrop of a rising China.

To reveal and lay bare the connections between domestic and international factors that explain Japan's current shift in nationalist tone, each chapter will be informed by the central research questions of this thesis. Chapter

2 will seek to answer foundational questions of Japanese nationalism by developing a theoretical framework to analyse the relationship between national identity and nationalism. Chapter 3 will discuss the historical development of Japanese nationalism and national identity since the Meiji Restoration, and how Japanese nationalism has evolved over time. Chapter 4 will bring the discussion to the present and will seek to explain why the world is now witnessing an eclipse of pacifism with an emergence of conservative nationalism Finally, Chapter 5 will present the conclusions of this study and the implications for the nation and region.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework

Despite theoretical advances, there is a tendency to view Japanese nationalism through the lens of Japan's imperial past (Kohn, 1967; Berger, 2014; Hughes, 2004). Such studies mistakenly present contemporary nationalist expressions as a resurgence of past ideologies. A more promising approach selectively draws on the rich literature on nationalism that has developed over the past three decades. Applied to Japanese nationalism, these theories and concepts offer a corrective to the conventional imperialist lens through which contemporary developments are often viewed.

This chapter draws on contemporary approaches to nationalism to build a theoretical framework that will inform the analyses of this study. First, the question of the applicability of nationalism theories will be addressed given the issues concerning Western-centrism and conceptual ambiguity. Second, in light of the conceptual ambiguity, attention given to various nationalist concepts will allow for focussed discussions of the key issues related to Japanese nationalism and provide an appropriate orientation for this thesis. Through discussions of various elements that make up the nation: culture, politics, objectivity, subjectivity, imagination, state interaction, pluralism and renovation, will a theoretical framework to understand the Japanese nation and by extension, Japanese nationalism come to reveal itself. Third, an examination of national identity theories seeks to reinforce further as well as add to the theoretical framework. Finally, the chapter will conclude by drawing on the above elements to put forward a framework to analyse the salient features of Japanese nationalism and how and why it is changing.

Theoretical Issues: Applicability and Conceptualisation

The question of the applicability of nationalist frameworks to Japan based on the concern regarding Western-centrism is an unnecessarily contentious one. The

assumption that one cannot approach Japanese nationalism through nationalism theory because of the idea that the Japanese experience is so unique and so intellectually pure precludes any reasonable explanations; it is merely an assertion of uniqueness or even exceptionalism that provides no explanatory power (Doak, 2006). In other words, it is impossible to purge any cultural or political analysis of all theoretical assumptions. To admit that there is no other option to explain Japanese nationalism is not an admission of cultural imperialism. Simply, for instrumental reasons, the concepts in contemporary theory offer important insights in not only the Japanese context but also every other context, inside and outside Asia. Consequently, the only constructive way to understand nationalism in Japan is through theory.

Nevertheless, an imperative to reveal how theories are received and debated within the Japanese nationalist discourse, regardless of their origins, endures. As 'the core doctrine of nationalism offers only a broad and abstract framework', other theories and concepts must be used to supplement (Smith, 2001, p. 24). Similarly, a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is inadequate and will not be able to explain all expressions of nationalism nor provide a comprehensive exposition of the phenomenon in the one context (Özkırımlıi, 2000).

The other issue is conceptual clarity. Ambiguity often undermines nationalism studies; therefore, it is important to distill as much as possible, the fundamental concepts, their relationships and how they will be used in the context of this thesis. Attempts to disentangle fundamental concepts such as nation, nationalism, and national identity, become a challenge. This is because dealing with exceptionally amorphous concepts as Calhoun states, 'will legitimate some claims and delegitimate others' (1993, p. 215). However, in consideration of the constraints of this study, both in time and in scale, along with nationalism's pervasive ambiguity, certain conceptual and theoretical choices will be made in order to give a coherent account of Japanese nationalism. These choices are not assertions of what is correct, but rather, what is *useful* for this thesis.

Understanding the Nation

To understand nationalism, is to understand the nation. This task is exceptionally difficult when faced with a deluge of definitions and within it multiple and even contravening assertions of the nation. The Japanese equivalents of the word 'nation' only compound this confusion, as they too cannot escape criticisms of ambiguity and numerous interpretations.

In Japanese, *minzoku* (民族), *kokumin* (国民), and *kokka* (国家) share the meaning of the English word 'nation'. The suffix, *shugi* (主義) added to these terms changes the meaning to 'nationalism'. The distinction between these terms is apparent when looking at the choice of iconographical representations of these words through the Japanese linguistic feature known as *kanji*. The choice of *kanji* characters is used to emphasise a certain element. For example, the character *min*「民」denotes an ethnic group while *koku*「国」is synonymous with the state or country. Although each of these terms may carry a dominant meaning and sometimes used only in specific contexts (Conroy, 1955, p. 820), consistent conflation of these terms, much like in English, produces many of the differing conceptions and interpretations of 'nation' and 'nationalism'. As Morris-Suzuki observes, 'all efforts at fixing these Japanese terms to stable English translations, indeed, is frustrated not just by the slipperiness of the Japanese words themselves, but also by the fact that the English words "race", "nation" and "ethnic group" are' (1998, p. 87) often used imprecisely and inconsistently. Considering the overwhelming volume of ambiguity, attempts by scholars to explicitly negotiate these terms are rare. Instead, *nashonarizumu* – the English loan word – is often used to refer to all ideas of nationalism (Doak, 2006).

Cultural nation and the political nation

The above suggests a distinction between ethnic (*min*) or political (*koku*) elements of the nation. Friedrich Meinecke (1970) elaborated on this distinction and classified nations as either a *Kulturnation* or *Staatsnation*. The former refers to a cultural community delineated by cultural elements such as language, history, origins and tradition and is congruent with primordialist/essentialist

origins of nationalism. Proponents of the cultural nation immersed themselves in history to discover origins of life, community and polity, often as part of a Romantic celebration of cultural diversity. The latter, on the other hand, is a community unified by a collective political history, self-determination and citizenship. Achieving a state that reflects the political ideals of such a community is a *Staatsnation's* sole purpose. Certain principles of the civic conception of the nation correspond to the modernist/instrumentalist approach.

This distinction, in some instances, may present a valid typology; however, this caveat is accompanied by misunderstandings and misuse. Some scholars identify with civic forms of the nation as an embodiment of 'liberal' ideals while cultural conceptions are resigned to 'regressive' and 'reactionary' understandings. Hans Kohn (1967) further refined this typology by assigning the civic nation as the progenitor of Western nationalism that is voluntarist in nature, whereas the cultural nation is associated with Eastern nationalism that was excessive and militarist. Scholars like Doak (2007), regard the distinction between the cultural nation and the statist nation a major feature of Japanese nationalism.

To insist on a dichotomy between the two conceptions of the nation, however, not only attracts unfortunate connotations for one side while glorifying the other, it also perpetuates the notion that the West is all that is good and virtuous, while the East is in a permanent state of backwardness held behind by primordialist views. I regard the two concepts as not being mutually exclusive. For instance, when taking into account their normative potential, rather than their substantive content, a common denominator is revealed: the civic nation is motivated by self-determinism; however, the cultural nation also embodies self-determination and asserts the right for a distinct cultural community to realise a nation of their own (Hutchinson, 1999; Yoshino, 1992; Hroch, 1996). Moreover, in some cases, and as the Japanese nation will show, cultural nationalism and civic nationalism do coalesce: 'Every nationalism contains civic and ethnic elements in varying degrees and different forms' (Smith, 1991, p. 13).

Meiji nationalism was the product of both cultural and civic forms of nationalism. Japanese national discourse naturally envisioned Japan to be among the great powers. While forced to admit their material inferiority *vis-à-vis* the

West, the Japanese identified with a national self-image that emanated cultural superiority. Hence, the Meiji elites appropriated nationalism to achieve material parity commensurate with their perceived cultural superiority (Doak, 1997; McVeigh, 2004). At the same time, the political elites used nationalism in civic terms to justify their liberal crusade to free Asia from the West, and to protect Japan's sovereignty and civic way of life (Brown, 1955).

In contemporary Japan, the 're-emergence' of nationalism can also be argued from both points of view. The discourse of Japanese nationalism is much imbued with a strong sense of cultural superiority fuelled by the pursuit for a more influential position within the international realm (Matthews, 2003). Tokyo's bidding for a United Nations Security Council permanent seat and its desire to play a leadership role in multilateral institutions are examples (Roy, 2005; Atanassova-Cornelis, 2011). At the same time, the revival of Japanese nationalist discourse can also be seen as a civic expression, which appeals to the right to self-determine the formation of their own state, in alignment with the nation's own values. The right to establish and maintain a military commensurate of its own economic clout is one instance of the civic prescription, and is highly relevant to the Japanese context (Hughes, 2004; Oros, 2008; Hagström & Gustafsson, 2014). To be sure, both civic and cultural elements have combined to inform and reinforce reactionary and militaristic strains of Japanese nationalism. Therefore, at least in Japan's case, the nation and nationalism cannot be bifurcated into two neat categories: more often than not, an expression of the nation is a synergy of the two conceptions; both are locked in a mutually dependent relationship.

The subjective-objective spectrum

An alternative way of conceptualising the nation is through yet another dichotomy. One definition emphasises 'objective' elements, which include language, religion, race, territory and institutions. The other, instead, stresses the 'subjective' elements, which are attitudes, perceptions and sentiments. The notion that the nation only exist when people believe it does so (Smith, 2001). Joseph Stalin (1994) is an obvious advocate of the objective definition. According

to him, 'a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture' (p. 20). Contrary to Stalin, Ernest Renan (1996) maintains a subjective position: 'a nation is a soul, spiritual principle. Only two things, actually, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One is in the past; the other is in the present' (p. 17).

However, dealing with absolutes will either include too many or too few possibilities (Weber, 1948). Delmer Brown (1955), for instance, chooses to define the Japanese nation based on a mixture of objective and subjective elements. He regards geographical isolation, a common language, religion and the shared belief in racial homogeneity to constitute the Japanese nation. Here, it is apparent that Brown leans toward the objective side of the spectrum. While other Japanese nationalist scholars have made particular reference to *kokutai*, a spiritual force that is inextricably tied to the mystical lineage of the Japanese Emperor and therefore represents the national essence of Japan (McVeigh, 2004; Doak, 2006; Benner, 2001). This sentiment has been known to re-establish the Emperor as the father of the nation. Therefore, the objective-subjective spectrum is a useful approach to conceptualising the Japanese nation. Of course, where along the spectrum the Japanese nation sits is up for debate.

Imagining the nation through style

The intentional use of history is another prominent theme in nationalism. The theory of Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) holds that nations are a product of nationalists who exploit 'invented traditions', a type of construction through which a particular nationalist discourse is engendered. The aim is to construct a nation by using 'invented traditions' to establish continuity with a desired past, even if these traditions are fictitious. History serves as a repository of national symbols and traditions and is the thread that holds the nation together. Therefore, history should not be viewed as an artefact of the past, but as a selective interpretation, for the present, by the present. In other words, nationalists are remaking nations by remaking history. However, the word 'invent' suggests a greater element of agency, in particular, for those who are in a

position to invent with influence. To moderate the artificiality associated with the political uses of 'tradition', discussions of a nation 'imagined' come to the fore.

Benedict Anderson's (1991) definition of the nation as an imagined community minimises the problem of artificiality. In the broadest sense, an imagined community is a socially constructed boundary-contained group unified by a sense of belonging and presumes a level of horizontal comradeship, despite inequality and exploitation. What differentiates a nation from another is the *style* in which a nation is imagined. Anderson's idea of 'imagined communities' serves as a point of departure for Marylyn Ivy's (1995) analysis of the Japanese nation.

Although her study focuses on the discourses of 'the vanishing' that ostensibly define Japan, Ivy demonstrates how imagined discourses of traditions, customs and spiritual essence of the cultural-nation secures a perennial position in national discourse, since styles of imagining constantly critique processes of modernity by revealing and reifying differences between the 'East' and 'West'. For this thesis, however, confining the debate to notions based on the traditional/modern nexus is insufficient in the context of this study; conceiving the 'imagined community' as a discursive construction of discourse is, instead, helpful. Since '"nations" have no independent existence outwith the discourse of nationalism' (McCrone, 1998, p. 25), the Japanese nation, therefore, can be viewed as an amalgamation or contestation of various national discourses, which are inscribed into the imagined community to give us the nation.

