

Chapter Title: Multiple Militarisms

Book Title: Japan's Aging Peace

Book Subtitle: Pacifism and Militarism in the Twenty-First Century

Book Author(s): TOM PHUONG LE

Published by: Columbia University Press. (2021)

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/le--19978.7>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

Columbia University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Japan's Aging Peace*

CHAPTER TWO

Multiple Militarisms

Scholars and policymakers have long predicted Japan's eventual return to normal security behavior, mainly differing over whether international threats or domestic forces would undo Japanese pacifistic attitudes and institutions. Embedded in these predictions is the belief that normal states are militaristic. This chapter unpacks some of the underlying assumptions within the study of international relations theory that inform such thinking and, in doing so, establishes a more comprehensive understanding of how the use of force is legitimized.

The current militarism analytical framework is inadequate for understanding Japanese security policy because it oversimplifies complicated—and seemingly contradictory—security practices, which leads to misinterpretation of Japanese security motives. For example, although scholars readily acknowledge that present-day Japanese security policy is not akin to 1930s-style militarism, they do not precisely articulate what contemporary *remilitarization* entails, nor do they specify the standards by which it would be considered normal. This lack of specificity forgoes critical analysis of why Japan would not return to its more aggressive colonial past, a shortcoming that regularly fuels open-ended alarmist predictions. Most states accept the legitimacy of the use of force in a conflict-prone world, and therefore they are militaristic. However, states address insecurity in vastly different ways.

An expanded conceptualization of militarism is necessary to accurately reflect how the interactive effects among the international security environment, domestic politics, and norms shape security policy. Japan's decision not to return to more aggressive forms of militarism is not only due to a lack of desire but also

because the present context lacks many of the institutions and socioeconomic variables that allowed for imperialistic militarism to arise in the early nineteenth century. Although nationalism and militarism exist in the present day, their influence, in degree and character, is determined by the rules of a given period.

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, it examines historical cases of Japanese militarism to elucidate consistent and divergent themes among the cases. These cases demonstrate that although Japan has been militaristic over the last 150 years, it has adopted vastly different security policies due to material and ideological conditions. Second, this chapter reexamines the meaning of militarism and discusses the content and utility of the multiple militarisms concept.

JAPAN'S MULTIPLE MILITARISMS

Although regularly referenced, there is a lack of nuanced analysis on what militarism *means* in international relations. This deficiency is due to the absence of an analytical framework that differentiates among types of militarism. Consequently, vastly different cases are described as “nationalism,” “militarization,” and “remilitarization,” and these terms are often used interchangeably. Scholars are frequently overly reliant on basic indicators of militarization, such as defense spending and technology acquisition, and therefore reify narrow conceptions of security that dominate international relations scholarship. The orthodox realist view assumes that security policy begins and ends with the state, ignoring non-state actors utilizing innovative methods for achieving peace and curtailing more aggressive forms of militarism.

Given the significance of Japan's militaristic past and anxiety over its current security policy, it is surprising that the concept of militarism has not been more critically examined. Sociologist Martin Shaw contends that the term “militarism” is not often used in international studies because it denotes a political opposition to military force and is therefore not scientific.¹ One can also attribute the hesitation to critically examine the term to the positionality of scholars, many of whom reside in the United States. The United States often serves as the reference point within security studies and criticisms of militarism, and therefore the United States itself could be interpreted as politically charged and controversial. The United States' primacy in international

relations provides some insight on the limitations within the literature concerning Japanese security policy.

Since the United States frequently responds militarily to international threats, the starting assumption regarding change to security policy is that it must be tied to threat. When scholars contend that Japan is normalizing, militarizing, or remilitarizing, they emphasize motivations for change while neglecting the character and direction of change. Not all motivations are acted on or converted to corresponding security measures. Inaction can reveal more about a security doctrine than action. Furthermore, analysis of security behavior is often framed as bidirectional—states are either increasing power projection capabilities or decreasing power projection capabilities. However, the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) is most often mobilized for peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief missions, activities that do not fit neatly into power projection calculations or conventional understandings of militarism.

U.S. foreign policy also shapes how scholars interpret security behavior. Since the United States is often criticized for what are perceived to be politically motivated nation-building agendas, the assumption that security policies must have ulterior motives is prevalent in international relations scholarship. Nonetheless, such ulterior motives are normal if they fit within a narrow realist conception of self-interest.

Although realism focuses on why states adopt militaristic security policies, the theory tacitly acknowledges not all militarisms are the same. Within neorealist debates, disagreement over offensive, defensive, and free-riding strategies suggests that although state survival is most important, states differ in how best to secure it. As war technologies become more advanced and accessible, after a certain threshold, the differences are negligible among states. Most countries possess an air force, a navy, and an army, yet few scholars would suggest they practice the same *kind* of militarism. Since World War II, the United States has spent more on defense than any other country, possesses bases in foreign territories, and has fought several wars—sometimes unilaterally. However, U.S. militarism is unlike the militarisms of the British Empire, Nazi Germany, the Mongol Empire, and other hegemons. The current literature implicitly understands militarisms are different but has not integrated this understanding into the analysis of security policy.

According to Cynthia Enloe, militarism is “a compilation of assumptions, values, and beliefs.”² The compilation of ideas are rules that inform a society whether the use of force is a legitimate tool of statecraft. Militarization involves the “encroaching of military forms, personnel and practices upon civilian institutions or social orders.”³ Militarization is a mutually-constituted process where the more “militarization transforms an individual or society, the more that individual or society comes to imagine military needs and militaristic presumptions to be not only valuable but also normal.”⁴ In other words, militarism is a collection of rules that informs a society when, why, and how force is utilized. Several scholars have called attention to the all-encompassing nature of the concept, where everyday life is transformed by militarism and militarism is supported by things that may not be obviously military.⁵ External threat is one potential cause of militarization but not a sufficient explanation for how militarism is pursued or what character militarism takes. Militarism stands contrary to absolute pacifism, which argues that the use of force is illegitimate in all circumstances. Most states are militaristic—undoubtedly postwar Japan has been and is. This book builds upon these root definitions and the arguments of previous scholars by shifting the focus from determining *if* militarism exists to *what* kind of militarism exists. Moreover, this book argues militarization is shaped not only by institutions that allow it to flourish but also by conditions that constrain it.

Several indicators illustrate the degree of militarization and type of militarism. The power dynamic between civilian and military forces in government reveals the direction of security policy. If military officers possess disproportionate influence, states are more likely to utilize force to settle international disputes. Another indicator is the prevalence of militaristic symbols. In many communist states, statues and murals propagate party narratives about national history and identity. In North Korea and Russia, for example, statues of war heroes are often displayed in roundabouts, and political murals blanket major cities. These discourses are public, unabashed, and uncritical of the military. Another indicator of militarism is how history is portrayed in places of education, such as textbooks, museums, and monuments. For many in East Asia, the Yasukuni Shrine is commonly associated with Japanese militarism. An investigation of not only the contents of museums but also their popularity and relationship with the government can be informative. In Japan, the portrayal of the military, whether positive or negative, in novels, movies, comics, and television elucidate how the public’s

opinion of the JSDF is influenced. How comfortable is the public with military symbols? Are there certain taboos that the public and media avoid? Are JSDF personnel respected in society? The pervasiveness (or lack thereof) and type of symbolic and physical manifestations of militarism among states can illustrate different militarism types.

