

# Experience of Modern Japan and Its Foreign Policy Challenges

By

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## **Prologue:**

The famous American scholar on Japan, Edwin O. Reischauer, in his book *Japan; The Story of A Nation*, divided Japanese history into three periods, namely: Traditional Japan, Modernizing Japan and Post-War Japan.

Though I feel these divisions are fitting to my lecture, I should state now at the outset that today we will not be delving into Traditional Japan except to make the following observation:

During the Tokugawa Era – that is to say, from the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> through the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century – uninterrupted peace and stability made it possible for the Japanese to develop the social and physical infrastructure conducive to subsequent rapid modernization. For example, basic education was broadly provided; social order and security were maintained; and Tokyo, then called Edo, was one of the largest urban centres in the world. Developments in rice growing, fishing, artisanship, commerce and finance led to the accumulation of capital, technical know-how and management skill.

When modernization started in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps the only major contributing factor Japan had to import from the developed west was industrial technology. Therefore, while the modernization of Japan has been described as “remarkable” or even “miraculous”, Traditional Japan served more as a springboard rather than fetters for Modernizing Japan.

At the same time, the remarkable postwar recovery of Japan has also been described by some as a miracle. However, I should point out that the stage had been set for this second miracle by Japan's utter fiasco that destroyed itself as a nation in the latter part of the Modernizing Japan period.

Today, I would like first to look at the first "miracle" of modernizing Japan in the Meiji period, and how and why that supposed "miracle" led to the suicidal debacle of 60 years ago. Then I will look at how the experiences of rapid modernization followed by equally swift destruction lay the framework for Japan's developments in the postwar period as a "non-nuclear arms, non-military, peace-oriented" nation, as well as a country characterized by its economic and trade orientations. These orientations still define today's Japan and are relevant in understanding how it might respond to the challenges it presently faces in the international arena.

About 15 years ago, the Japanese pop singer Hiromi Goh sang a song called "Dramatic Japan". The song was about today's Japan, but in my mind it is the history of modern Japan that is truly dramatic. For the Japanese who lived through the drama along with all of its ups and downs – that is to say, my generation as well as those of my parents, grandparents and great grandparents – life could not always have been easy.

### **The Building of a Modern Nation**

Looking over the century-and-a-half-long chronology of Japan's modern history, some specific historical details stand out. First, the pace of Japan's modernization that began in the 1860s was sudden and fast, and can be described as inimitably rapid nation building. At the same time, it cannot be denied that this hurried modernization also cast a shadow on the path that Japan subsequently would take.

- (1) The year 1868 was a milestone in the development of modern Japan. That year, Kobe and Osaka opened their ports to foreign trade, ending the country's nearly two and a half centuries of isolationism. Political power was returned to the Emperor, and Tokyo was designated as the capital. In the following years, under the slogan "Enrich the country, strengthen the military", Japan embarked on building such institutions commensurate to a modern state as conscription, a constitution and an education system, and started on the path toward industrialization.
- (2) The regime change in 1868 could rightly be called a revolution, but it took on a form in which power was returned to the Emperor from the warrior class of the Tokugawa Shogunate. This is why the movement is referred to as the Meiji restoration rather than Meiji revolution.

In other words, the revolution was carried out not in the name of a democratic entity that was supposed to give legitimacy to a new political power, but in the name of an archaic, traditional authority that was the Emperor. This was a recurring pattern throughout Japanese history in seeking legitimacy for ruling the nation. In fact, in the approximately 2000-year history of Japan, there are limited periods in which the Emperor actively held political power. Instead, there was a pattern of the aristocracy or the military class taking the reigns of power at different times, and whoever held power did so by bringing the Emperor on their side as the source of legitimacy.

The Emperor's political authority seemed to serve as a "standard" for governing, and those successful in bringing the Emperor on their side gained the legitimacy to exert political power as a bearer of this standard. Where such

authority of the Emperor originates is an interesting question, and perhaps one of the most important in understanding the history of Japan.