Significance of the state

The significance of the state to the nation and nationalism is often challenged. Bruce Stronach holds that 'Japanese identify themselves as members of a national group, not with the state that governs the nation. Indeed, there is very little identity with the state at all' (1995, p. 61). Similarly, Kevin Doak (2006) contends that nationalism belongs to the people, not the institutions that constitute the state. While it is true that the state is a separate entity from the nation, the state has been, historically speaking, very influential to Japanese nationalism. The state is a separate entity because it operates in a clearly

delineated territory, in which it holds a legitimate monopoly over means of coercion through a set of autonomous institutions. A nation, however, is a lived community, reified through a common culture – real or imagined – and a shared homeland (Smith, 2001; Anderson, 1991). State sponsored nationalism, or official nationalism, is the imposition of nationalist values, sentiments and politics onto the nation it governs. The question of its acceptance by the masses is, of course, a different matter. Under these parameters, scholars like Stronach and Doak view official nationalism in Japan as negligible, if not a hindrance to popular nationalism, where the people, not the state, are the rightful guardians of nationalism. This is because Stronach and Doak subscribe to Elie Kedourie's (1960) principles of nationalism in that the horizontal bond among fellow men will work to seek their own political governance. Walker Connor's (1994) work aligns with this notion and demonstrates how ethnicity is closely tied to the nation with little or no loyalty shown to the state.

Nonetheless, the notion that the state and the nation are always locked into an antagonistic relationship is questionable. Michael Hechter (2000) has redefined this relationship and maintains, 'nationalism consists of political activities that aim to make the boundaries of the nation – a culturally distinctive collectivity aspiring to self-governance – coterminous with those of the state' (p. 7). Alternatively, Anthony Giddens (1991), Michael Mann (1995) and John Breuilly (1993) see the state as the most powerful force shaping nations. 'The modern state both shapes nationalist politics and provides that politics with its major objective namely possession of the state' (Breuilly, 1993, p. 352). These sentiments suggest a complex mutually constitutive relationship and are contrary to the oppositional conception in which either the state or the nation tries to antagonise the other. Furthermore, the dominance of one or the other tends to be dependent on other social and political forces. In Japan, prewar nationalism can be characterised as heavily state sponsored while postwar nationalism provided a new political landscape conducive to popular ownership of nationalism exemplified by Japan's postwar peace nationalism.

Japanese nationalism and its interaction with the Japanese state cannot be thoroughly explained through frameworks that see nationalism entirely belonging to the masses and disregard the role of the state by simply classifying

it as a negative force, and therefore, the antithesis of nationalism. But nationalism is not inherently good, nor is it inherently bad. Much literature has referred to the misconception of treating Japanese nationalism as a dogma that is jingoistic, xenophobic and excessive, with the state as the emphatic actor and instigator of nationalism (Brown, 1955; Takekawa, 2007; Rose, 2010; McVeigh, 2004; Atanassova-Cornelis, 2011). The nation under such assumptions suggests it is a passive participant and is subservient to the state. Perhaps at certain points in Japanese modern history, this would be an obvious observation; however, to subject contemporary expressions of nationalism in Japan to the same conventions will preclude alternate perspectives to the phenomenon and repudiate forces of popular nationalism.

The pluralist approach

As mentioned earlier, nationalism's ambiguous character is responsible for the many diverse interpretations. Consideration given to this point demands Japanese nationalism to be rediscovered and redefined, and added to its discourse, a narrative different to that of its one-dimensional past. To start, conceptualising nationalism as something else other than monolithic and surplus in expression can manifest a plethora of alternative ideas. A product of this reflection suggests that 'nationalism does not exist as such, but a multitude of manifestations of nationalism do' (Alter, 1994, p. 2).

Conceiving nationalism as 'plural' as opposed to 'singular' can be found in the work of Cartlon Hayes (1931), with his views alive in contemporary scholars of Japanese nationalism such as Shigeki Satō (1995), Naoko Shimazu (2006) and Brian McVeigh (2004). These scholars fervently promote a pluralist view of Japanese nationalism that directly contravenes a monolithic view typical of most traditional analyses of nationalism. For example, Shimazu (2006) warns against the intellectual complacency in the study of Japanese nationalism as all one and the same. Instead of 'nationalism in Japan', she argues that Japanese nationalism would be better understood if 'we were encouraged to think more in terms of the plural, that is, "nationalisms in Japan"' (2006, p. 182).

Shimazu's core argument echoes that of McVeigh's, and he also concedes that 'nationalism, does not come in coherent wholes… Any given "nationalism" is actually a vast array of "nationalisms"' (2004, p. 4). He adds to Shimazu by describing how a family of nationalism interact and may overlap, clash, collide, weaken, strengthen and even compete with each other, with varying degrees of intensity. The pluralistic approach widens the Japanese nationalist discourse to include other ways of consolidating the nation through various narratives such as pacifism. In this way, postwar pacifism can be interpreted as a strand of nationalism, whereby, through peace, a nation is reimagined and is the ideology that reframes the political parameters of the state.

Regeneration and recurrent renovationism

Themes of national regeneration are common within the Japanese nationalist experience; the Meiji Restoration and the peace discourse are examples of intense efforts to regenerate the nation (McVeigh, 2004). John Breuilly (1993), refers to these experiences as 'reform nationalism'. His theory holds that contact with superior outsiders triggers a desire to reform society and often involves embracing processes of modernisation as a means of achieving economic and cultural parity. Simultaneously, deliberate efforts to safeguard against an erosion of cultural authenticity, or a perception of such, require transplanting the newly reformed society onto a national identity that aligns with the nation's cultural core.

This resonates deeply with Brian McVeigh's (2004) cyclical theory of recurrent renovationist nationalism. Indeed, since the Meiji restoration, McVeigh concedes that the need to reconstruct, reform and improve the nation is an enduring feature of Japanese nationalism that continues well into the twenty-first century. Like Breuilly, McVeigh believes, to a large extent, exogenous factors activate renovationist nationalism. Japan's encounter with the West in the mid-nineteenth century created a sobering sense of inferiority with a superior Other. Cognizant of its own inferiority, Japan took to emulation of the West with great fervour as a means of national reform. In general, 'renovationism is best conceived as a broad, inclusive, and relatively mutable ideology that has been

able to bring together a range of official/state/elite movements and nonofficial/society/popular sentiments' (p. 11). It can also infiltrate both ends of the political spectrum and anchors both progressive and retrogressive national movements to a certain standard of reformation.

The cyclical nature of recurrent renovationist theory can be explained through its close links with both the future and the past, and ties together the work of Anderson and Ivy. National regeneration is often mixed with imagination, a symbolic relationship that involves assigning specific meanings to certain passages of time. Processes of modernity encourage the nation to reflect on its current national identity, which the nation then recalibrates and reimagines, reflecting the new national objectives brought on by modernity. Japanese nationalist discourse has a tendency to reminisce about the 'glorious past' when, through processes of modernity, it perceives to reach a stage of the 'degraded present'. Therefore, modernity implicates Japanese authenticity, which is observed to be lost through modernisation – a Western ideology. Through this idea, a cycle is set in motion; whereby Japan's nationalist discourse is constantly challenged by the desire for a modern future, yet also, strives to maintain an acceptable version of the 'authentic self', believed to exist more conspicuously in the past. Paradoxically, the perpetual quest to preserve the authentic self is also perceived to be holding Japan back in its modernising efforts; thus, the cycle starts again (McVeigh, 2004).

Recurrent renovationist nationalism, accordingly, can be summarised into three main tenets: first, modernity facilitates an awareness of the speed and intensity in which sociopolitical changes come to bear. Second, there is a preoccupation with preserving the 'authentic self'. Third, there is an intense emulation of superior Others with the intention to increase power and prestige (McVeigh, 2004, p. 57). Recurrent renovationist nationalism thrives on the nation's struggle between modernity and tradition and in the words of Ivy:

> The hybrid realities of Japan today…are contained within the dominant discourses on cultural purity and non-difference, and in nostalgic appeals to pre-modernity: what makes the Japanese so different from everyone else makes them identical to each other,

> what threatens that self-sameness is often marked temporally as the intrusively modern, spatially as the foreign. (1995, p. 9)

This theory is useful to the analysis of Japanese nationalism and is a complement to the pluralistic approach mentioned previously. Both theories function from a different analytical location while working in tandem to uncover alternative insights. The pluralist approach shows the breadth of Japanese nationalism by acknowledging the different types of nationalism that are engaged in the sociopolitical sphere. While recurrent renovationist nationalism offers a temporal explanation by explaining how the different types of nationalisms may be activated. In other words, recurrent renovationist nationalism is the 'master program' that underlies the multiple nationalisms in play. For their ability to articulate particular temporal and spatial sites of Japanese nationalism, these frameworks are appropriate for this study.

National Identity and the Imagining of the Nation

The centrality of national identity to the formation of nationalism has been commonly accepted. However, determining how identity is conceived and expressed remains contested. Monsterrat Guibernau (2007) describes national identity as a common belief of belonging to a community sharing attributes that make a community distinct from others. In other words, national identity is envisioned through a belief in the existence of a cohesive nation invoked by a set of distinctive cultures, traditions, languages and politics. This belief in belonging can 'remain latent for years and suddenly come to the surface whenever the nation is confronted with an external or internal enemy – real, potential or imagined' (p. 12). Irrespective of reality, how the political elites interprets both the internal and external milieu is indicative of the style of imagination it will choose that could determine its national identity.

In the Japanese context, both internal and external factors have an effect on Japanese national identity and nationalism. But how can we explain this process of interpreting the internal and external factors and its connection to

nationalism? Theoretical advancements in the field of nationalism have introduced a range of identity theories to help answer this question. Of note are two promising approaches: the relational approach and the norm constructivist approach. Hagström and Gustafsson (2014) have drawn extensively on relational theory to analyse Japanese national identity. Their study suggests that the Japanese identity is mainly constituted through the demarcation and reification of boundaries that enclose the 'Self' as a product of 'othering'. In other words, the constant reification of difference is a vital part of identity formation and transformation. Their relational understanding of Japanese identity highlights processes of differentiation or 'othering' as the manner in which the nation discovers its 'Self'. How Japan imagines its 'Self' through its interactions with 'Others' as an active negotiation of who they are and who they want to be is indicative of what national doctrine Japan will adopt or what national discourse Japan will promote. This logic aligns with arguments from Özkırımlı (2005) and Finlayson (1998) who consider nationalism as a type of discourse that forms, maintains and reproduces national identity.

Thomas Berger (1998), Andrew Oros (2008), and Peter Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara (1993), on the other hand, attest to norms that constitute identity, rather than processes of differentiation. They believe Japan's 'pacifist' or 'antimilitarist' identity, for example, is constituted by 'peaceful norms', which are domestically produced and consumed. Norm constructivists emphasise norms, culture and ideas as the main constituents of national identity and underestimate external forces, namely the interactions with Others. Norm constructivists also view identity as relatively stable. Although constructivism allows for some change, norm constructivists believe norms and culture transform at a slow rate. While this may explain why pacifism has become the prevailing orthodoxy in Japanese politics for the last 70 years, norms cannot adequately explain how Japan, a former expansionist, suddenly lapsed into pacifism. However, a relational analysis resolves this issue. Gustaffsson (2015) demonstrates Japan's postwar 'peace identity' as a construction to the prewar 'aggressive' Self as the Other, albeit an internal Other.

In consideration of these theoretical flaws, a relational approach makes up for what norm constructivism lacks and vice versa. National identity becomes

more elucidated when the role of borders, which is to enclose the Self and expel Others, becomes the primary focus (Triandafyllidou, 1998). Likewise, Alexander Bukh (2010) holds that the 'ongoing boundary drawing process in which the cognitive borders of the "Self" are defined and redefined in opposition to difference embodied in a multiplicity of "Others"' (p. 11). Correspondingly, Ivy (1995) explains the Japanese nation as an imaginary construction made possible only through locating the nation *vis-à-vis* the West. Many strengths of the relational approach are helpful in this study: first, the theory does not limit itself to a singular Other. The Japanese nation constitutes its Self through its encounters with the US, Europe, North Korea, South Korea and more increasingly, China. Moreover, as demonstrated by Gustafsson (2015), Japan also has internal Others residing within the nation whereby the Self is constructed through a past Self. Hagström & Gustafsson (2014) have expanded the list of internal Others to include minority groups such as the *Ainu* and the *Burakumin*. Second, the theory does not assume these Others are static. Third, the Other can be positioned as either inferior or superior to the referent Self. For Japan, Asian Others are viewed as 'inferior', while Western Others are deemed 'superior'.