A Brief History of Japanese Militarisms

During the Edo period (1603–1868), the Tokugawa Bakufu (shogunate) ruled Japan from Tokyo. Tokugawa Ieyasu consolidated power through war, but what followed was 250 years of peace and stability. The intrusion of Western powers, most notably by Commodore Matthew Perry who sailed into Yokohama Bay in 1853 with his infamous black ships, led to the steady decline in power of the Tokugawa Bakufu, signaling the beginning of the end the Edo period. The United States followed the international relations playbook and swiftly forced unequal treaties upon Japan. The erosion of Japanese sovereignty was a rude awakening, and the bitter lessons of great power politics have informed government leaders since. Though Japan's most iconic symbol of militarism, the samurai, is often associated with the Edo period, in reality, they were a minority group. Many of this elite warrior class, most notably from Satsuma and Chōshū, would play an important role in the development of the succeeding Meiji government; however, they were valued more for their bureaucratic skills than their ability to wield a sword. Japanese security policy moving forward was as much influenced by the norms of the Western powers as any militaristic tradition at home.

The Meiji Period (1868–1912)

Capturing all of the significant societal changes during the Meiji period is a herculean, if not impossible, endeavor. As such, this section focuses on four issue areas that most directly relate to militarism: (1) legitimacy of the state, (2) state religion (3) armed forces, and (4) foreign policy.

The Meiji Restoration is regarded as the beginning of modern Japan. After successfully overthrowing the Tokugawa Bakufu, Meiji leaders quickly sought to address international and domestic problems. In international affairs, the government renegotiated the unequal treaties signed with Western powers. China,

for centuries the nexus of power in East Asia, was a shadow of its former self after just a few decades of Western semicolonialism. The balance of power in international relations had a significant impact on domestic and foreign policy. Simultaneously, domestic debates over cultural identity, race theory, and direction of the nation shaped foreign policy. Japan sought recognition as a modern and equal nation to the Western powers. This motivation was not only due to strategic power balancing but also due to a desire for prestige and respect. To avoid China's fate and regain its sovereignty, the Meiji government adopted the philosophy of *fukoku kyōhei*, or "rich nation, strong army." Japan internalized the "rules of the game" in international relations, what historian Harry Harootian describes as "overcome by modernity."⁶ To ensure Japan's survival, the Meiji government worked toward legitimizing its rule, modernizing its economic policies and legal codes, and building a cohesive national identity.

Though the imperial line dated back to antiquity, the emperor was rarely the center of Japanese economic and political affairs. During the Edo period, *daimyō* (feudal lords) governed autonomous domains and held allegiance most strongly to the Tokugawa Bakufu. Based in Kyoto, the emperor was the final authority in political affairs yet effectively remained isolated from state affairs. While he was considered the legitimate ruler of Japan, rarely did the emperor serve in an active role as a uniting symbol for the public. Meiji government leaders understood that in order to legitimize their newfound authority and effectively exercise power, the emperor had to be restored as the ultimate symbol of authority of the nation. Historians have referred to the elaborate and, at times, forceful implementation of restoring imperial rule as "internal colonization."⁷ The young Meiji emperor toured the four main Japanese islands to unite the public under a single powerful symbol. Before the Meiji Restoration, the emperor rarely made public appearances. By having a presence across the countryside, yet remaining physically separated by an imposing entourage, the emperor established a visceral link to the common person while maintaining an aura of divinity. The locations the emperor visited became public spaces where Japanese congregated and celebrated the nation. Historian Takashi Fujitani carefully details these "mnemonic sites," or "material vehicles of meaning that either helped construct a memory of an emperor-centered national past that, ironically, had never been known or served as symbolic markers for commemorations of present national accomplishments and the possibilities of the

future.”⁸ These sites later served as locations for celebrating military victories during the interwar period.

Establishing a state religion was also critical to legitimizing the Meiji government and constructing a national identity. The emperor had long been considered a “living deity with magical powers,” and according to some accounts, during imperial processions, villagers gathered dirt-covered pebbles kicked up by imperial horses believing that they would bring good luck and a plentiful harvest.⁹ The government aggressively promoted Shinto as the state religion and foundation of the educational system. Before the Meiji Restoration, Shinto and Buddhism were highly syncretic, sharing places of worship across a decentralized network of shrines and temples. The government established the *jingikan* (Department of Divinities) to separate the two religions, solidifying Shinto as a unifying force of Japanese cultural identity. What followed was a “frenzied move to suppress Buddhism, and consequently, many Buddhist artifacts were damaged, or destroyed.”¹⁰ The violence instigated by the government under the guise of religion is telling of how militarism developed over the following five decades. Japan’s colonial expeditions were supported by the divinity of the emperor, and thus, the righteousness of the mission.

Establishing a modern military was a priority for the government, which was concerned with encroaching Western powers and domestic instability. In April 1871, three years into the Meiji period, the government established an imperial army of approximately ten thousand soldiers recruited from restoration forces.¹¹ By 1873, Japan had instituted universal conscription, which required three years of active service and four years of reserve service from all males of age.¹² Conscription is important for understanding militarism in modern Japan. Though Japanese soldiers have been portrayed as zealous practitioners of Bushido up to World War II,¹³ conscription was an unpopular and contested policy. To former samurai elites, conscription represented the end of the class system that privileged their abilities and afforded them numerous rights not provided to the majority of the population. In other words, the rules that governed society changed, and so did their rule. On the other hand, nonelites rejected what they believed was a “blood tax,” and numerous protests against the new government policy broke out throughout the country.¹⁴ Thus, “the strong discipline and fierce loyalty shown by Japanese soldiers in the later decades were by no means timeless traditional elements of Japan’s ‘national character.’”¹⁵ Regardless of time period, the majority of

the population does not draw their lineage from the warrior samurai class.¹⁶ The establishment of several elite military schools and war professionalized the military and normalized a national standing force as an essential feature of the state. As Onuf reminds, “exercising choices, agents act on, and not just in, the context within which they operate, collectively changing its institutional features, and themselves.”¹⁷ In short, the institutionalization of the military militarized the civilian population.

The government aggressively spent and distributed technologies to remake the private sector into an independent and sustainable military-industrial complex. Kōzō Yamamura contends “the ‘strong army’ policy, combined with the wars, was the principal motivation behind creating and expanding the arsenals and other publicly-financed shipyards and modern factories which acted as highly effective centers for the absorption and dissemination of Western technologies and skills.”¹⁸ Participation in foreign wars generated demand, helping the struggling private shipbuilding, machinery, and machine tools industry.¹⁹ The sheer speed of Japan’s economic growth was astounding. Within a decade of the Meiji Restoration, the government had developed four major arsenals with satellite plants and three government shipyards that were “fully engaged in supplying the needs of a modern military force.”²⁰ The strong links between government and industry were critical to the growth of militarism. Through the Ministry of Construction, the government ensured the efforts of the private sector closely complemented security policy. For example, on the eve of the First Sino-Japanese War, government-supported arsenals went into “a 24-hour production schedule to increase the output of ships, guns, shells, and other military needs, and the largest private shipyards, such as Ishikawajima and Kawasaki, were also called upon to upgrade their technological competence and increase production.”²¹