At any rate, in order for the lower-class samurais from the obscure and peripheral regions of Japan to override the old establishment despite their lack of pedigree and experience, and in order for them to establish a powerful centralized government in place by chipping away legacies of the old regime, the Emperor's authority was vital. As well, implementing the revolution in the name of restoring the traditional authority of the Emperor, rather than forcing new, unfamiliar ideology onto the country, helped significantly to make the transition relatively peaceful. This also served to implement the subsequent substantial reforms smoothly.

At this juncture, it is interesting to note that the postwar Allied Occupation also decided to use the Emperor's authority to conduct the occupation of Japan as peacefully as possible, and refrained from prosecuting the Emperor for his wartime responsibilities.

- (3) Thus, I have to point out that the rapid modernization seen in the Meiji period was served greatly by this factor unique to Japan – i.e., making use of the political legitimacy accorded to the Emperor.

Other factors that contributed to the remarkable speed with which modernization was carried out include: (a) the acute awareness of the leadership during the Meiji period that in order to defend Japan from imperialism abroad, they needed to modernize as quickly as possible; (b) as already stated, the sophisticated social and physical infrastructure that developed through the Tokugawa period served as a springboard for modernization; (c) the Japanese

held a proactive attitude toward bringing foreign knowledge and technology to their country.

- (4) The fruits of this rapid modernization was exhibited to the world through such historical landmarks as the Japanese victory in the Sino-Japanese War from 1894 to '95; the successful abolition of extraterritoriality embodied in the unequal treaties signed with Western nations; and victory in the Russo-Japanese War from 1904 to '05.

The Russo-Japanese War holds a special significance in the history of modern Japan. First, it signifies that by 1905, less than 40 years after the Meiji restoration of the late 1860s, Japan had achieved the kind of modernization that enabled it to fight Russia, one of the major powers of the time. Secondly, because of Japan's "victory" of a sort, it gave birth to an overblown confidence and a misguided nationalistic sentiment among the populace, affecting Japan's subsequent militaristic development greatly.

In other words, up until the Russo-Japanese War, the strengthening of Japan economically and militarily was mainly intended as a defense against external pressure and a defense of its independence. Once having experienced victory, however, Japan started to lean towards militarism, and increasingly took on the characteristics of an imperialist nation.

### **The Rise of Militarism**

The second thing that stands out in the 150 year history is that the success of Japan's modernization quickly turned to the advent of imperialism, which in turn led to the inevitable rivalry with other major powers and finally to its own ruin.

(1) The overseas expansion of Japan's imperialism had already begun with the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki at the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, by which China ceded territorial rights over Taiwan to Japan.

With the Treaty of Portsmouth, which ended the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Russia ceded the southern half of the Island of Sakhalin to Japan. In 1906, Japan founded the South Manchuria Railway Company, annexed Korea in 1910, took the Chinese city of Qingdao from German occupation in 1914, and things escalated to the point of Japan presenting its 21 demands on China in 1915.

By this time, Japan had grown to be a rival of Britain in the domination of China, and in 1920, at the end of the First World War, Japan sat at the Versailles Conference as one of the five victorious powers alongside the U.S., the U.K., France and Russia.

(2) At this point in time, however, Japan was in reality nothing more than a latecomer to the imperialist world, and what it had gained by then was after all not enough to support the growth of its industries. By the time Japan acquired awareness of being a major power and sought further expansion, the world was beginning to be more intolerant to such expansion. The established powers became more concerned about defending what they had gained already, and nationalism was also on the rise in China. Japan's imperialist expansionism was therefore doomed to conflict with the major powers of the time as well as be resisted by China.