On the other hand, Andrew Oros, (2014), although more sympathetic to norm constructivism, concedes that attention to both approaches provides a clearer picture of how Japanese identity is being challenged by their interactions with significant Others, and how those interactions are negotiated through the norm formation processes: elite learning, institutionalisation and internalisation (Armstrong et al., 2012). The relational approach is the starting point to explaining Japan's shift in nationalist tone, but these interactions must also be processed. Hence, norm constructivism is useful to explain how norms, which rest on interpretations of structural and material foundations, are negotiated and absorbed in national discourse (Miyashita, 2007). When interactions with significant Others start to change, the potential for norms to change may arise. Therefore, the relational approach and the norm constructivist approach provide an appropriate framework for this thesis through their complementary utility. Not only is this framework able to highlight domestic and international factors that explain Japan's nationalist shift, but it can also explain how these shifts are changing.

Conclusion: Elements of the Theoretical Framework

These frameworks represent some of the salient debates in which Japanese nationalism is renegotiated and redefined. Although issues of Western-centrism and conceptual ambiguity are difficult to contend with, to discard theories of nationalism merely based on their origins or ambiguity will repudiate all the theoretical contributions of the past. The diverse range of nationalism theories reflects the varied conceptualisation of foundational concepts. Therefore, the salient issue then becomes which set of theories can satisfactorily explain Japan's current shift in nationalist tone. As Smith (2001) has observed, each theory seeks to answer a different question; only by asking the right questions will obscurity start to fade.

To answer the question, 'what explains Japan's current shift in nationalist tone?' this study is based on Ivy's (1995) usage of Anderson's (1993) imagined community. The Japanese nation is a complex imagination of cultural and political elements and rests on objective-subjective interpretations. In other words, the Japanese nation is a distinct imagined community and is spiritually integrated into a positive identification with the prevailing mode of cultural and political expression, through which meaning is derived from objective and subjective justifications. The style of imagination orientates the nation to various discourses of nationalism that contest for dominant representation of national identity. Similarly, the pluralistic approach to nationalism opens the discussion to encompass various strands of national discourses that either compete with or consolidate other forms of nationalism as the nation imagines and reimagines itself. With regards to the state, it is historically important to Japan's style of national imagination and will continue to be. Thus, this study will treat the state as a highly influential force, which brings about various national discourses with the purpose of achieving dominant representation of national identity.

In terms of explaining the history and processes of imagining, three concepts are useful for this study: recurrent renovationist nationalism, relationalism and norm constructivism. Recurrent renovationist nationalism is a

prominent theme throughout the history of Japanese nationalism. A large component of renovationist nationalism rests on the nation's tendency to compare itself to other nations (McVeigh, 2004). This predisposition to compare itself to others often triggers a style of imagination that is usually geared towards change or regeneration. Hence, the relational approach also becomes important to understanding the relationship between Japan's encounters with Others and Japan's styles of imagination. As a useful complement, norm constructivism adds to the relational approach by explaining how Japan's encounters with Others are mediated within national borders to generate norms that support certain strands of nationalism. Together, these frameworks are capable of providing robust explanations for Japanese nationalism both past and present.

CHAPTER 3

Origins, Evolutions and Manifestations of Japanese Nationalism

Much of what is written about Japanese nationalism consists mostly of narratives located in the context of militarism and expansionism. Therein lies the source of misconception in which 'nationalism' is circumscribed by and reified through acts of violence in the name of the 'nation' (Doak, 2006). Such one-dimensional understandings have consigned Japanese nationalism to a force that is inherently nefarious, with its resurgence framed in threatening terms. Forays into the past, however, show a different story: Japanese nationalist thought can be seen in all forms of expression, subjected to both internal and external forces – Japanese nationalism is more than just military excess.

Nevertheless, Japan's past will continue to condition its future. A historical account of Japanese nationalism thus becomes relevant. While an emergence of national consciousness and even nationalism was reported to exist during the Tokugawa era (Doak, 2007), most scholars isolate the Meiji period as the start of modern Japanese nationalism (Brown, 1955; McVeigh, 2004; Stronach, 1995). By charting the course of Japanese nationalism since the Meiji era, this chapter aims to unveil driving forces of nationalism, its evolution, manifestations, and salient themes, to explain the current orientation of contemporary Japanese nationalism.

Prewar Nationalism

Nationalism during the Meiji era is highly significant because of the remarkable political and cultural implications it had on Japan's national identity. Forceful encounters with outside Others in the late nineteenth century precipitated Meiji modernisation projects as Japan faced an unprecedented threat to its national sovereignty. From pre-existing cultural materials – shared language, history and a growing sense of what it means to be Japanese – a new national identity was quickly realised leading to a dramatic breakaway from isolationism and the

abolition of feudalism that had characterised the preceding Tokugawa period. The Meiji period can, therefore, be described as the 'radical alteration in direction from the received past, as in the total restructuring of the polity inclusive of economical, educational, and ideological systems to mobilize the populace and acquire wealth, strength and national independence', which led to the nation being 'unmistakably industrial, centralized, egalitarian, constitutional, and expansionist' (Najita, 1985, p. 85, 43-44).

In 1853, the imposition of Commodore Perry's 'black ships' forcefully broke Japan's self-imposed isolation of more than two hundred years, and woke Japan to a world comprised of Western empires (Berger, 1993). It soon became clear that in a Western-dominated world, weak, non-Western states were extremely vulnerable. The West demonstrated their economic and military power around Japanese shores with the threat incomparably greater and more tangible than previous encounters with Europeans in the early seventeenth century. It was at this sobering moment that Japan was forced to agree to unequal treaties imposed by the West. This in turn sharpened Japan's sense of inferiority. It was clear to the Japanese elites that the prevailing ideology of isolationism and feudalism needed to be altered. The elites hence conceived the restoration movement with the purpose of acquiring Western technology and adopting Western modes of societal and political organisation in order to achieve parity with the West (Miller, 2004).

Through these encounters with the West, Japan was obliged to acknowledge its inferiority. In light of the prevailing regional atmosphere, the national discourse became saturated with fears of colonisation and loss of sovereignty. This fear provided the normative foundations for Japan to aspire to power and prestige. Now guided by their new national vision, the Meiji oligarchs skillfully engineered their own brand of nationalism, setting Japan on a course of rapid emulation of European colonial powers whom the Japanese simultaneously admired and despised (McVeigh, 2004; Stronach, 1995; Yoshino, 1992). Thus, nationalism was geared towards convincing the West that Japan was a civilised nation deserving of respect.

Japan became cognizant of the structures that placed Japan painfully near the bottom within a system of nation states. Eager to shed the image of a weak

Asian state, Japan took drastic measures to achieve its modernisation ends and enforced the centralisation of power and the abolition of feudalism. Nationalism was further diffused through national conscription and education. These policies enabled the government to turn peasants into the patriotic citizens needed to mobilise the state's nationalist agenda (Brown, 1955). Moreover, Japanese nation builders were of the view that modernisation was synonymous with expansionism and the possession of colonies connoted great status in a Western-dominated world. Consequently, 'enrich the country, strengthen military' became the slogan that underpinned Japan's nation building program and permeated all facets of society including, law, education and economics (Conroy, 1955; Pyle, 1971).

However, Japan's relentless pursuit of modernisation rendered many Japanese customs and traditions either anachronistic or inferior according to the emerging norms of Westernisation. The Meiji elites thought an immediate detachment of all things 'traditional' or 'Asian' was an appropriate remedy. In more strategic terms, certain influential members even advocated for the realignment of Japan with the West and recommended an urgent dissociation from Asia. One of these individuals was the renowned intellect and Meiji educator, Yukichi Fukuzawa (Miller, 2004):

> Once the wind of Western civilization blows to the East, every blade of grass and every tree in the East follow what the Western wind brings…We do not have time to wait for the enlightenment of our neighbours so that we can work together toward the development of Asia. It is better for us to leave the ranks of Asian nations and cast our lot with civilized nations of the West…We should deal with them exactly as Westerners do (Fukuzawa, cited in Lu, 1997, p. 351-353)

Nonetheless, the sweeping tide of Westernisation incited a 'nativist' revival: the sudden assault of Western ideologies and its concomitant attempt to eradicate all things culturally sacrosanct provoked another set of fears related to cultural erosion and therefore 'national identity' (Stronach, 1995; Conroy, 1955; Pyle,

1971). To appease the groups that espoused a more culturally moderate line of modernisation, the Meiji elites welded a cultural component to their nationalist agenda; selected traditions, symbols and myths, namely Shintoism and great emphasis on the Emperor system, were incorporated into the modernisation program (Oguma, 2000). In other words, a cultural component comprising of traditions and 'Japanese values' was deliberately infused into this brand of nationalism in an effort to safeguard against the destabilising effects of modernisation (McVeigh, 2004; Tamamoto, 2001).

While the start of the Meiji Restoration is predicated on the perception of inferiority and insecurity, successful overseas military campaigns just decades after the start of the Meiji movement gave credence to the officially sanctioned nation-building programs. These successes translated into an increased sense of confidence (Pyle, 1971; Nish, 2000). Of note, the victory over China (1895) and Russia (1905) had great significance: both proved Japan had acquired military strength. The success of the first Sino-Japanese War meant that Meiji leaders were able to impose peace treaties, similar to those forced on them by the West, onto other non-Western states. The Shimonoseki Treaty, concluded at the end of the Sino-Japanese War, demanded that China withdraw from Korea, pay indemnity charges, and cede Taiwan to Japan on top of non-reciprocal trade agreements (Miller, 2004). The victory over Russia, in particular, boosted Japan's confidence and signified the possibility of an overturn in Western domination. The outcome of the Russo-Japanese War alerted the West of Japan's growing power, but Japan still did not receive the recognition it had hoped for. The 1908 Gentleman's agreement by the US, for example, prohibited Japanese immigration. By 1924, discrimination from the US became explicit when the Asian Exclusion Act was implemented, which drastically lowered the number of immigrants from Asia, especially China and Japan (Leitch et al., 1995).

These exclusionist policies convinced Japanese rulers that the unfair treatment boiled down to race; the West could never accept a non-white nation coming into ascendance, especially under the very imperialist rules in which Western powers themselves came into prominence. As a response to impenetrable white supremacy, Matsutaro Sawayanagi, a prominent Meiji educator, noted that 'the Japanese have earnestly studied and assimilated foreign

civilization. They have learned to appreciate all that is good and helpful in western lands, consequently they respect western people much more than western people respect them.' (Sawayanagi, 1927, p. 15-17). However, a more proactive stance to furthering national interests through means of expansion has already been promoted before the Meiji Restoration and thus became influential to the ideals and ethos of the Meiji Restoration. Yoshida Shoin, for example, considered expansion necessary to achieve parity with Western powers. In this notion, he declared:

> The nation is destined to decline unless it advances and flourishes. Therefore, those who know how to look after the welfare of their country should not be satisfied with maintaining and protecting that which their country already has, but at the same time should aim to reform and improve upon that which their country already possesses. They should also strive to gain and add that which their country has not, thereby extending the power and glory of the nation beyond its borders. (cited in Brown, 1955, p. 121)

Therefore, 'from the Japanese perspective, the war years were an attempt to throw off the status quo – to transcend the global depression and to catch up with the more advanced industrial economies of the West. People's lives were transformed dramatically after 1931, as the country mobilized for "total war," and the wartime goals of "construction" were explicitly renovationist' (Dower, cited in McVeigh, p. 47). As mentioned in Chapter 2, the theme of renovation or regeneration is a salient feature of Japanese nationalism. Renovationism carries with it an intention to change the status quo in order to achieve a better outcome for the nation. However, when efforts from the Meiji elites did not translate into recognition (a better outcome), Japanese national discourse turned into the most explicit rejection of the West and further justified Japan's mission to liberate Asia from Western imperialism (Miller, 2004).