The international environment also influenced the Meiji government. Meiji leaders were preoccupied with two main issues, establishing a greater presence in Korea and renegotiating unequal treaties. Japan’s first major foreign policy success on the Korean Peninsula was the Treaty of Kanghwa in 1876. It gave Japan access to key trading ports and, more importantly, a footprint on the continent to challenge Chinese and Russian influence in Korea. For Meiji leaders such as Prince Yamagata Aritomo, Korea was critical to the security strategy of establishing a colonial buffer zone (“zone of advantage”) necessary for protecting mainland Japan (“zone of sovereignty”).²² Over the next few decades, the government

and public intellectuals grappled with the ethics and ideologies of who and what comprised the nation. By the early 1920s, colonial possessions became integral components of the empire, thus expanding Japan's zone of sovereignty. This fueled the government's anxiety over its security and fueled legitimization of security policies seeking to establish more zones of advantage. Consequently, the independence, prestige, and boldness of the military increased. These issues would arise a few decades later during the Manchurian Incident when the Kwantung army manufactured an invasion of Northeastern China. Just a few decades prior, military officials were "relatively cautious" and resisted popular jingoistic attitudes.²³ It was not until the euphoria of later military successes did Japan dedicate its resources to full-scale imperialism.

The next major foreign policy victory for Japan was the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which was signed following the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War. After achieving an unexpected lopsided victory, Japan gained territorial concessions, development rights, sizable war reparations, and most importantly the respect of the international community. Japan's rising status fueled an enormous outpouring of domestic support and national pride. Japan's incursions in Korea and China established a pattern of the press and political opponents of the government propagating Korean independence from China under the "guise of Asia-wide (pan-Asian) solidarity," followed by the government limiting but not sanctioning such movements as "it moved cautiously in a similar direction."²⁴ Similar to the strategy of establishing the divinity of the emperor, pan-Asianism was an elaborate tool utilized by nationalists and military forces to justify aggressive militarism. Japan's military successes during the Meiji period reached its zenith after its remarkable victory over a Western power in the Russo-Japanese War. Securing victory in September 1905, Japan gained some territorial possessions, but most significantly, dominion over Korea, later formally colonized in 1910.

Its aggressive policies in East Asia provided the leverage the government needed to renegotiate the unequal treaties with the Western powers. During the Iwakura Mission of the early 1870s, Japan was a voracious student looking to mimic Western political, military, economic, and cultural institutions. Over the next few decades, the government slowly regained rights over tariffs, territories, and trade. Eventually, Japan forced unequal treaties upon Asian countries, and it annexed Korea, which went unchallenged by the West. The fact that its early military successes allowed the government to renegotiate treaties and gain

a prominent position in world affairs certified its belief that what it was doing was justified.

The Meiji period provides several important insights concerning Japanese militarism. First, colonialism did not begin with Korea—it started at home. The first territories the Meiji government gained were Ezo (Hokkaidō) and the Ryūkyū Islands (Okinawa). Additionally, the imperial processions allowed the emperor to establish sovereignty over the main Japanese islands, with each step analogous to placing a flag in the ground of unclaimed territories. Early Meiji leaders sought to remake society, one obedient and loyal to the divine emperor, and hardworking to build a rich nation and strong army. This brand of militarism was not initially expansionist. The government and public intellectuals were in the process of constructing fundamental characteristics of Japanese identity and had not yet developed a colonial doctrine of empire and race. Hence, militarism during the early Meiji period was defensive and inward looking. This survival militarism was defined by the government's creation and control of the military to fulfill the goals of a vulnerable developing nation. Even with several military successes, the public was not ready to support empire building. The public suffered from war fatigue as often as it was overtaken by the deliria of victory. Government coffers were pushed to their limits by questionable international excursions, and Japan endured significant losses in the Russo-Japanese War. Up to the Meiji period, the common person did not pay the costs of war so directly.

Second, it was not only the distribution of power that fueled the rich nation, strong army ideology but also the feeling that Japan was unmodern and backward. These sentiments would eventually be overtaken by feelings of pride in Japanese uniqueness and anti-Western attitudes. Nationalism in the Meiji period sought to *mimic* the West. Japan's evolving ideologies led to different types of militarism during the interwar and World War II periods; militarisms defined by racism, military control of the state, and arrogance. Meiji institutions and ideologies served as fertile ground for the imperial war machine in the succeeding period; the war machine did not create Meiji institutions and ideologies.

Interwar Period (1918–1939)

By the end of the Meiji period, Japan had fully transformed from a developing state to an expansionist empire, possessing colonies (Korea, Taiwan, and the

southern half of the Sakhalin Islands), a strong military, a modern economy, relatively equal treaties with the West, and unequal treaties with East Asia. The path toward empire and confrontation with the West was not a foregone conclusion. During the interwar period, Japan was divided between democratic internationalism and fascist isolationism, with the latter eventually winning the day.

The Taishō period (1912–1926), often referred to as the Taishō democracy, was the model for democracy and modernity in the non-Western world and yet, it was here that militarism took hold of the state. This period demonstrates the extreme sides of Japan, a nation torn between cooperating with status-quo powers and placing faith in its ability to independently progress through power projection. The militarists were able to wrest the nation from internationalist forces because of weak democratic institutions, subterfuge, and eventually popular support. Interwar period militarism is defined by two contradictory beliefs: (1) Japan could carve out a space for itself among the Western powers; and (2) Japan could not be accepted by the West and thus must prepare for an inevitable war. Neither a defensive nor offensive realist account of the Taishō period completely captures this internal struggle. Japan went to war not because the capabilities of the West were fundamentally more threatening, but because Japan's conceptions of the West and itself changed.

During the Taishō period, the Japanese government was an emperor-centered democracy, a hybrid form of government full of compromise and contradictions. Here, it is worth considering the difficulties faced by developing democracies. For most of world history, the majority of people were not free citizens who possessed inalienable rights. The Meiji Constitution was passed only twenty-three years before the beginning of the Taishō period, and during the 1920s Japan was in the process of remaking a population of previously nonpolitical peasants into modern citizens, albeit imperial subjects. Prior to the Meiji period, society was divided into a four-class system consisting of samurai, farmers, artisans, and merchants. Only samurai possessed substantive rights; the rest of the population was trapped in hereditary positions. However, half a century after the end of the Edo period, it was possible for a farmer born in the countryside to commute to a factory owned by foreigners in the city and work alongside members of all social classes. The Meiji and Taishō governments not only established basic rights but also wholly remade the Japanese economy, technology, and society. However, democracy was ultimately disrupted by a combination of shocks, namely

“economic depression, intense social conflict, military expansions, and the assassination of prime ministers and leading capitalists.”²⁵ The depression provided an opportunity for military leaders to seize the nation.