In retrospect, Japan could have tried to meet its economic needs within the broadening framework of international trade. For Japan to take such an approach, it was vital to maintain at least a degree of cooperation with the dominant powers of the time, particularly the U.S. Indeed, the International Conference on Naval

Limitation in Washington from 1921 to '22, as well as the London Naval Conference of 1930, presented Japan with such a choice. However, with the world economy stagnating at the end of the 1920s and the emergence of trade blocks as well as the shrinking of the world markets, choosing such an option became difficult. Indeed, the limitation on naval strength imposed by the Washington and London Conferences were seen in Japan at a time of its economic difficulties as an impediment to Japanese interests and fed the resentment held among the Japanese public toward the West.

Against such a backdrop, an idea arose in Japan, professing that further expansion of the Japanese empire was the best way to resist the Western domination of Asia and to put a stop to the West's subjugation and perversion of the Orient. This kind of ideology, helped by racial overtones, became increasingly subjective and emotional, making Japan increasingly blind to the realities of international relations and objective assessment of its own strengths and weaknesses.

(3) The difficulties facing the world economy gave rise to fascism in Italy at the end of the 1920s, and to the rise of Nazism in Germany in the early '30s. So it must be noted that the failure of democracy and the rise of nationalism at the time were not unique to Japan. These developments in Europe certainly exerted significant influence on Japan, and subsequently helped Japan to fatally misjudge the international landscape and enter the Asia Pacific War.

## The Asia Pacific War – An enigma

- (1) From the Manchuria Incident in 1931, to the start of the war against China in 1937, expansion into Indochina from 1940 to '41 and the Tripartite Alliance established in 1940, Japan drew increasingly closer to war with the United States, finally progressing to the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941.

While initially successful in its war against the U.S., Japan wandered into the path to defeat starting with the Battle of Midway in 1942, leading to the war's end in 1945 with the acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration.

You may notice that the year of the Potsdam Declaration, 1945, comes 40 years after the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905. In other words, it took 40 years to destroy the nation that had spent the previous 40 years building itself.

- (2) The thought that persists is: why would Japan so foolhardily enter a war against a country with ten times its resources? This enigma will probably never be resolved completely, but it is still possible to provide some relevant explanations.

(a) The success of modernization also initially brought about military victories, as was seen in the Sino-Japanese war, the Russo-Japanese War, and the First World War. The fruits of imperialist expansion dependent on military strength resulted in confidence among the Japanese leadership and the public, as well as arrogance and condescension against China and the West – indeed resulting in what can only be described as a loss of sanity.

(b) Indeed, the voices of the sane were crushed beneath militarist doctrine and terrorist acts and threats thereof by segments of the military as well as right wing extremists.



(c) As war spread from the Manchuria Incident in 1931, the war against China starting in 1937 and to the invasion of northern Indochina in 1940 and that of southern Indochina in 1941, efforts were made, albeit ineffectively, to halt military advancements and seek compromises. But these attempts were ill fated, because Japanese troops on site could not be adequately controlled by the central command, and the military as a whole grew to be beyond the control of the government. Consequently, the Western nations took the measure of economic sanctions against Japan, further pushing Japan toward taking a gamble on war with the U.S.

With the government unable to control the military, and the central military command unable to control the units dispatched to foreign soil, Japan lost its central authority and degenerated into a regime of irresponsibility if not anarchy. At the root of this deterioration were the sacrosanctification of the military and its institutional independence from the government. The Meiji government, in order to create a conscripted military with morale high enough to face up to the revolts by the old warrior class, attached its command directly to the Emperor and endowed it with a large degree of autonomy. Here again the Emperor's extraordinary quality to induce legitimacy was used, and again with consequences.

(d) Around the time it entered into its war with the United States, Japan made a number of critical errors in reading the international political landscape. For example, it misread Germany's military successes, which was only temporary, as something that was indicative of its long lasting strength.

This mistaken assumption motivated Japan to join the Tripartite Alliance of the Axis Powers, making war with the U.S. unavoidable. As well, Japan misread the non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Germany, and tried even to draw the Soviets into the Axis, demonstrating an astonishingly rudimentary understanding of the situation in Europe.