Aggressive revolt against the West soon became the dominant theme in Japanese nationalist discourse in the 1930s. As with every other period, Japanese

nationalism is the negotiation of different and even competing forms of nationalist discourse. Alternative voices to the dominant discourse have always existed, along with different visions for Japan's future. The 1930s, however, were the period in which militarism dominated Japan's nationalist discourse. Certain converging factors made it conducive for militarism to take over Japanese nationalism. First, as a nation that yearned desperately for recognition from powerful Others, respect soon turned into derisive resentment as repeated rebuffs turned a congenial competitor into a rogue adversary. Unfair treaties imposed since the 1850s, the triple intervention in 1895 and disarmament treaties in the 1920s and 30s, despite victory over Russia, were evidence of the West's inability to accept Japan as a fellow colonial power (Pyle, 1971). This ignited a national discourse that tilted towards anti-Western and even anti-government sentiments. Frustrated by the double standards of Western powers and their bullying tactics, the elites felt they were being discriminated against. As a result of this perceived discrimination, Japanese nationalism then quickly devolved into fundamentalist extremes known as ultranationalism (Stronach, 1995; Matsumoto, 1971; Berger, 1993).

Second, popular dissatisfaction related to a downturn in socio-economic developments made militarism seem more appealing (Stronach, 1995). The dissatisfaction emanating from the bureaucratic elites renewed desires for another revolution, one with even more xenophobic underscores and intense nativist attitudes, which sought to purge Japan of Western ideology including the abolition of democracy and reinstatement of the Emperor as supreme (McVeigh, 2004). To that end, the military was elevated to a high status and became the core component of Japan's revised nationalism. Subsequently, Japan's domestic and foreign policies were hijacked by intense militarism with renovation priorities geared towards an all-out expansion. Denying Japan equal parity with the West revved nationalism into the full force.

Consequently, as a way to organise and increase the national solidarity needed for a new ultranationalist discourse to take off, the government used national education, as well as various other public channels, as a vessel in which the basic doctrines of ultranationalism were disseminated. To achieve this, an order from the Minster of Education to all school officials were sent out in 1938:

> Now is a time when we must bear clearly in mind the true significance of the present situation…and endeavour to establish a new order of peace on earth. With a glorious national structure to begin with, the people should work all the harder toward promoting the spirit of loyalty to the Emperor and service to the country. The whole nation must unite and go forward to master the situation. (cited in Brown, 1955, p. 211)

While national solidarity was consolidating under the new ultranationalist ethos, aspirations for closer state-society relationships developed. Internally, the 'New Order Movement' was underway in the 1940, which in addition to increasing national solidarity, was also a way for the state to encourage support for official economic and military objectives. Internationally, the 'East Asia New Order', announced in 1938, aimed to convince China to form a pan-Asia movement against Western imperialism. Unable to convince China of the East Asia New Order, the concept of the 'Greater East Co-Prosperity' was created and promulgated within the Japanese Empire in 1940. This clarified Japan's intentions to become the head of the new Asian order; the foreign policy presented Japan as representative of the victims of Asia and justified its invasion under terms of liberation and anti-colonialism (Oguma, 2000; McVeigh, 2004). It was made clear later that Japanese elites considered their Asian neighbours as merely passive instruments of their crusade against the West (Miller, 2004). 'The Greater East Co-Prosperity' proved to be a guise for the Japanese government to extract valuable resources to sustain its modernisation. However, while the initiative to establish closer state-society relationships was somewhat successful at increasing solidarity within the Japanese populace and their support for military intervention, Japanese conquests in Manchuria, China and Southeast Asia only provoked serious condemnation from Western powers. Disapproval from the West only consolidated anti-Western sentiment and pushed Japan further towards a 'siege mentality' (Stronach, 1995, p. 44; McVeigh, 2004). It was only Japan's catastrophic defeat in World War II that brought an end to

ultranationalism and destroyed all faith in prewar nationalist discourse (Brown, 1955).

Postwar Nationalism

The traumatic experiences of WWII drastically altered Japanese nationalism and national identity. In times of acute identity crisis, militarism was discarded, and popular repudiation of prewar statism led Japan to find national salvation in pacifism; thus, Japan's 'peace identity' was born (Miyashita, 2007). Article 9 of the postwar constitution, in which Japan gives up its sovereign right to wage wars and the use of force against other nations (Prime Minster of Japan and His Cabinet, 2001), became a central component to Japan's postwar identity. As a result, a total denunciation of prewar institutions, traditional ideals, and above all, militarism followed. Democracy, disarmament and economic development became the focus of Japan's postwar national doctrine. (Matsumoto, 1971; Miller, 2004). However, nationalism did not disappear; the need for national regeneration has always been a recurring feature of Japanese nationalism, and so a new strand of nationalism emerged as the dominant national narrative. Japan's national imagination had evolved to suit its new pacifist approach, and once norms of pacifism became central to Japan's postwar identity, opportunities for constitutional revision in particular of Article 9 and bilateral security agreements were politically out of the question during the immediate postwar era (Arase, 2007; Katzenstein, 1996a).

Since Japan's commitment to peace, the Japanese struggled to deal with 'nationalism' in a straightforward manner and would only accept nationalism in distorted forms such as cultural, economic and peace nationalism (Sasaki, 2001; McVeigh 2001; Rose 2000). Thus, the postwar domestic landscape created greater conditions for contestation of multiple forms of nationalism, including peace nationalism itself (McVeigh, 2004). Even remnants of ultranationalism survived and were active, albeit being far less influential than in prewar times; radical right-wing groups were pushed to the periphery and had limited power and mass support (McVeigh, 2001).

Despite the pacifist orthodoxy, postwar nationalism can be delineated into three distinct periods: (1) the early Cold War decades; (2) the decades of economic brilliance from the 1960s-1980s; (3) the post-bubble 'lost decades' from the 1990s (Sasaki, 2001). These periods coincide with significant structural developments in the international sphere, especially in terms of regional relations. This suggests an intimate relationship between external developments and Japan's expressions of nationalism. The early Cold War decades can be further divided into two movements. The first movement was the promotion of pacifism, disarmament, and neutrality in security relations that was predominantly propagated by leftists and centrists (Gao, 1997). The other came from right-wing groups that represented a new strand of conservative nationalism, which pushed for diplomatic autonomy, defence capabilities and ardently supported the US-Japan security alliance (Sasaki, 2001). Therefore, two divergent expressions of nationalism emerged and began to fight for dominance in Japan's national discourse and how the nation imagined itself. The Cold War created an arena for different images of the nation to contest and negotiate with each other.

Even though pacifism became the framework for postwar nationalism, conservative politics still governed the political realm. When the new security structure, which had emerged during the early decades of the Cold War, shifted focus away from Japan to the Soviet Union, Washington ended its occupation and encouraged the reinstallation of a conservative government as a bulwark against communism (Dower, 1996). This is the first instance in which conservative nationalism was able to soften restrictive readings of Article 9 with selected remnants from Japan's prewar nationalist past that could safely work with the emerging norms of pacifism. This saw the restoration of the parliamentary monarchy system, the eventual establishment of the SDF, Japan's entry into the US-Japan alliance and the eventual long-term entrenchment of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in domestic politics (Dower, 1999). Even convicted war criminals and other wartime figures were restored into Japanese politics, albeit while being severely restricted by the pacifist framework (McCormack, 2000; Berger, 2007). Therefore, the conservative equation, even with its many permutations, often came in direct contention with postwar peace

nationalism. This 'push and pull' effect between the two strands of nationalism has come to characterise Japan's postwar nationalism (Soeya, 2005).

Even though conservative parties such as the LDP have made political concessions based on the peace constitution, oppositional forces still lobbied for peace nationalism. Both the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) and the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) were dedicated to enforcing pacifist norms by encouraging armed neutrality, committing to democracy and categorically opposing 'nationalism'. Peace nationalism is usually referred to as a popular movement (McVeigh, 2004); however, official and popular nationalism are reconcilable: every strand of nationalism permeates into both official and nonofficial realms and with support for and protest against every strand of nationalism alive in both levels.

The cooling down of Cold War tensions further altered the new conservative nationalism in this second phase. Instead of concentrating on security issues and foreign policy, attention was diverted to economic pursuits and cultural patriotism (McVeigh, 2004). However, as pacifism, not conservative nationalism, was believed to have led the nation towards economic success, the legitimacy of peace nationalism grew (Miller, 2004). Miyashita (2007) credits the US-Japan alliance, as the reason Japan's economy was able to flourish. The alliance, which was at odds with Japan's newly acquired pacifism, unburdened Japan with military costs and allowed Japan to concentrate on economic recovery without worrying about security matters. People who supported the alliance and advocated for its existence were part of the conservative nationalist movement (Miyashita, 2007; Oros, 2008). Through this logic, it was a few ideals of prewar nationalism that guided postwar economic nationalism. Prewar national doctrines that included the desire to build a strong Japanese nation through labour mobilisation, state-guided economic policies and developmental projects were injected into the desired postwar national imagination and defined conservative economic nationalism.

In addition, Economic nationalism revitalised and reinforced ethnocultural national discourse. Japan rapidly transformed into an economic powerhouse; its admission into the G-7 conferred onto Japan its long yearned for superpower status. Its economic success revived a sense of national pride and

even national identity based on economics and peace. This renewed sense of confidence reinvigorated an awareness of cultural uniqueness and paved the path towards unprecedented international activism (Yoshino, 1992).

The rediscovery of Japan's national pride resulted in the rebirth of Nihonjinron (theories of Japanese), which saturated the Japanese nationalist discourse of the 1970s and 1980s. Nihonjinron was conceived through notions of cultural exceptionalism founded on perceived ethnic homogeneity. Although its postwar revival was an expression of Japan's economic confidence, prewar Nihonjinron was an officially sanctioned ideology designed to mould a certain national identity when tradition and 'Japaneseness' were observed to be eroding during Japan's Westernisation processes (Yoshino, 1992; McVeigh, 2004; Befu, 1992).

The ideological crux of postwar cultural nationalism was that of supremacy. Japan's economic redemption created a view within the reinvigorated Japanese a myopic brand of national pride that once again sought to challenge the Western/American hegemony, and saw to Japan realigning itself with Asia once again. In cultural terms, this brand of confident nationalism wanted to challenge Western culture and lifestyle based on individuality and the relentless pursuit of self-interests with its society-based national character (Yoshino, 1992). In political terms, traditional right-wing policies were given a second chance which saw Prime Minister Nakasone advocating a stronger political and military posture to reflect Japan's economic status, including the deepening of the US-Japan alliance or even the total abandonment of the alliance in pursuit of 'normalisation' (Pyle, 1996; Oros, 2008). This also coincided with a view of Japan as the economic leader of Asia, and even a challenger of American hegemony (Hirata, 2008; Miller, 2004). Shintaro Ishihara's book, *The Japan that Can Say No* was a tribute to Japan's national pride extolling Japanese superiority, while at the same time asserting strong anti-American sentiment grounded on white exceptionalism. However, these efforts to shift Japan towards the right were severely restricted by the pacifist framework and criticisms from Japan's neighbours.

Pacifism was no longer about choosing a course diametrically different from its disastrous prewar nationalism; it was about the belief that their pacifist

ways have truly led the Japanese nation to prosperity. The belief in the pacifist framework was solidified when pacifism also coincided with an astonishing increase in material wealth. This made it difficult for conservative politicians to openly initiate policies, especially those that concerned security matters, due to Japan's faith in pacifism as an effective ideology to national security and prosperity (Miyashita, 2007; Berger, 1993).

Only when Japan experienced protracted economic stagnation did Japan start to question the pacifist orthodoxy and attitudes towards conservative nationalism. The changing structural shifts in the international sphere, especially with regards to China, North Korea and the US, added to Japan's growing insecurities. Soon confident nationalism that thrived on economic vitality started to wane, which required both the masses and the government to question the status quo, namely its blind adherence to pacifism as the viable national ideology (Matthews, 2003).

The economic malaise provided an opening for conservative, anti-pacifist nationalism to gain a foothold in Japan's contemporary national vision. The Japanese public was willing to accept certain changes to the status quo given the prevailing domestic and international atmosphere. While still reluctant to fully break away from Japan's main tenets of postwar peace nationalism, the 1990s was when pacifism began to be significantly and openly challenged for the first time since its establishment. However, conservative nationalists were very aware of the public's aversion to prewar nationalism and therefore, conservative politicians and intellectuals went to great pains to package their policies so that they were still, in some measure, compatible with the main tenets of peace nationalism (Oros, 2008). Again, Japan perceived its present situation to be unsatisfactory in relation to its economic achievement, which had preceded the downturn. Attempts to resuscitate ideas of security augmentation and active diplomacy were responses to such changes and tilted Japan back towards the US. Furthermore, the contestation between the old prevailing peace ideology and the visible conservative, anti-pacifist nationalism is now becoming more articulated. However, short of a national crisis to discredit peace nationalism, similar to the crisis that precipitated the Meiji Restoration or the crisis that followed Japan's

World War II defeat, a set of radically different national principles to replace the now existing pacifist orthodoxy is unlikely to emerge.