The strength of democracy was inversely related to the strength of the military. During the Taishō period, military officials were deeply involved in the policymaking process. Militarists took advantage of public discontent over rising rice prices, inflation, and a weak economy to justify their expansionist agenda and to marginalize government officials. Militarists argued, “Japan’s economic difficulties could be resolved by moving into Manchuria and other parts of China where supposedly unlimited reservoirs could be tapped.”²⁶ Ambassador Kitaoka Shinichi summarizes this expansionist mentality by stating, “The idea that a country could not make headway without sufficient territory, and that military force could be used to create such a territory, began to grow. It was this approach that Japan ended up endorsing.”²⁷ With each military success, militarists grew bolder and sought to extend their reach further. After the Russo-Japanese War, they aggressively pressed the government to increase the size of the military. As Onuf states, “Institutionalizing expedites the assignment of value to and through rules offering instruction.”²⁸ And instruct they did. During this period, military spending comprised over 30 percent of the national budget and would increase to over 70 percent beginning in 1937, the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War.²⁹ The increasing size and prestige of the military allowed Japan to expand the scope of its colonial aspirations. Under the pretense of supporting the Anglo-Japanese alliance, Japan entered World War I with intentions of increasing its international standing and taking hold of German possessions in China.³⁰ In 1918, Japan inserted itself in the Siberian intervention with far more troops than requested by its allies and stayed two years after the other powers had abandoned the mission.³¹ The government utilized the military to increase its colonial possessions, international prestige, and maintain domestic stability, hence the government and military were mostly aligned in these early expeditions.

Over time, the military became increasingly uncontrollable. In 1931, two Kwantung army officers plotted to take Manchuria from Chinese nationalists in the name of the Empire of Japan. They reasoned that taking Manchuria was vital to protecting Japan from Russia, provided valuable resources for the economy, and ultimately good for Mongolians.³² On September 18, 1931, a small cabal within the Kwantung army blew up a small section of the South Manchurian

Railroad and used this opportunity to blame China and increase hostilities. Following the attack, the Kwantung army occupied all of southern Manchuria in an independent and illegal military campaign.

The government in Tokyo was powerless during the entire fiasco. Before the Manchurian Incident, the emperor expressed concern over the rogue military leaders, leading Minister of War Minami Jirō to dispatch General Tatekawa Yoshitsugu to rein in the Kwantung army.³³ The army acted before Tatekawa arrived. During the Kwantung army's incursions into southern Manchuria, Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō desperately tried to settle the dispute with China. The army rebuffed Shidehara's efforts, claiming that their actions were protected by the "independence of the supreme command." Moreover, the army received enthusiastic public support, further limiting the power of the government. Even the emperor could do little to control the army. Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi contemplated asking the emperor for assistance in stopping the rebels but did not out of fear that the army's independence would reveal the throne's weakness.³⁴ The Inukai cabinet ultimately yielded to the military's demands, sending two army divisions into Shanghai to quell anti-Japanese demonstrations against the illegal activities. On March 9, 1932, the army formally established the state of Manchukuo. This episode demonstrates that the military was beginning to make independent political and strategic decisions on behalf of the government; not on its orders. This was a new kind of militarism; one defined by the *manufacturing* of opportunities instead of responding to threats.

The boldness of the military is apparent in attempted coups and assassinations of opposition forces, sometimes referred to as "government by assassination." The military coups in 1932 and 1936 resulted in the assassinations of Prime Minister Inukai, several prominent politicians, and opposition military leaders. Although both coups were suppressed, the light punishment of the rebels and boldness of the military signaled the end of effective civilian control of the government.

Japan's relationship with the West deteriorated significantly during the inter-war period. Following the Allies' victory in World War I, Japan pressed China with the infamous Twenty-One Demands. Up to this point, the West was relatively accepting of Japan's intrusions into China's affairs. However, Japan suffered an embarrassing blow to its status when the British and Americans sided with the Chinese on some demands, resulting in significant modifications to the original proposal. Though Japan gained control of German possessions in China

and railway rights, this event laid credence to the belief that the West was the ultimate adjudicator of its foreign affairs. Another conflict between Japan and the West arose during negotiations of the Treaty of Versailles. Japanese leaders advocated for a racial equality clause in the founding charter of the League of Nations but were denied. This defeat dredged up memories of the humiliating Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907. The Immigration Act of 1924 would expand on the limits of the Gentlemen's Agreement and banned Japanese immigration altogether. The end of World War I was not the beginning of a more egalitarian era.

In 1922, several Japanese leaders denounced the 5:5:3 tonnage ratios for the United Kingdom, United States, and Japan that were established at the Five-Power Naval Limitation Treaty of Washington. Though the agreement was favorable to Japan in that it artificially limited the arms production of the United States—a two-ocean power—and provided relief to a Japanese economy stretched thin by war, nationalists saw the conference as a clear sign of Japan's secondary status in the international community. They found the London Naval Treaty of 1930 equally insulting. Following the Manchuria Incident, the League of Nations responded with the Lytton Commission report criticizing Japanese aggression. The report outlined a plan that would result in limited control of the new state, to which Japan responded by leaving the League of Nations altogether.³⁵ These series of conflicts led many to believe that coexistence with the West was impossible and war was inevitable.

The interwar period highlights the difficulty the literature has with analyzing militarism. In one sense, the period is an example of Japanese democracy at its zenith before World War II. Increased enfranchisement, improved standard of living, and cooperation with the West according to the rules of the game indicated Japan was becoming a more peaceful nation. On the other hand, it was increasingly reckless and antagonistic. Was Japan more or less militaristic than in previous eras? The conventional indicators of militarism, such as military expenditures, reveal little. In the 1920s, the government cut force size, arms, and defense spending.³⁶ Yet Japan was not less expansionistic in objectives and practice. As the government cut defense spending, it fostered military education curricula in middle schools and high schools and refined its increasingly racist worldview. War capabilities retracted while the logic of war expanded. What is apparent is that the material and ideational conditions had changed. Kitaoka concludes that the growing population led to the idea that not only was expansion necessary

but also that “expansion of the nation meant national glory, and that expansion was good.”³⁷ That is, “interests are recognizable to us as the reasons we give for our conduct.”³⁸ The *idea* that expansionism was necessary was only as powerful as it could be justified to the public. The rules of the international system, which allowed for Western imperialism and stymied Japanese growth, made those justifications easier to make.

World War II Japan (1937–1945)

At first glance, it seems that colonial expansion, end of cooperation with the West, and attack on Pearl Harbor are natural progressions of Japanese militarization of the previous five decades. A realist analysis of Japan’s security behavior would conclude that the international system compelled it to engage in balancing behavior. Indeed, foreign policy before World War II was decidedly realpolitik. On September 27, 1940, Japan formed one-third of the Tripartite Pact and proceeded to sign the Japanese-Soviet Neutrality Pact on April 13, 1941. Japan was preparing for war.

However, Japanese security policy did not follow a linear trajectory, nor was it ideologically coherent. As demonstrated in the Meiji and Taishō periods, the government sought ways to cooperate with the West and rein in the military. Had it possessed the ability to control the military and cooperate with the West, militarism would have been very different.

World War II militarism was markedly different from preceding types. Japan’s actions were hyperaggressive, risky, and excessively cruel. A simple rubric describing war expenditures and listing body counts provides little insight into motivations and practices. Structural-based arguments have difficulty explaining security behavior leading up to World War II because the international distribution of power was increasingly favorable to Japan as it became stronger. Realism can account for the West’s response to Japanese expansion, but it cannot explain why Japan was so willing to put itself at odds with clearly militarily superior nations that, for the most part, accepted its rapid growth.³⁹ Japan’s changing perceptions of the West and its increasingly racist ideology compelled the government to remake the rules of the game.

Following the establishment of Manchukuo, Japan dedicated its resources to total war. The Sino-Japanese War was followed by the colonization of several

regions in China, French Indochina, the Philippines, and several other territories in Asia. The expansion of territory alone provides an important, but incomplete, story of security policy. Japan's behavior within the colonies *defined* World War II militarism. "Total war militarism" was the extreme manifestation of ideologies and strategies of the previous eras.

Japan believed it was the center of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The Kyoto School philosophy developed the foundations of this belief in the 1920s. Leading intellectuals such as Tanabe Hajime propagated a theory of the "logic of species," arguing for a multiethnic nation under a single Japanese identity.⁴⁰ According to Naoki Sakai, "Tanabe's Logic of Species was a response to such needs of Japanese Imperialism and it represented a philosophical attempt to undermine ethnic nationalism."⁴¹ This philosophy found a following with empire proponents in government. One government document, titled "An Investigation of the Global Policy with the Yamato Race as Nucleus," outlines the racial hierarchy in East Asia. This report guided policymakers and propagated "the subordination of other Asians in the Co-Prosperity Sphere," an "unfortunate consequence of wartime exigencies, but the very essence of official policy."⁴² Japan's hierarchical view of the world reflected a lack of confidence in its security and cultural strength, which it tried to rectify via comparison with the poorer and weaker East Asia countries. Historian Robert Eskildsen explains:

Japanese colonialism happened concurrently with and contributed much to Japan's modernizing process. The discourse on civilization and savagery that gained popularity at the time of the Taiwan Expedition points to a similar pattern. Even before Japan established a formal colonial empire, debates about using Japanese military power overseas drew heavily on the imagery and rhetoric of Japan's own efforts at modernizing. Despite being shot through with contradictions and ambivalence, the idea of exporting the Western civilizing impulse to the indigenous population of Taiwan helped justify, naturalize, and explain the concurrent effort to modernize Japan. Mimesis of Western imperialism, in other words, went hand in hand with mimesis of Western civilization.⁴³

Colonialism was modern and natural. Military leaders such as Colonel Ishiwara Kanji developed "an apocalyptic view of the international scene through his

idiosyncratic studies of Buddhism and world history,” predicting that a “cataclysmic ‘final war’ loomed inevitably between Japan and the United States.”⁴⁴ The public was “indoctrinated to see the conflict in Asia and the Pacific as an act which would purify the self, the nation, Asia, and ultimately the whole world.”⁴⁵ Japanese security policy was not only a strategic rebalancing of power in the international system but also the practice of establishing an ideological racial hierarchy. Remaking the world required transformation at home.

The militarization of education became especially pronounced after 1941. Japanese elementary schools were reorganized as *kokumin gakkō* (National People’s Schools), where they implemented a form of highly regimented and militarized education that took both its name (a direct translation of *Volksschule*) and inspiration from Nazi Germany.⁴⁶ Students were rebranded as “little nationals” and provided war-related training—boys were taught martial arts and girls were trained to use *naginata* (traditional Japanese pole weapon) and in nursing. The Ministry of Education implemented a curriculum that ensured “selfless dedication” to the emperor and nation. For example, one elementary school textbook included a flowery narrative about the honor of dying for one’s country and being enshrined at Yasukuni.⁴⁷ Students were bombarded with propaganda describing enemy combatants as “beasts” and “devils” and the homeland as pure.⁴⁸ The indoctrination of youth was best symbolized by *hinomaru bentō* (rising sun lunch boxes), comprised of rice and a red plum arranged to resemble the Japanese flag.⁴⁹ The boxes instilled loyalty to the nation, built solidarity with the military, and fostered unity. The pervasiveness of militarization extended to the playground, where students played war games instead of tag, and children’s magazines glorified war. Students were wholly mobilized for the war effort. All middle school students committed one year to building munitions at factories and regularly worked in the most dangerous air raid areas digging firebreaks. When students came of age and entered the war, their mothers sewed one thousand stitches in the shape of tigers into their clothing for their safe return and success for the empire. The parallels with Spartan mothers sending their sons to war and expecting them to return with or on their shields are more than apparent.

The full mobilization of the public, young and old, led to the most extreme violations of acceptable war conduct.⁵⁰ Although realism can account for the scope of Japanese expansionism during World War II, it has difficulty outlining the logic of its scale and character. The wanton violence did little to secure the

homeland and only invigorated opposition forces. Its actions were often irrational and not strategic. Japanese “prejudices affected their war conduct: the way they evaluated, and frequently misjudged, Allied capabilities; the attitudes and policies they adopted toward other Asians within the Co-Prosperity Sphere, and how they fought and died.”⁵¹

Under the doctrine of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, many believed they were freeing Asia from the “many years of tyranny under white rule.”⁵² The Japanese held a genuine belief that they were on a divine mission to create regional solidarity. This mentality was an amalgamation of warped religious and modernity philosophies and self-serving economic interests. Japan did not simply replace one colonizer with another. Japanese dehumanized their colonial subjects and enemy combatants. The list of Japan’s war crimes is lengthy. From 1937 to 1945, it colonized several countries, killed hundreds of thousands of noncombatants (Nanjing Massacre, Manila Massacre, and Bataan Death March), and killed millions indirectly (the Vietnamese famine of 1945). Many of those who survived the initial fighting became forced laborers. Japan violated dozens of warfare norms, such as torture, execution of prisoners of war, human experimentation, and use of chemical and biological weapons. The government also operated a vast network of “comfort stations,” forcing between 10,000 to 200,000 *ianfu* (comfort women) to provide sex for its soldiers.⁵³ In total, approximately fifteen million Chinese, four million Indonesians, one million Vietnamese, and several hundred thousand Malaysians and Filipinos were killed.⁵⁴

The Japanese paid for their extremism as well. Thousands of soldiers died fighting in unwinnable battles and one-way kamikaze attacks. Civilians were coerced into believing that they had to fight to the death, and many did. The fighting in Iwo Jima and Okinawa was particularly intense and tragic. Firebombing leveled almost every major city, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki suffered the only use of nuclear weapons on a human population in history, resulting in 140,000 and 70,000 deaths, respectively. In total, approximately 2.1 million soldiers and civilians died, about 3 percent of the total population.⁵⁵ The six million soldiers who returned home faced the stark reality that they had fought an unjust war that had led to the end of an imperial line that dated back millennia.

Japan’s conduct in World War II cannot be entirely explained by the orientation of the international system, external threats, or internal politics. Ideology shaped how Japan treated its colonial subjects and operated in the wider

world. Thus, when scholars discuss Japanese remilitarization, what kind of militarization do they mean? Militarism in the Tokugawa period and the first half of the Meiji period sought to create *internal* security. The Meiji government's chief objective was creating modern citizens. From the second half of the Meiji period to the end of World War II, Japanese militarism sought not only to increase its security from outside forces but also to remake the international order. In the postwar period, the government adopted antimilitarism to increase *external* security. More recently, the government of Japan has pursued the concept of proactive contribution to peace that leverages a combination of military, economic, and diplomatic tools to combat causes of international insecurity. In the span of 150 years, the role of the military, the public's view of the use of force in statecraft, and Japan's place in the international community have undergone remarkable changes. To treat all militarisms as the same sacrifices the valuable lessons that can be drawn from Japan's many mistakes and successes, and it is a disservice to the countless individuals who stood in the way of tyranny.