Conclusion: Salient Themes

From the above, the following three themes are salient: vacillation, nationalism as a reaction to threats, and national regeneration. First, Japanese nationalist discourse has a tendency to vacillate, at times violently, between inferiority and superiority; traditionalism and modernism; and between East and West (Miller, 2004; McVeigh, 2004; Reischauer, 1987). Japan's identity and concomitant expressions of nationalisms changed depending on whether it perceived itself to be either inferior or superior *vis-à-vis* a significant Other. The moment when Japan started this trend of vacillating between superiority and inferiority was after Japan's self-imposed isolation ended; Japan realised that the world had been organised through a system of competitive Western empires, which rendered non-Western states vulnerable to Western colonisation (Berger, 1993). The next vacillation occurred when Japan's pursuit of Western recognition was unsuccessful; Japanese nationalism turned into ultranationalism as a response (Stronach, 1995; Matsumoto, 1971; Berger, 1993). In the postwar era, as Japan's commitment to peace translated into great material wealth, cultural nationalism emerged (Berger, 1993). Pacifism became so pervasive to the extent that it became a dogma that rehabilitated Japan's innate sense of exceptionalism because, for the Japanese, the construction of the 'peace identity' was how Japan justified its uniqueness that set it apart from other nations (Hagström, 2015). However, pacifism was called into question when Japan's economic boom ended.

A downturn in economic performance has negatively affected Japan's confidence and weakened Japan's credibility to project itself as Asia's economic leader. Japan's confidence has diminished further as China enjoys remarkable economic success and as regional developments are becoming more volatile and even threatening to a militarily powerless Japan. The culmination of these events has created a desire for actions that would safeguard Japan from regional threats as well as restore the economy to its previous level of success (Matthews, 2003).

This has provided an opportunity for the conservative discourse to take root as a legitimate approach to restoring Japan's confidence and superiority. Ostensibly, when Japan perceives itself to be inferior, insecure or lacking in confidence, reactionary nationalism arises, on the other hand, when Japan perceives itself to be superior and confident, assertive nationalism often transpires.

Another struggle is between modernisation and traditionalism. McVeigh (2004) observes an inverse relationship between traditionalism and modernisation: traditionalism is seen as an impediment to modernisation while modernisation implicates tradition. For the Meiji elites, traditionalism was a setback to modernisation goals, while for the nativists, preserving 'Japanese' identity and authenticity were paramount. It was this sensitivity to cultural erosion as a result of Japan's uncritical application of Western ideologies that agitated nativist movements to orient the nation back to acceptable cultural moorings. Thus, the nativist movement was born. The terms of traditionalism and modernism in the postwar era, however, has evolved to reflect the changing domestic and international political milieu: instead of traditionalism grounded on cultural authenticity, it is now grounded on the sanctity of pacifism which advocates for unarmed neutrality and commitment to democracy. Modernism, on the other hand, can be seen in the postwar era as now grounded on the conservative agenda, which creates its sense of superiority through national pride, sovereignty, and respect from the international community. The more that the conservative discourse is given salience, the more that pacifism is perceived to be eroded. When the pacifist discourse is threatened, much like when Japan's cultural authenticity is threatened, actions to pull the nation back to pacifism are voiced or taken.

The decision to either align with the West or the East suggests a close link with the style of national imagination. In the late nineteenth century, Japan began to invent a national narrative centred on the politically contrived criteria of emulating the West, because Japan desired the same status, power and prestige. Despite Japan's successful adoption of Western ideologies, which culminated in the acquisition of colonies and even victory over a European nation, Japan's efforts were met with consistent rebuffs from the West. This failure to gain recognition from the nations they admired changed how the

Japanese imagined themselves: Japan then rejected the West and sided with Asia by committing to an ill-conceived crusade to liberate Asia from Western colonisation (Brown, 1955; Miller, 2004). The revolt against the West, thus, became the dominant national discourse of the 1930s, and Japanese nationalism assumed a heavy militarist tone to carry out this vision. Japan then realigned with the West after its catastrophic defeat in World War II as it reimagined itself as a peaceful, democratic state with pacifism as the central component of Japan's postwar identity. Protected by the US-Japan alliance, Japan successfully rebuilt its economy and became an economic powerhouse. Peace nationalism had proven to be a successful ideology and helped Japan regain confidence and its sense of cultural superiority (Yoshino, 1992; Berger, 1993). Therefore, the period between the 1970s and 1980s seemed to constitute a different stage in the development of Japanese nationalism, yet had similarities with the ultranationalist manifestations of the period between 1919 and 1936.

Feelings of national confidence soon translated into a tilt back towards Asia, but this time, as Asia's economic leader. Retaliation in the form of anti-American sentiment was also evident when recognition for Japan's economic success was marred by accusations of 'free-riding' within the US-Japan alliance, with the US slandering Japan's national ideology as one of selfish pacifism (Hirata, 2008). From these encounters, Japan began to construct the US as an arrogant hegemon that kept Japan from realising its full autonomy and fulfilling its true national identity (Suzuki, 2015). In the post-Cold-War era, however, Japan realigned with the West and began to withdraw ideologically from Asia when Japan's economic bubble burst and shifts in the regional atmosphere became unfavourable for Japan (Miller, 2004). The way in which Japan imagines itself is connected to how it perceives itself; whether that would be inferior or superior, a modern or a traditional nation or a Western or an Asian nation. As a result of changing imaginations, an array of national discourses emerges and vies for dominance.

Second, another prominent theme that affects Japanese nationalism is Japan's perceptions and reactions to threats. The imposition of the West in the nineteenth century brought with it a tangible threat of invasion due to Japan's perception of material inferiority *vis-à-vis* the West. These coercive encounters

constructed an inferior identity reinforced by the fear of invasion. Japan believed the solution was to become a great power as well. Thus, this ignited a desire for greater status and parity with these Western powers (Brown, 1955). This subscribes to principles of realism with fear regarded as a legitimate reaction to threat, which may initiate actions to remove or minimise the threat (Crawford, 2000; Hall, 2006; Weber, 2010; Saurette, 2006). Japan's encounters with the West in the nineteenth century drove Japan to end its isolation and embrace Western processes of modernisation in 1868.

When it became clear that white exceptionalism precluded Japan from gaining parity with the West and the threat of colonisation solidified, Japanese nationalism grew to dangerous and unmanageable proportions. (Stronach, 1995; Matsumoto, 1971; Berger, 1993). On the other hand, Japan's reactions to threat in the immediate postwar era were different and more nuanced: the US-Japan alliance meant that Japan was exempted from considerations of security matters and was free to focus on economics. When Japan's economic performance earned Japan unprecedented material wealth, a healthy economy became the new referent for securitisation. Threats to its economy or the standard of living the Japanese have become accustomed to tend to activate a variety of reactions that change the dominant national discourse. A reaction gaining attention is the conservative response. Unfavourable shifts in Japan's domestic and international landscape from the 1990s have set the trend for a gradualist revival of conservative, anti-pacifist nationalism. Therefore, a 'tug-of-war' between peace and conservative nationalism became more visible according to the strategic changes within the international and domestic realm (Hagström, 2015).

Last, the relentless need for national regeneration and restoration situates recurrent rennovationist nationalism as the dominant leitmotif in Japanese nationalism. The Meiji Restoration can be regarded as Japan's template for national regeneration:

> It is a vision still likely to appeal to thoughtful Japanese today after several wars won and lost and the passage of five generations since 1868. Not merely as a symbol of empire, but also a beacon of faith for all Japanese about the viability of

> their world, the Meiji Restoration lives on as a model event in Japanese history. (Wilson, 2001)

In the same vein, peace nationalism can be considered as a type of renovationist nationalism capable of offering a recently defeated nation a new sense of purpose (McVeigh, 2004). Economic nationalism – a quest for self-sufficiency through economic efforts with official economic policies coterminous with the masses – is another example of renovationist nationalism (Mayall, 1990).

Japanese nationalist discourse has a tendency to react to both internal and external instabilities by attempting to change the status quo. Indeed, '"change" in a word, was itself a continuity. Although certain cycles of renovationism were more overtly expressed than others in the past, recurrent renovationism remains active in Japan's national imagination; a change to national identity often dictates a new round of renovationism, in order to achieve security, success or status within the prevailing internal and external atmosphere. The question then becomes which form of nationalism will come to regenerate the nation in current times of uncertainty? It is in this context that contemporary Japanese nationalism should be understood.

CHAPTER 4

Japanese Nationalism in the Twenty-first Century

The turn of the century marks the site in which contestation between peace nationalism and conservative nationalism characterises Japan's contemporary national discourse. The critical conditions both in Japan's internal and external affairs in the immediate postwar era created a popular mood most conducive to radical changes to national identity – one that was grounded in peace and pacifism. Since the imposition of Article 9 of the Constitution, Japan has not drastically strayed from the pacifist path until recently (Oros, 2008).

A *new* brand of conservative nationalism, which inspires Japan to embrace national pride, and play a larger role in international affairs with security matters at the top of its nationalist agenda, is at odds with peace nationalism, which derives national pride through its strict adherence to Article 9 of the Constitution, unarmed neutrality and democracy. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi ushered in a wave of new conservative nationalist sentiment that flourished into the opening decades of the twenty-first century. His right-wing policies directly challenged pacifist norms and Japan's denunciation of 'nationalism' with his controversial visits to Yasukuni Shrine, the spiritual home of Class A war criminals from World War II (Ryu, 2007); push for revisions of the peace constitution; and other revisionist efforts through education reforms (Horiuchi, 2014). His successor, Shinzo Abe, has carried on Koizumi's work by stretching the limits of the Constitution even further, increasing capacity of the SDF and promoting 'healthy patriotism' (Berger, 2014).

As mentioned throughout the preceding chapters, Japanese nationalism cannot be understood on its own terms; both external and internal factors are inextricability linked and must be examined. The relationship between internal and external factors is mutually constitutive: encounters with outside Others sparks nationalist stirrings within Japan, while domestic politics is the vessel in which various forms of nationalisms are propagated and sustained. In turn, effects of nationalism emanating from Japan go on to shape relations with other

countries. By adhering to the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2, this chapter will discuss key external and internal forces, as well as nationalism's impact across national borders to explain the current contestation between these two strands.

External Factors: Encounters with Others

The question of China is undoubtedly an issue of salience for Japan. China's astonishing economic performance has provoked a variety of reactions, with realist assumptions initiating some of the most dynamic responses, and counter-responses, within International Relations (Ikenberry, 2008; Mearsheimer, 2006; Turner, 2013; Beeson, 2009). Already, China is putting its extraordinary economic power and active diplomacy to use, seeing to a structural transformation in East Asia. The growth of China's power and influence is predicted to continue well into future decades. Although Japan enjoys great relations with China in terms of trade, political relations are usually characterised as fragile and full of mutual distrust (Atanassova-Cornelis, 2011). As China's growing power and actions have a bearing on Japanese interests, both economically and diplomatically, China has become Japan's significant Other, as Japan is continually defining and redefining its nationalist discourse through interactions with China (Suzuki, 2015).

One source of distrust comes from China's rapid military modernisation. Adhering to realist assumptions, China is trying to build a military commensurate with its economic status (Mearsheimer, 2006; Shambaugh, 2003; Wan, 2013). Since 1990 the military budget for China has increased almost tenfold from 20 billion USD to 190 billion USD in 2014[2]; while military spending has remained relatively constant in Japan, rarely exceeding 60 billion USD or one per cent of the GDP (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2014). Furthermore, China has a history of military intimidation such as its nuclear test explosion of 1992 and subsequent firing of missiles towards Taiwan in 1995 and 1996. China's military build-up has forced Japan to question its pacifist stance

[2] Due to transparency issues, China's military spending is notoriously difficult to determine. This thesis acknowledges that figures will differ depending on the source.

and has reinvigorated discussions concerning military normalisation in Japan. For instance, Machida (2014) notices popular support for militarisation tends to grow in accordance with the perception of military threat from China. Even discussions of Japanese nuclear armament is not out of the question within this context (Machida, 2014).