Postwar Japan (1945–Present)

The remaining chapters in this book investigate the content and direction of Japanese security policy in the postwar period. Therefore, the following section is limited to analysis of the connections and cleavages of different types of militarism before and after World War II.

One of the core features of various militarisms from the Meiji period onward was the primacy of religion. The government prior to and during the war years utilized state Shinto to legitimize its claim to power, justify colonial expansion, construct ethnic and culture-based nationalisms, and garner fanatical devotion to the state. Today, religion is no longer closely linked to politics, removing a critical element of the militarisms of the past. Japan would have difficulty returning to older forms of militarism, and any new type of militarism would have to derive its strength from another source of unity.

The removal of religion from politics was a purposeful attack on militarism. State Shinto was abolished by the Supreme Commander for Allied the Powers (SCAP) in 1945. Soon after, the Shinto Directive abolished Shinto as the official state religion, the Yasukuni Shrine was “demobilized, Shinto altars (*kamidana*) and the Imperial Portrait were removed from all schools, the worship of the

Imperial Palace from afar, imposed upon pupils in Japan and its overseas territories was banned, and visits to Shinto shrines were prohibited.⁵⁶ The democratization of Japan, specifically freedom of religion, ensures that the government cannot monopolize religion for political purposes. Whatever links remained between the state and Shinto were met with protests and civil rights litigation. Currently, many local and former national shrines are independently affiliated with the Association of Shinto Shrines.⁵⁷

According to Masako Shibata, education of State Shinto “has never been revived in publicly funded schools since World War II,” and “even some hardline nationalist cabinets, which attempted to restore the old notions of national identity and national traditions in education, have been hesitant to stir up the old memory of State Shinto.”⁵⁸ The Japanese are quite distrustful of religion. In one survey about confidence in seventeen social institutions, “only 13 percent of the respondents in Japan indicated some level of trust in religious groups, putting religious institutions at the bottom of the list,” which “reflects a high level of distrust toward religious groups across the board.”⁵⁹ State Shinto is now associated with the militaristic state, and new religions are often met with skepticism. Religion is unlikely to have a significant role in politics again.

Nevertheless, many in East Asia contend Japan is whitewashing history and remilitarizing. No site is more contested by Japan’s former colonies than the Yasukuni Shrine, which has been used to highlight Japan’s victimhood during World War II.⁶⁰ The Yasukuni Shrine has minimized Japan’s colonization of East Asia in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and serves as a rallying point for nationalistic groups. Nationalists have used the shrine to encourage antforeign attitudes and to stand out among a typically apolitical public. These groups seek to restore Japan’s former glory and instill pride among the Japanese youth. Several prominent politicians, such as Prime Minister Koizumi and Prime Minister Abe, have visited the shrine in official and unofficial capacities. Indeed, since the 1980s, the Yasukuni Shrine controversy has created tension in East Asia and increased the chance of conflict. However, outsiders usually overstate the importance of the Yasukuni Shrine in Japanese politics and society. Much of the controversial discourse associated with the Yasukuni Shrine is not actually located in the shrine but at the Yūshūkan that shares the same grounds.⁶¹ When politicians visit the shrine to pray, they rarely go into the Yūshūkan, the museum that propagates a whitewashed version of war history. Furthermore, since Japan

is a democratic country with strong freedom of speech protections, there is little the government can do to change the narratives propagated by the Yūshūkan.

Many Japanese visit the Yasukuni Shrine to pray for those who died fighting for the nation. According to theologian William Woodard, Japanese “feel guilty about enjoying post-war prosperity by surviving the war and by receiving a state stipendiary for the sacrifice of the death of their sons. They are normally regarded as pacifists and even anti-nationalists, but they also want a healing sanctuary in the shrine supported by the state for which their sons died.”⁶²

The emperor system has also changed significantly since World War II. During the war eras, the emperor was the symbolic force behind colonialism. Historians debate the centrality of the Shōwa emperor in World War II, but the role of the emperor in contemporary politics is clear—he does not have meaningful influence on politics and security policy. Under the postwar Constitution, the emperor of Japan is “the symbol of the State and the unity of the People, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power.”⁶³ The end of World War II demystified the emperor’s status as a living god, and as a result, proponents of reviving World War II-style militarism can no longer use him to further their agendas.

Takashi Fujitani contends that the emperor system has significantly changed since the end of World War II, highlighting the importance of “radical transformations” and “historical discontinuities” within the emperor system that reveal “which operations of power change over time.”⁶⁴ Understanding the changing role of the emperor in modern Japan helps differentiate militarisms over the past one hundred years. The emperor system was an elaborate mix of material and ideational discourses that formed an environment conducive to aggressive militarism. According to Fujitani, during the prewar era:

Tokyo underwent massive physical transformations as political elites within the new national and Tokyo governments as well as the Imperial Household Ministry reconstructed it to become a central and open theater for performance of spectacular national pageants. In that age of rising mass nationalism, the masses and the emperor were brought together to Tokyo’s new public spaces, the most important being the Imperial Plaza, for enormous ritualized celebrations for themselves and their communion.⁶⁵

In the past, the public was an active participant in constructing the divine status of the emperor and the exceptionalism of the Japanese state. Today, the Constitution separates the emperor from public affairs.

The “de-auratization” of the emperor system was facilitated by communication technologies that not only laid the emperor’s humanity bare, but it also “comes long after the Shōwa emperor’s self-proclaimed renunciation of divinity in 1946 and the formal, legal/ideological repositioning of political sovereignty from the monarch to the people.”⁶⁶ In other words, the locus of power no longer sits with the emperor; the public uses the emperor system for their secular purposes. Fujitani’s analysis of the Shōwa emperor’s funeral and ascension of the Heisei emperor finds that the emperor system highlights the progressive changes in the postwar period and a convenient forgetting of the past. During the enthronement of Akihito, the emperor (now emperor emeritus) emphasized his status as a symbol and an upholder of Japan’s “Peace Constitution.” Fujitani argues, “despite the charges from the left that the mystery surrounding the *daijosai* [enthronement of the Japanese emperor] threatened a return to the divine emperor of prewar days, media coverage accomplished quite the opposite. Rather than enhancing the monarch’s cult value, mystery coupled with titillation and these snatched glimpses completely deauratized him. No longer, as in imperial Japan, did the emperor’s panoptic gaze discipline the masses.”⁶⁷ The emperor’s increased presence in society has led to the opposite effect that it had during the Meiji period.

Another significant development regarding the emperor and politics is that all three emperors following the end of World War II have made it difficult for conservatives to utilize the throne for their causes. After the enshrinement of the fourteen Class A war criminals at the Yasukuni Shrine, the Shōwa emperor stopped visiting the shrine. The emperor emeritus Akihito never visited the shrine during his thirty-year tenure. Akihito is also quite the nontraditionalist—acknowledging the imperial family’s Korean ancestry, speaking in plain language, apologizing for Japan’s colonial history, and marrying a commoner. Akihito’s son, emperor Naruhito has maintained a low profile but shares the same liberal and global outlook. On rare occasions and prior to his enthronement, Naruhito has made oblique statements about the need to look back at the past humbly and correctly. The naming of the last two eras, Heisei (creating peace) and Reiwa (auspicious peace), highlight the general ethos of the Chrysanthemum Throne after

World War II. Modern nationalism, and the militarism that can derive from it, clings to a dehistoricized notion of the emperor and imaginary past. Yet nationalists are marginalized by the very symbols that they rally behind.