The right for any nation to establish an army capable of defending itself from an existential threat is customary in accordance with international law (Armstrong et al., 2012). Stemming from this sentiment, the current Abe government has made bids to re-evaluate Article 9 of the Constitution, in order to finally enjoy, to the fullest extent, a right that is already conferred to members of the international community (Piotrowski, 2005). Conservative nationalism is justification for this kind of response. The threat of China, in this way, can be seen as a trigger for conservative nationalism that seeks to protect a community's vision of autonomy and with it, the right to self-determine and realise this vision to the fullest extent of international law. A fully capable military is one aspect of this vision (Berger, 1993).

Japan's new conservative nationalism, in light of the China question, aims to give an alternative response to peace nationalism. The following are aspects of Japan's new conservative nationalism: (1) National pride is fundamental. It is from national pride that conservative nationalists are motivated to realise a national image of a nation that is proud of its past accomplishments, confident about its future and thrives vibrantly in all areas of social and civic life. In this sense, conservative nationalists view pacifism as an inhibitor of national pride for three reasons: first, pacifism based on Article 9 of the Constitution is a colonial legacy and is symbolic of the shame and guilt that Japan was made to feel for its past atrocities. Second, peace nationalism began to portray 'Japan as victim' (Orrs, 2001), which moves past the atrocities Imperial Japan has caused to instead focus on the atrocities that had befallen on Japan. As the only nation that has experienced atomic bombs, Japan soon latched onto peace nationalism 'to loudly accuse others and quietly exonerate themselves' (Fic cited in McVeigh, 2004, p. 207). Third, pacifism is sometimes condemned as hypocritical because Japan may proclaim to be a peace loving country while it benefited from the US-Japan alliance (Miyashita, 2007; Stronach, 1995). Therefore conservative

nationalists do not derive national pride from pacifism, but through national accomplishments in both the past and future. (2) A proactive role in international affairs is another basic tenet of twenty-first-century conservative nationalism. Conservative nationalists no longer want their nation's foreign policy to be labelled as 'passive', 'subservient' or 'weak-kneed' which is said to be a corollary of the pacifist stance (Suzuki, 2015; Hughes & Krauss, 2007). Conservative nationalists also believe that 'check-book' diplomacy (Piotrowski, 2005) does not accurately reflect the kind of international contribution Japan should be known for. Instead, they believe they can actively contribute to international peace and security through proactive steps and assertive diplomacy, even if they are in contention with Japanese pacifism. It is in the realm of security matters that conservative nationalism attracts the most controversy, because it presents a response that contravenes with the conventional wisdom of peace nationalism.

The reason behind the resiliency of peace nationalism and the 'peace identity' comes from their ability to derive much of their legitimacy from Article 9 of the Constitution. However, the purpose of conservative nationalism is not to explicitly replace peace nationalism; rather, it is a strategy in which conservative nationalists strive for the best course of action within the limits of international law to protect Japan's sovereignty, engender national pride and productively contribute to the international community. However, by doing so certain principles of Japanese pacifism may be contravened. Nevertheless, contention between the two does exist and has brought about polemic responses from within and outside the nation.

In light of this view, the conservative discourse may be seen as an alternative response to dealing with changes in the international landscape. China's military build-up and display of military power over the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu Islands in China) have stoked territorial disputes with Japan. During this time, China was often depicted as a bullying state, which frequently beats Japan into making diplomatic concessions (Suzuki, 2015). Parties from both sides of the political spectrum have placed China as a focal point for their respective nationalist agenda with politicians from the LDP asserting a hardened stance by choosing to deal with China in a 'resolute manner' (*kizen to shita taido*), while the

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has chosen a view China as a victim of Japan's past aggressions and needs to be treated accordingly (Suzuki, 2015). This is uncharacteristic of Japan's past diplomatic strategies, which are usually perceived as either 'subservient' or 'week-kneed' (Suzuki, 2015).

For instance, in 2010, a Chinese fishing trawler collided with the Japanese Coast Guard, leading to the arrest of the captain and crewmembers. This sparked a major diplomatic dispute between the two nations, with China calling for an immediate release of their nationals (Ito, 2010). A spate of anti-Japanese protests fired up in several cities throughout China leaving the Japanese embassy in Beijing trashed and vandalised (Wang & Okano-Heijmans, 2011). Japan tried to hold its ground by refusing to release the captives. However, China fired back with an onslaught of trade embargoes, including shipments of highly valuable rare-earth minerals (Choong, 2014). The Prime Minister at the time, Naoto Kan, conceded and eventually released the captives back to China. This was at a great political cost for Kan as he was chastised for his 'diplomatic defeat' (Horiuchi, 2014). While this kind of response might have been acceptable or expected under the principles of pacifism, the public's dissatisfaction with Kan's handling of this case showed the electorate wanted the government to act differently from its usual pacifist ways; they wanted the government to stand its ground and take an assertive approach to diplomacy (Horiuchi, 2014). Therefore, the Senkaku Islands disputes are one of the political sites in which peace and conservative nationalism contest each other.

Succumbing to China's high-handed tactics presented Japan as 'weak' and 'subservient'. In ideological terms, the humiliation runs deep when a communist country that is regarded as morally inferior is discovering great economic success while Japan, a nation that is deeply committed to pacifism, adheres to democracy and swears by liberal capitalism, is wallowing in economic stagnation. Combined with China's high-handed tactics, out of principle, the Japanese government is pushed into considering a more independent security policy to overcome this 'emasculated identity' (Suzuki, 2015).

In contrast, during a 2012 electoral campaign, Abe made it clear that he would pursue a proactive security posture in regards to the disputes over the Senkaku islands: 'What is important, first and foremost, is to make [China]

realize that they would not be able to change the rules or take away somebody's territorial water or territory by coercion or intimidation. Accordingly, for the first time in 11 years, I have increased our defense budget, as well as the budget for the Japan coast guard' (The Washington Post, 2013, para, 38). Conservative nationalism will continue to increase so long as China continues to expand its military and becomes less hesitant in using high-handed tactics when it comes to foreign policy (Machida, 2014). When Japan is perceived to be insecure, inferior and weak, reactionary nationalism tends to develop in response (Chapter 3). In this case, conservative nationalism is incited and presents itself as a possible alternative to the existing orthodoxy. This may be one explanation for the rise of conservative nationalism.

The ostensibly aggressive actions of North Korea are also a strong external factor, pushing the Japanese nation towards stronger defence policies and uncovering new permutations of conservative nationalism. In 1993, North Korea launched a missile, the Rodong, into the Sea of Japan as part of North Korea's ballistic missiles development. In 1998, another missile was launched, the Taepodong, which flew over Japan and into the Pacific Ocean. With its increased capability to cause major destruction to Japan's soil, the possibility of being attacked felt real (Matthews, 2003). Further missile tests were launched in the Sea of Japan in 2006: the Taepodong-2 was believed to have long-range capabilities reaching as far as the US (Arase, 2007). Moreover, North Korea clarified its nuclear ambitions as it withdrew from the Nonproliferation Treaty in 1993 and consistently refused inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (International Atomic Energy Agency, 2015).

In addition to the missile threat, another threat has been identified. North Korean kidnapping of Japanese nationals also aggravated tensions between the two nations. The Japanese government believes North Korea is responsible for 17 abductions of Japanese citizens between the 1970s and 1980s (Hagström, 2015). To bring back the abductees, Japan has repeatedly demanded their return and imposed harsh sanctions including freezing flows of remittances from North Korean residents in Japan (Hughes & Krauss, 2007). Koizumi's 2002 visit to Pyongyang culminated in an agreement with North Korean leader, Kim Jong-Il to send five victims back to Japan. His successor, Abe, took this matter to heart and

decided to make the abductions issue a priority as Prime Minster. Responses from Abe and his government indicate a preference for an assertive and proactive approach – the embodiment of conservative nationalism – rather than adhering to the pacifist orthodoxy: 'We can never compromise on the abduction issue. I swear that my administration will tackle this as its top priority' (DiFilippo, 2013, p. 78). Moreover, the issue of nuclear armament has compounded the perception of threat, triggering more nationalist sentiment from Abe: 'North Korea's nuclear development is something Japan cannot possibly tolerate…unless the abduction issue is resolved, there can be no normalization of relations between Japan and North Korea' (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2007b, para 51). Even before Abe was Prime Minster and served as the Chief Cabinet Secretary, he encouraged discussions for a legal framework allowing pre-emptive attack: 'If we accept that there is no other option to prevent an attack, there is the view that attacking the launch base of the guided missiles is within the constitutional right to self-defense' (FoxNews, 2006, para 19).

Threats emitting from China and North Korea caused conservative nationalists to construct China and North Korea as hostile Others, which threaten Japan's national pride and sovereignty. This presents pacifism as an ideology that fails to adapt to the current geostrategic circumstances and creates demands for a new set of ideas capable of generating an appropriate response. In essence, the perceived hostility and intimidation from China and North Korea creates a view that pacifism does not address or remedy these issues. Conservative nationalism is an attempt to do so.

In a policy speech, Abe highlighted conservatism as the best way forward: 'Now the time has come to boldly review these post-war regimes all the way back to their origins, and set sail on a new course. In order to realize "a beautiful country, Japan," my mission is none other than to draw a new vision of a nation which can withstand the raging waves for the next 50 to 100 years to come' (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2007b, para 4). Consequently, the Japanese government is beginning to reflect seriously on the peace constitution as something no longer in agreement with their reimagining of the nation.

The US, as Japan's major ally, has affected the nationalist discourse in Japan in critical ways. Article 9 of the Constitution itself was a legacy of the American occupation, with the Japanese strongly latching onto the Constitution to build a new national vision and identity, given the circumstances of their defeat. As the Cold-War dynamics led to uncertain shifts in the international sphere, the US had a different image in mind for its Asian ally. Needing to establish a political bulwark against the sweeping tide of communism, the US negotiated the Mutual Security Assistance Pact of 1951 that would allow US bases in Japan. Only five years after the establishment of the Constitution, the Korean War crisis was the second instance that prompted Japan to establish the SDF in 1954 ,with great support from the US, despite major objections based on the Constitution (Piotrowski, 2005). The results of the Korean War started the well-known divide between the left and right in regards to security matters, which still endures today (Oros, 2008). This was the first instance, since World War II, of when pressure from the US encouraged the growth of conservative nationalism within security affairs.

Nevertheless, it was difficult for conservative nationalism to gain prominence in Japanese nationalist discourse during this time, due to Japan's fierce commitment to pacifism, centred on Article 9. For the next 38 years, the establishment of the SDF was the only significant step towards an active security policy. And within that period, heated debates about the constitutionality of the SDF persisted. To get around public disapproval, its exclusive defensive nature was strongly emphasised, which included provisos such as: activation of the SDF only in an event of an attack on Japanese soil; no collective self-defence; no possession of offensive weapons; and no overseas dispatch of troops. It was the inability to wage war that deemed the SDF as constitutional (Arase, 2007). These deliberate restrictions left the US unimpressed. During the Nixon administration, for example, the US made their wishes clear for America's allies to take ownership of their own defence, which mostly applied to Japan. Moreover, complaints of 'free riding' bubbled to the surface along with trade frictions in the 1980s (Arase, 2007). Japan tried to appease the Americans by spending slightly more than the legal one per cent of the GDP on defence and agreed to join the US in a partnership for the Strategic Defence Initiative (Arase, 2007). In this sense,

the US-Japan alliance at this time can be portrayed as one-sided with Japan only making small concessions to placate its partner when pressured. During this period, peace nationalism was powerful and pervasive, permeating all aspects of Japanese politics. Conservative nationalism struggled to occupy a larger role in Japan's nationalist discourse.

In contrast, the turn of events after the Cold War changed the traditional division of labour within the alliance in unprecedented ways. Changes to the post-Cold War security structure meant that Japan was facing the possibility of US abandonment, which would not only leave Japan defenceless in a highly volatile region, but also make Japan's extensive investments abroad particularly vulnerable without American backing (Cooney, 2002). Thus, America's bargaining power was strong enough to coax Japan into providing manpower as opposed to its traditional 'checkbook' contributions that have long since frustrated the US (Arase, 2007; Berger, 1993).