Japan is also a long-established and robust democracy with firm civilian control of the military. Americans did not introduce democracy to Japan during the occupation. The Meiji period and early Taishō period showed signs of a healthy party system and expanded the franchise to millions. Japan was not a complete democracy because the emperor was the source of political power and the military sabotaged the democratic process, but within 150 years it had evolved from an extremely stratified class system, where the vast majority of the population were peasant subjects, to a country with full suffrage, free and fair elections, religious freedom, academic freedom, and freedom of press.

The strength of democracy goes hand-in-hand with civilian control of the military. Civilian control is the “distribution of decision-making power in which civilians have exclusive authority to decide on national politics and their implementation.”⁶⁸ Moreover, it is “civilians alone who determine which particular policies, or aspects of policies, the military implements, and the civilians alone define the boundaries between policy-making and policy implementation.”⁶⁹ In East Asia, Japan enjoys the highest amount of civilian control in the areas of elite recruitment, public policy, internal security, national defense, and military organization—what political scientist Aurel Croissant has referred to as “civilian supremacy.”⁷⁰

Concerning military practices Croissant states, “While a certain degree of autonomy is necessary for the military to fulfill its missions and roles, civilian control requires the ability of civilians to define its range and boundaries”⁷¹ This is best exemplified in the current debates around Article 9. Critics of the Abe administration argue reinterpreting Article 9 is tantamount to remilitarization. However, this effort to expand the role of the JSDF is not coming from the military but from a civilian prime minister. Moreover, the reinterpretation is a significant concession; Abe sought a constitutional amendment in his first term. Abe extended deliberation in the Diet hoping to clarify to the public the legal limitations of collective self-defense and provide adequate time to consider the merits of his policy recommendations.

The separation between the military and the government is clearly outlined in the Ministry of Defense (MOD) guidelines and white papers. The prime minister

of Japan, a civilian, is the commander-in-chief of the JSDF. Military authority then proceeds to the minister of defense (civilian) of the MOD. The prime minister and minister of defense are advised by the chief of staff (military) of the Joint Staff Council and the National Security Council (civilian officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MOD), which was established in 2013. Military officers do not have a direct link to the prime minister and must go through the normal channels of communication; the system is designed to have several layers between the prime minister and the military. This is vastly different from the 1920s, when high-ranking army and navy officers had direct access to the emperor via the mechanism of the “independence of the supreme command.”⁷²

MILITARISM WITH ADJECTIVES

From the Tokugawa period to the present, Japan has pursued a myriad of militaristic policies and ideologies with significant consequences domestically and internationally. The diverse security motivations, practices, and justifications of the government and the public suggest militarism is much more complicated than currently depicted in the literature. The standard pacifism-militarism analytical framework fails to provide deeper insight into the creation and consequences of policies reflective of unique individuals, relationships, and historical contexts. Comparative analysis of militarism across temporal and geographic cases would be a fruitful exercise in determining the content and direction of contemporary Japanese security policy. This book proposes a multiple militarisms analytical framework to achieve sharper analytical differentiation among militarisms.

This framework denaturalizes the prevailing assumptions about militarism and provides some basic guidelines for analyzing security policy. Historian Ingo Truschweizer argues it is problematic to rely on normative definitions based on the most extreme historical examples.⁷³ The term “militarism” is commonly associated with interwar-period Japan, Nazi Germany, and present-day North Korea. Though these cases are surely examples of militarism, further scrutiny reveals diverse motivations and practices. The United States, for example, has fought more wars and acquired many more destructive weapons than the aforementioned cases, but one would be hard-pressed to conclude it is similarly militaristic. The United States’ democratic values, civilian control of government,

and general acceptance in the international community legitimize its security behavior.

To begin, the multiple militarisms framework does not assume militarism is aggressive, immoral, or singular. Sanitizing the term allows for the examination of security policy according to a case's unique context and circumvents normative biases. Second, the multiple militarisms analytical framework encourages analysis of how force is used. Is the military used for defensive or offensive purposes? Does the military represent a single state, or does it participate in multi-lateral missions? Does it participate in nontraditional security missions, such as reconstruction, disaster relief, or election monitoring? Addressing these questions illustrates the types of militarism states practice. Third, empirical data, not theory, should guide analysis. Realism assumes states, as rational actors, engage in balancing behavior because of tangible and perceived threats. This assumption is built on normative prescriptions of what theorists believe states *should* do. Analysis of weaponry, defense budgets, and elite rhetoric should focus on actual practices and less on predicted outcomes or unsaid motivations. Fourth, an eclectic approach utilizing *only* the complementary elements of different theories in the field of international relations is problematic and should be avoided. Although both material and ideational variables shape militarism, researchers should avoid cherry-picking hypotheses from competing schools of thought to fill in gaps in theory. For example, one cannot assume that a culture of antimilitarism explains constrained security policy while also arguing that international anarchy compels states to always balance against threats. The assumptions regarding the permanence of the international system and the lack of actor agency are ontologically incompatible with arguments highlighting the malleability of interests and impacts of ideational variables on state behavior. In other words, theories of absolutes are not compatible with theories of change. Fifth, beyond the examination of data related to security, such as the military-industrial complex and defense expenditures, careful attention should be paid to the general environment that cultivates or represses militarism. Demographic, economic, political, and ideational variables significantly impact a state's willingness and *ability* to pursue certain kinds of militarism.

These general guidelines are not a definitive list of what can comprise a multiple militarisms analytical framework. Depending on the case, one may need to

examine other dimensions of security policy. I propose this framework to reverse the conventional logic. Instead of the question, Have material and ideational environments caused militarism? one asks, What kind of militarism has a state adopted, if at all, given the material and ideational environment? Before militarism type can be determined, a baseline understanding of the core elements of militarism is needed.

Although a recurring topic in international relations scholarship, political scientists have not critically examined militarism. In the foundational book, *History of Militarism: Civilian and Military*, historian Alfred Vagts reasons that militarism is not the opposite of pacifism, but “more, and sometimes less than the love of war,” as it can exist and even flourish in peacetime.⁷⁴ Militarism “presents a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions, and thought associated with armies and wars and yet transcending true military purposes. . . . Its influence is unlimited in scope. It may permeate all society and become dominant over all industry and arts.”⁷⁵ In this classic definition, the commonly understood dimension of militarism is emphasized, the encroachment of military forces into the civilian world. Yet, as demonstrated in the Meiji period, militarism draws much of its strength from discourse and motivations not entirely related to matters of war. Besides, this definition suggests that the causal arrow is unidirectional; militarism reshapes the nonmilitary world and not the other way around. The public can be as culpable as military elites in shaping and propagating militaristic ideologies and practices.