The possibility of abandonment along with growing regional instability highlighted pacifism's inability to respond to the new geopolitical circumstances, thus creating a bourgeoning sentiment that favoured conservative nationalism. The 1993 North Korean Missile crisis, in particular, alerted the US that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, military operations and Japan could not respond readily to any crisis within the region. The US again put pressure on Japan to reconsider their security options in light of the new crisis. In 1995, Japan came up with a new framework: the National Defence Program Outline, which allowed activation of the SDF to respond to contingencies that have a direct effect on Japan's security in areas surrounding Japan. Its regional security influence was further extended in the US-Japan Defence Guidelines signed in 1997, when Article 9 was reinterpreted to allow deployment of SDF troops to support the US in non-combative roles such as logistics, medical services, intelligence and search and rescue. The Koizumi government put this into effect in 2001: the SDF was dispatched to Afghanistan in support of the US coalition, with authorisation for SDF deployment to Iraq soon following. This marked the first overseas dispatch of SDF troops without UN approval since its establishment in 1954 (Arase, 2007).

As unfavourable shifts in the geo-strategic landscape coincided with pressure from the US to do more within the alliance, this raised questions concerning peace nationalism and its handling of security. The contest between the two forms of nationalism became polemical and began to play out in public. Both US pressure and increased volatility in East Asia alerted Japan to its vulnerability, led Japan to question its pacifist orthodoxy and reinvigorated the debate about rearmament (Arase, 2007). As Chapter 3 has shown, Japan's tendency in times of fear and insecurity is to embark on a particular mode of national renovation to overcome rising problems (McVeigh, 2004). In this case, redefining the US-Japan alliance by agreeing to a more balanced division of labour is one instance of conservative nationalism gaining traction within Japan's nationalist discourse.

The momentum of conservative nationalism gaining significant ground within Japanese nationalist discourse has culminated in the reinterpretation of the peace constitution. Following on from Koizumi's interpretation of Article 9, the Abe government in 2014 successfully pushed through a reinterpretation to allow collective self-defence. In July 2015, two security bills permitting the constitutional use of collective self-defence passed through the lower house. Two months later, Japan's parliament enacted the bills into law (Seig, 2015; BBC News, 2015).

The activation of collective self-defence, however, will be limited to three conditions: (1) When Japan or an ally is attacked and poses a direct threat to Japan's survival. (2) When no other non-military means can repel an attack. (3) The use of force will be kept at a minimum necessary to repel an attack (Mie, 2014). All of which conforms to international law on the use of force (Armstrong et al., 2012). Authorisation of collective-self defence does not give Japan the ability to wage war, but it does raise questions concerning the sanctity of Japanese 'pacifism'.

Although the recent revision is significant, it does not presume a complete abandonment of pacifism. Rather it is a renegotiation of peace nationalism and conservative nationalism to determine the minimum degree to which Japan can activate the use of force in the name of self-defence, collective or otherwise. This revision of the Constitution does not seek to intentionally undermine the sanctity

of the pacifist clause. The activation of the SDF for only matters of self-defence through a minimalist approach is, and always has been, the cornerstone of Japan's security policie since the SDF's establishment (Oros, 2008). Even then, as mentioned previously, the creation of the SDF was deemed unconstitutional, until conservative nationalism was able to negotiate with pacifism to reach a compromise (Piotrowski, 2004). Consequently, to what extent these two discourses can coexist is a question that looms over Japan's twenty-first century national discourse and national identity. It would seem, at least in matters of security, conservative nationalism is *becoming* dominant.

Even though the US introduced the pacifist discourse through the Constitution, it has also encouraged the development of conservative nationalism through its policy of encouraging Japan's regional and international activism. As a facilitator, the US has invigorated conservative nationalism by continuing to remind Japan, as an influential Other, that things need to change to appropriately deal with today's shifting security structure. The possibility of abandonment amid mounting regional tensions demanded the more conservative Japan to step up and fulfil its obligations as an ally (Arase, 2007). This incited the contestation between peace and conservative nationalism and seems to be pushing Japan away from pacifism. Therefore, conservative nationalism is now becoming more prominent in Japan's nationalist discourse to the extent that Japan is on the verge of reimagining its national identity.

Internal Factors: Renegotiation of Nationalism

While exogenous factors played a large role in setting off conservative nationalism inside Japan, it was within national borders that a new national identity and Japan's current expression of nationalism come to be debated, mediated, and absorbed through certain domestic developments, both structural and ideational in nature. In addition to protracted economic stagnation that has provided an opening for conservative nationalism to take hold as outlined in Chapter 3, the momentum of conservative nationalism is, also in part, the result of a change in demographics, with the new generation of leadership growing

increasingly immune to the criticisms of nationalism (Matthews, 2003). After Japan's defeat in World War II, the generation directly affected was conditioned to fear war, be ashamed of their past and forever disavow nationalism as a legitimate political tool. The new generation, however, is not so much bound by such fears and feel that their nation deserves a responsive army while those that espouse pacifism and unarmed neutrality are now dying out (Matthews, 2003).

Leaders from this new generation have already been elected into parliament, placing them in an optimal position to propagate nationalist views and enact reforms reflecting nationalist values. Abe is a prime example as the first Prime Minister born after World War II to be elected; he has been successful at stretching the peace constitution to allow collective self-defence, as previously mentioned, and implementing other overtly nationalistic strategies such as education reforms to burnish national pride. His plans for education reform begin with revisions to the Fundamental Law of Education established since 1947, written under American occupation. His intention is to 'nurture people who value their families, their communities and their country' (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 2007a, para 15). In Abe's second term, two significant steps are underway: first, revision of middle school and high school teaching manuals will be made to highlight territorial claims over the Senkaku Islands. Second, is the plan to give local officials greater power to set education policies (The Asahi Shimbun, 2014; Hayashi, 2014). Furthermore, in his book, *Towards a Beautiful Country*, Abe has made it clear that 'after the war, the Japanese have single-mindedly blamed nationalism as the cause of the war and the reason for our defeat. As a result, the notion that the state is evil has become lodged in the corners of the minds of the post-war population' (cited in Hayashi, 2014, para 11). Attempts by Abe to indoctrinate nationalism and eradicate the intractable relationship Japan has with nationalism are part of the national pride aspect of conservative nationalism. Combined with the augmentation of national defence, such overt steps towards conservative nationalism would not be as palatable to the Japanese public without the perception of threat emanating strongly from international developments. This perception tends to encourage a new nationalistic generation.

For example, the public's responses to both China and North Korea can be interpreted as support for conservative nationalism. The political elites and Japanese citizens perceive China as a 'bullying state' with friendly feelings towards China being at an all time low. The latest Cabinet Office (2014) poll showed that in 2010, friendly feelings towards the Chinese were as low as 20 per cent[3]. This decreased even further in 2014 being 14.8 per cent. As China grows more powerful and more concerned with economic and territorial expansionism, Japan in turn, just like in pre-Meiji times, becomes more aware of its vulnerability.

Similarly, the public's response to North Korea suggested that Abe was successful at guiding nationalism in the conservative direction with regards to security matters. Respondents to the Cabinet Office survey showed a spike in concerns related to defence issues to reflect how effective Abe's appeals were. In 2005, before Abe's administration, 59.4 per cent of respondents showed concern for Japan's security matters. This number jumped to 67.5 per cent in the next year when Abe was elected. There has not been a spike like this since 1991, and that was most likely a response, in part, to Japan's economic crisis of that time. In 2015, this increased to 71.5 per cent (Cabinet Office, 2015). These responses indicate a generation that is growing increasingly amenable to the ethos of conservative nationalism.

Another critical domestic development is the decline in leftist parties. The receding influence from these groups has diminished their ability to act as a counterbalance against right-wing groups. While LDP dominance came to characterise Japanese politics, the LDP still had to contend with leftist parties such as the Japan Socialist Party and the Japanese Communist Party. The JSP, in particular, was the largest opposition party during this time and held one-third of the seats in the Diet. These parties served as a political check for the LDP's more conservative policies. Leftist parties were most powerful during the Cold-War era with mass protests against militarism and even the US-Japan security alliance (Sasada, 2006). The most astounding example is the 1960 protest held on June 15. A total of 650,000 protesters, comprising of radical Marxists groups, labour unions and student organisations, stood in solidarity, inspired by the

[3] English translations of poll results written in Japanese are my own.

leftist groups' strict pacifist stance. They stood in protest against the Kishi government's decision to renew the US-Japan Security Treaty. In response to the protest, Prime Minister Kishi announced his resignation on June 23, 1960; however, not before the treaty had been renewed (Izumikawa, 2010). For the next two decades, leftist parties continued to garner considerable support (Sasada, 2006).

The 1990s, however, marked a downturn for leftist parties. Sasada (2006) notes that their unwillingness to adapt to the post-Cold War structure became their biggest downfall. Amid perceived threats from Japan's neighbours, leftist parties refused to budge from their strict pacifist position and were criticised for their idealism and inability to grasp the harsh realities of the new evolving international structure. Expressing sympathy for North Korea and China is another factor contributing to their decline. Support for these countries was highest during the Cold-War with the JSP and JCP pushing for closer relations with the Chinese Communist Party and the North Korean Labour Party. Leftist parties extolled the virtues of China's Cultural Revolution and the bold economic policies in North Korea, which proved to be catastrophic. The JSP went as far to say in their party magazine, the *Monthly Social Democracy*, that the Japanese government lied about the abductions of Japanese nationals by North Korea.

Finally, leftist groups attracted condemnation for their hypocrisy. In 1995, the JSP formed a coalition with its nemesis, the LDP. When the JSP leader Tomiichi Murayama became the Prime Minister, he betrayed the long-standing pacifist values and principles of unarmed neutrality of the JSP by announcing his support for the US-Japan alliance, and no longer deemed the establishment of the SDF and its peacekeeping operations as unconstitutional. This revealed that the JSP was incapable of running the country as well as adhering to the pacifist values on which the party built its credentials (Sasada, 2006).

Out of all of the internal factors, perhaps the most significant of all, is the erosion of pacifist norms (Berger, 1993). Peace nationalism predicated on norms of pacifism and the antimilitarist identity (Katzenstein, 1996a) is starting to weaken to make way for conservative nationalism (Hughes & Krauss, 2007). Undoubtedly, these norms have proven to be the biggest obstacle for conservatism to take root, but the contestation between the two has started the

'tug-of-war' known to characterise Japan's contemporary nationalist discourse. As both Katzenstein (1996a; 1996b) and Oros (2008) maintain, Japan's peace identity has been largely intact through decades of institutionalisation of pacifist norms since America's imposition of the Constitution. Although not without disputes, norms of pacifism, have time and time again, eluded more conservative persuasions because of their resiliency. Instead, conservative nationalism had to collude with more 'agreeable' forms of nationalism, such as economic nationalism and cultural nationalism to survive (Chapter 3). In the twenty-first century, however, the extent to which pacifist norms are openly challenged has been unparalleled. An example that exemplifies this is, of course, the revision of Article 9. With the erosion of pacifist norms, conservative nationalism can come to the fore without having to hide its nationalist 'identity'.

Contestation and renegotiation of Japanese nationalist discourse

The discourse on Japanese security provides the most polemical arena for peace nationalism and conservative nationalism to interact. Furthermore, the negotiation of these two forms of nationalism in the context of security affairs tends to arouse the most dynamic responses within and outside Japan. The two strands of nationalism, however, are not entirely intractable; instead, they are in a process of negotiation as to how Japan should adjust its national identity in light of changing circumstances, rather than an outright replacement of one with the other. Through challenging dominant discourses by considering alternative views, including those inherently antagonistic to those long established, Japan might be able to imagine a nation quite different to what it was 70 years ago. In the words of Oros, 'identity shift can not take place without the presence of an alternative set of unifying principles and respected political actors to advocate for them' (2008, p. 28).

For identity to change in regards to security matters, according to Oros (2014), the three central tenets of its security identity of domestic antimilitarism (SIDA) must be altered. Tenets of Japan's domestic antimilitarism security identity are: (1) no possession or maintenance of traditional military forces; (2) the use of force is exclusively for self-defence and; (3) no collective self-defence.

These tenets mostly refer to the mature phase of norm socialisation (institutionalisation and internalisation). Therefore, when norms that directly contravene pacifism arise, these new norms will have to be socialised in order to achieve longevity within Japan's nationalist discourse.

The conservative identity in creation

A new class of conservative politicians has started the elite learning process. In the last thirty years Junichiro Koizumi, in particular, has earned the reputation as 'the man who has remade Japan' (The Economist, 2006). In addition to domestic reforms, he successfully pushed through controversial policies that saw to the SDF's deployment overseas for the first time since World War II. Granted that the SDF's participation was highly restricted to logistical support, Koizumi's proactive style satisfied the public's new mood for political changes amid an ailing economy. His tenure proved to be rather successful at starting discussions that might otherwise be taboo or even beyond reproach, including the revival of patriotism, the subject of constitutional revision and even nuclear armament (Mochizuki, 2007).

Abe, in his two separate tenures, continued this trend and pushed the debates even further, culminating in Abe's new security bills to allow collective self-defence, which are in direct conflict with the third tenet of SIDA. The first tenet of SIDA has already been compromised with the introduction of fighter aircrafts with mid-air refuelling capabilities as well as long-distance transport planes (Oros, 2014). This example shows how norms of conservatism are working their way to achieving broad legitimacy as they now move from elite learning to institutionalisation. If legitimacy can be achieved, Japan's old security identity, underpinned by the above SIDA tenets, will start to ebb away and its range of actions within security and foreign policy will significantly widen (Hughes & Krauss, 2007). Therefore, to ensure the preservation of the core principles of peace nationalism, with no further depletion of the SIDA tenets, pacifist norms must negotiate with conservative nationalism. At the same time, a new conservative identity is consolidating as norms of conservatism are being socialised into institutions, and in turn, society.

Conclusion

Conservative nationalism, which is now striving for a dominant position differs substantially from its immediate postwar alternative, peace nationalism. However, it would be wrong to conclude that it resembles nationalism from its imperial past[4]. This new strand of conservative nationalism is not a reincarnation of the principles and ideals responsible for imperialism, but rather is an alternative response to Japan's growing vulnerability and dissonance to national pride. The postwar era has marked the site for peace nationalism and conservative nationalism to contest, negotiate, and even reconcile with each other, sharpening the change in nationalist tone: contemporary Japanese nationalism is increasingly displaying conservative predilections; however, the pacifist framework still constrains conservative leaders.

Due to Japan's recent encounters with significant Others and shifts in the international strategic environment, nationalist thought is being moulded into new ways of serving the nation. The 'resurgence of nationalism' that emerged since the turn of the century was, therefore, a reaction to the volatile movements within the region, not an attempt to recreate an empire through acts of aggression. Internal responses from both the popular and elite level have reflected these concerns by even challenging prevailing pacifist norms.

In particular, military build-up and perceived aggression emanating from China and North Korea in recent years have made Japan aware of its vulnerability. With America in support of Japan's proactive stance towards security, conservative nationalism is given the opportunity to provide a response to problems that pacifism does not address. Outside of security matters, policies to bolster national pride through education reforms result in and are a result of, an increasingly nationalistic generation. Nationalist actions initiated by the political leaders and elites such as visits to Yasukuni Shrine and textbook revision have enjoyed significant popular support (Cheung, 2010).

[4] Owing to the size of this project, this thesis is unable to accommodate a comprehensive discussion of this particular issue.

Interactions with these significant Others have created a domestic environment more conducive to conservative persuasions. Combined with Japan's economic malaise since the 1990s, the government and even the electorate are beginning to lean towards a proactive stance towards security, especially in light of China's coercive behaviour and North Korea's bellicosity. Furthermore, the declining influence of left-wing political parties that are known as the traditional custodians of peace nationalism has minismised opposition against right-wing parties and their policies. Most crucial of all, norms of pacifism are either adapting or ebbing away to conform to the prevailing nationalist feeling that the external environment now seems to demand. Peace nationalism is losing its relevance amongst the strategic changes in international relations and domestic politics. It is precisely in this context that the willingness to openly challenge pacifism, the very ideology that the Japanese have for a long time devoted themselves to, has awakened. Peace nationalism is not able to offer an effective response to the actions of relevant Others; conservative nationalism has been constructed to fill this void. Therefore, conservative nationalism is becoming dominant.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Until recently, Japan was often cited as one of the most socially efficient, economically competent and politically proficient nations. Japan ostensibly owes much of its success to its unwavering commitment to pacifism and disavowal of nationalism. Japan in the twenty-first century, however, is showing signs of change; Japanese nationalist discourse is acquiring a conservative nationalist tone.

In Chapter 2, a theoretical framework was constructed to explain the changes within Japanese nationalist discourse by seeking to reveal the key internal and external factors and lay bare their intimate connections. By conceiving the Japanese nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1993) activated and maintained through various nationalist discourses or styles of imagining, Japan can be understood as an ever-evolving, ever-changing entity that inscribes and re-inscribes meaning through various internal and external circumstances (Ivy, 1995).

This conception is significant as it paves the way for more dynamic and pluralistic understandings of Japanese nationalism. The pluralist approach widened the purview of Japanese nationalism beyond militarist articulations and therefore, confered onto the field of study the theoretical space that Japanese nationalism now commands. Within that theoretical space, relationalism, norm constructivism and recurrent renovationist nationalism explained the processes of imagining. First, the relational approach provided a clearer picture of how international changes or encounters with Others triggered various nationalist discourses within the Japanese nation. Second, the norm constructivist approach showed how these discourses were interpreted, processed and absorbed within national borders. Third, recurrent renovationist nationalism explained the motivating principles behind changes to Japan's nationalist discourse that highlighted Japan's relentless need for national regeneration.

This complementary approach to examining the internal and external factors offers insights into how Japanese nationalism has changed, sometimes drastically, as Chapter 3 has shown. A historical analysis of Japanese nationalism since the Meiji era has unearthed several salient themes: themes of vacillation, reactions to threats and national regeneration. These themes demonstrate that outside encounters with influential Others often elicit responses that mobilise, strengthen or change the style of imagination and therefore, the dominant nationalist discourse of Japan. Through dramatic vacillations between inferiority and superiority; traditionalism and modernism; and East and West, Japanese nationalism has been through numerous transformations seeing to fundamentalist expressions of nationalism taking over the nation in the past. Therefore, Japanese nationalism has and can change depending on the perceptions from the Japanese and how the Japanese choose to define and imagine their nation.

Although interactions with outside Others often stir nationalist movements within Japan, it is the results of these interactions that are most informative. Interactions that lead Japan to perceive Others to be threatening are significant to understand how certain strands of nationalism (i.e. ultranationalism, conservative nationalism and peace nationalism) are triggered. While recurrent renovationist nationalism serves as the underlying theme, which heavily rests on perceptions of inferiority, and at times, superiority. It is Japan's constant need for status, security and prosperity that sees Japanese nationalist discourse changing for such pursuits. Thus, the Japanese nation is always striving to change the status quo to achieve its nationalist objectives.

Contemporary expressions of Japanese nationalism are continuing this trend for change. Chapter 4 recognised that the change in nationalist tone in the twenty-first century is not only contextualised through the salient themes elucidated in Chapter 3, but also through conceptions of contestation and negotiation. The unfavourable domestic and international landscape has led the nation to doubt the prevailing nationalist discourse, peace nationalism, and made the nation more open to other forms of nationalism as a possible alternative. The strength of peace nationalism started to decline while conservative nationalism ascended as a solution to problems of economic

stagnation and issues arising from an unfavourable regional environment. Conservative policies that supported constitutional revision, security augmentation and strengthening of national pride have been engineered and marketed by political leaders as necessary remedies. Therefore, Japan's contemporary expression of nationalism is increasingly accentuated by conservative virtues that have come about as a renovationist response.

Although conservative nationalism is gaining prominence within the nationalist discourse, both strands of nationalism had to adapt, negotiate and compromise on some of their underlying principles in an attempt to secure a leading role in Japan's nationalist discourse. Peace nationalism is receding as encounters with significant Others are perceived to be unfavourable or threatening to Japan's security, status and national pride. Therefore, peace nationalism started to decline as conservative policies that seem to address these threats were given salience. However, short of a national crisis, an outright replacement of peace nationalism with conservative nationalism would likely be met with overwhelming condemnation, and would dramatically diminish its chances to remain visible within Japan's nationalist discourse. In contrast, a gradualist approach seems to be the most effective way for conservative nationalism to gain visibility and legitimacy. Nonetheless, so long as encounters with Others are continued to be interpreted as unfavourable or threatening to Japan's national interests, and Japan's political leaders are able to package and market their policies as the most effective ideology against such circumstances, conservative nationalism is likely to increase in prominence.

Japan's nationalist shift towards the right will have profound effects on the nation and the region. Once the nation is able to adequately reconcile between the two main competing strands of nationalism and national identity, the government will be able to offer coherent domestic and foreign policies. Gradually, the government has tackled controversial issues that were previously 'non-negotiable' (Rose, 2010). Overt expressions of nationalism from political leaders are appearing more frequently in speeches, interviews and official publications. Today, topics that were previously taboo and shunned since World War II have re-emerged and secured a perennial space in domestic discourse: aspirations for a greater leadership role in regional and international affairs, SDF

military build-up, constitutional revision and patriotism are all part of the expanding list of Japan's core interests. As a result, Japanese foreign policy is being reoriented towards a more proactive posture and moving away from 'reactive' or 'passive' forms of diplomacy that once characterised Japan's foreign policy.

The conservative nationalist discourse will complicate regional relations with both China and South Korea for historical and geopolitical reasons. Japan will not deliberately embark on a nationalist course that is at the expense of its economy; however, Abe's nationalist rhetoric risks souring further, the already fragile relations with China, and to a lesser extent, South Korea – two of Japan's biggest trading partners. Punitive economic measures may be taken on Japan if Japan's nationalist agenda is pushed too far to the right. On the other hand, anti-Japanese sentiment emanating from both China and South Korea is partly complicit in reinforcing conservative Japanese nationalism (Kang, 2013). Japan is growing less tolerant of its neighbours' continued willingness to draw on historical issues in order to browbeat Japan into making diplomatic concessions (Moore, 2014).

The Yasukuni Shrine and history textbook issues have re-agitated such diplomatic problems, and demonstrated to China and South Korea, a lack of guilt and repentance for Japan's past aggression (Ryu, 2007; Wang & Okano-Heijmans, 2011). Oddly, for Japan to understand why its neighbours are so untrusting, Japan must confront and deal with its past in a way that does not further emasculate itself nor glorify or gloss over acts of past violence. In respect to diplomacy, the deepening of the US-Japan alliance may be interpreted by China as a move towards containing China's rise and, thus, viewed with the utmost suspicion (Atanassova-Cornelis, 2011). At the same time, China's military build-up and increased belligerence over the Senkaku/Daoyu Islands disputes drive Japan towards the US, which reinforces China's suspicion (Dreyer, 2012). Therefore, the longstanding mutual fear and distrust is self-fulfilling, and in turn, seems to preclude even the most reasonable solutions to problems existing within Sino-Japanese relations. Careful management of Japanese nationalism as well as constant dialogue between China may mitigate issues of distrust.

While the US welcomes Japan's proactive security stance, Washington enjoys great trade relations with China. As its second biggest trade partner, America will not want to intentionally upset China yet it has obligations to back Japan when it concerns matters of security. If issues revolving around the sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands flare into conflict, Washington may have to choose between China and Japan. In addition to the Taiwan issue, the Senkaku Islands will be telling of how strong Tokyo's and Washington's economic relationships are with China, and to what extent those relationships can withstand the diplomatic blows that these issues are likely to unleash.

Consequently, this project could be expanded further to investigate how nationalism affects contemporary Japanese foreign policy, with specific focus on regional policy. By focussing on what Japan is, or on the verge of becoming, not only puts identity matters at the forefront of nationalism studies, but also, determines, in part, national interest and, by extension, foreign policy (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Hopf, 2002; Katzenstein, 1996a; Wendt, 1999) As Japan is going through a change in identity, the range of behaviour from Japan will differ from its previous identity. Therefore, further research can benefit from the continued use of the relational/norm constructivist approach to enrich the study of nationalism and foreign policy studies in IR. Likewise, further investigation into how compatible Japan's new expressions of nationalism and national identity are to the regional movement within East Asia will undoubtedly provide useful insights. In most cases, Japanese conservative nationalism acts as an obstacle to productive regional integration; it tends to provoke criticism and outcry from Japan's neighbours, and negatively affect Asian diplomacy. As conservative nationalism is seeking dominance in Japan's nationalist discourse, such research may be telling of its limitations as well as possibilities.

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