Ingo Trauschweizer contends that militarism “may best be understood as the connection of militarization of the state and of society. It requires a strong military ethos, a social system threatened with rupture, a mythical reading of the nation’s past, and a sense of fear—of one’s neighbors or of ideological foes—that subsumes political culture.”⁷⁶ Trauschweizer suggests the concept of militarism is not static, and that the meaning can evolve depending on the strategic and political needs of those who brandish the term. For example, one reason why Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan are typically considered ideal types of militarism is because these countries lost World War II. If the Axis powers had won the war, one could assume British and American war conduct would be severely criticized in the present day. How states understand the relationship between military force and state formation has changed over time. In the late nineteenth

century, many Europeans measured national greatness in military strength and colonial possessions.⁷⁷ During the Cold War, militarism took on a different connotation depending on the ideological orientation of the concept holder. Marxists believed militarism was a result of capitalistic societies, and the West argued it was about the failure of civilian control.⁷⁸ By the end of the Cold War, states rapidly decolonized, and the worth of a nation was measured by how much it could protect and promote democracy. The use of the military and the concept of militarism drastically changed within a hundred-year span. Militarism is derived from different contexts, comes in different forms, and requires careful analytical differentiation.

Martin Shaw contends that militarism should be specified not in terms of “how military practices are regarded, but how they *influence* social relations in general.”⁷⁹ Furthermore, militarism “denotes the penetration of social relations in general by military relations; in militarization, militarism is extended, in demilitarization, it contracts.”⁸⁰ Richard Kohn proposes utilizing the term “militarization” instead of “militarism” to avoid the political connotations of the latter.⁸¹ Militarization is “the degree to which a society’s institutions, politics, behaviors, thought, and values are devoted to military power and shaped by war.”⁸² However, analyses focusing on degree instead of type leads to counting instances of militarism and an overreliance on the indicator, military expenditures. Determining the degree of militarization is crucial to understanding the strength of a militarism type, but the concepts are distinct. Additionally, this definition’s focus on evidence of militarism neglects scenarios where militarism was rejected or modified. The tenets of militarism that a state adopts, or rejects, can illustrate the kind of militarism it has constructed.

This book defines militarism as the following: (1) the acceptance of the use of violence as a legitimate tool of statecraft; (2) the merging of government, military, and public ideologies of war; and (3) the spread of militaristic discourse throughout the physical and ideational dimensions of a civilization, such as through art, physical sites, and public education. This broad definition salvages much of the literature identifying militarism in states while requiring the researcher to provide additional analysis to clarify type.

From this baseline definition, one can identify militarism type. Where to begin? Due to the dearth of analysis within international relations scholarship on the subject, I look toward other fields of research, namely democracy studies,

to construct the multiple militarisms framework. In identifying democracy subtypes, Collier and Levitsky call attention to the challenge that researchers face in constructing typologies, the tension between increasing analytical differentiation and maintaining conceptual validity. One method of creating subtypes is to utilize Sartori's ladder of generality. As one moves up the ladder of generality, one finds more cases of the root concept, and as one moves down, fewer cases exist.⁸³ This approach is useful for identifying cases of militarism but requires an additional step to determine type. Hence, Collier and Levitsky propose the use of diminished subtypes, accomplished by removing attributes from the baseline concept to explain each case. This approach is insufficient for our purposes because it assumes there is an ideal type of militarism. For example, one can have an "illiberal democracy" but not a "illiberal militarism."

Unlike the concept of democracy, where procedures and institutions are easily identifiable indicators of an ideal type, militarism is a broader concept that lacks similar indicators. The researcher can create a minimum list of militarism indicators to establish a root concept but should be transparent on how the list was determined and acknowledge that subtypes of this root concept reflect a normative bias. Another method is "precising" the definition by adding defining attributes to the root concept.⁸⁴ Precising allows for finer analytical differentiation because the additional attributes illustrate the uniqueness of each case. However, this method risks overly modifying the root concept and creating types far removed from the original concept. Colin Elman shows the usefulness of explanatory typologies, which are "multidimensional classifications based on an explicitly stated theory."⁸⁵ Explanatory typologies "invoke both the descriptive and classificatory roles of typologies," defining compound concepts and assigning case type.⁸⁶

In determining militarism type, this book proposes the method of utilizing the ladder of generality (abstraction) to determine the existence of militarism, precising type by identifying defining attributes, and utilizing explanatory typological analysis to confirm the content and direction of that militarism type. The researcher starts with a case that demonstrates the baseline definition of "militarism" and proceeds to add identifying descriptors to illustrate type. In other words, militarism with adjectives.

There are several strands of research within political science, sociology, and history that can help identify militarism types. Neorealists, for example, have

debated the prudence of offensive and defensive security postures. Constructivists such as Daisuke Akimoto utilize Andrew Oros's security identity framework to classify four kinds of security identity—a pacifist state, a UN peacekeeper, a normal state, and a U.S. ally.⁸⁷ Bhubhinder Singh has supplemented realist works with identity-based analysis, contending that Japan has shifted from a “peace state” to an “international state.”⁸⁸ Leif-Eric Easley draws a difference between unilateral and multilateral defense postures in addition to considering the “pacifism” versus “extensive use of force” traditional model.⁸⁹ Martin Shaw identifies at least two forms of militarism, classical modern militarism (industrialized total warfare) and contemporary militarism (global surveillance warfare).⁹⁰ Historian Andrew J. Bacevich calls attention to “misleading and dangerous conceptions of war, soldiers, and military institutions” that have come to define an American militarism.⁹¹ Sociologist Michael Mann writes extensively of this American militarism that is far too reliant on its military power given its ideological, economic, and political strengths.⁹² Adrian Lewis argues that the increased professionalization of the military and end of conscription changed the very nature of American citizenship, where citizens eliminated themselves from the conduct of wars and offered support for the troops in lieu of selfless service,⁹³ what this book would call bystander militarism. Lastly, Pierre Hassner warns of a growing modern militarism where the indirectness of conflicts sanitizes violence and dehumanizes the enemy, thus blurring the “normal” and the “extreme.”⁹⁴

This extensive literature across disciplines allows for the construction of multiple militarisms that do not fit neatly in a pacifism-militarism framework. Consider protectionist militarism in present-day Turkey and Thailand, where the military believes it serves as a check on government corruption. New defense technologies born out of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) may be leading to a techno-militarism that replaces boots on the ground with drones and hackers. Some terrorist groups practice a religion-based militarism whose objectives extend far beyond gaining territory. And some states have begun to explore privatized militarism, relying on mercenaries and private security contractors to circumvent international law and domestic criticisms. What may be the most controversial claim in this book, antimilitarism is another type of militarism that emphasizes diplomacy over the use of force, yet finds the use of force *legitimate* in some circumstances. These militarisms are constructed differently and have far-reaching and diverse consequences.

PACIFISM AND MILITARISM IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Predictions of a foreboding return of Japanese militarism and nationalism are built on assumptions of what states *should* do. This approach to analyzing security policy is incomplete at best and alarmist at worst. As this chapter sought to demonstrate, militarism has held different connotations for different people at different times. Impressive economic growth, fear of the West, and sense of superiority in Asia were the main forces behind the zealous imperialism of the late Meiji period and interwar period. During World War II, militarism was defined by fanaticism and wanton violence. Over the last three decades, Japanese nationalism has been fueled by insecurity brought on by economic decline and poor demographics. In each period, movements and countermovements, novel justifications and deeply embedded practices, and the material world and ideational world clashed and melded to form a distinct militarism reflective of the time. The next chapter begins the exploration of the material conditions that shape Japanese security policy by examining the consequences of an aging and declining population.