(e) Japan also underestimated America's resources and military power, and believed that if Japan would succeed during the early campaigns of the war, it would deflate the U.S.'s will to fight, bringing about a chance for a swift ceasefire. It would be beyond any reasonable analysis that Japan would think of engaging in war with a country from whom it imported its oil.

(3) While these reasons offer some answers to the "enigma", I find that Japan's exceedingly rapid modernization itself ultimately to provide the background of these developments.

The modernization of Japan was so hurriedly pursued with such success that it did not endow the nation with sufficient experience in the management of a modern state with all its destructive might. Specifically, Japan had not developed the ability to gather and properly analyze information needed for effective and correct diplomacy. The time needed for the country's industrial and military modernization was miraculously short, but that short period was not enough for the nation to sufficiently mature and become well versed in the statecraft necessary to use its physical destructive capability wisely.

(4) Was the Asia Pacific War that Japan started an evil enterprise or was it motivated by a noble cause like the liberation of Asia? There were in fact some who dreamt

of a liberated Asia, and in some ways the war indeed helped to bring about such a consequence. However, we obviously cannot say that Japan engaged in war with such a cause as its objective.

On the other hand, the war does fit more the description of something that spun out of control due to mismanagement based on erroneous reading of the international situations, rather than a fully pre-meditated and controlled evil enterprise. In this sense, I feel Japan's action was closer to a crime of passion than a crime of pre-meditation. Of course, given the suffering Japan caused its neighbouring countries and how it also destroyed itself, its actions were certainly evil in outcome.

### **The Occupation**

The third thing that stands out in the 150-year history relates to the occupation of Japan. The Allied Occupation introduced sweeping reforms to ensure that Japan ceased to be a military threat to the United States. However, its emphasis soon changed to developing Japan into a Western ally in the Cold War. This change pushed Japan toward playing a more active role for its own defense, but Japan sought as much as possible to stay its course as a non-military, peace-oriented country.

- (1) The postwar occupation of Japan by the United States was in great part received by the Japanese as liberation from Japan's own militarist regime. The values that were brought over from the United States as a result of the occupation – that is, for example, democracy, respect for the individual, equality between men and women – were of universal nature and something that the Japanese themselves desired. Many Japanese also believed that it was a stroke of luck in an otherwise

unfortunate situation that they were conquered by the U.S. rather than the Soviet Union.

- (2) The change of policy orientation of the Occupation Authority brought about strong resentment against the U.S. in Japan, particularly among the leftist political groups. Until the end of the Cold War, the political force in Japan critical of the country's alliance with the U.S. comprised roughly 1/3 of the National Diet. During this time, the loudest bickering between the governing and the opposition parties centred on Japan's management of its relations with the U.S. However, the ruling party nonetheless managed to maintain these relations by asserting, when necessary, its will through the power of the majority.

The public also did not overly take the government to task for this. Among the foreign policy elite, including the governing party leadership, the implications of allowing anti-American sentiments to gain strength were generally understood. The logic runs this way: anti-Americanism shakes the foundation of the Japan-U.S. security alliance, strengthens the need for independent military build up, possibly with nuclear armament, the effect of which would jeopardize relations with the U.S. irreparably and make relations with Japan's neighbours more difficult.

- (3) The Allied Occupation's original effort to reshape Japan into a pacifist nation was something that, in fact, the Japanese themselves desired. There was a deep longing for peace and a passionate outburst of anti-militarist sentiment, which still remains strong today. The renunciation of war in Article 9 of the new constitution, for example, had overwhelming support, which even now remains constant. It should be noted that although recently discussion has started to revise

the constitution, it is most likely that the basic tenet of Article 9 will be preserved in the end. Also, as the only people in the world who had suffered nuclear attacks, the Japanese showed particular sensitivity to nuclear weapons.

Even as the aims of the Allied Occupation shifted, and the U.S. began to desire the remilitarization of Japan, the Japanese Government only reluctantly responded to such requests in agreeing to create the National Police Force in 1950, the National Security Force in 1952, and The Self Defense Force in 1954.

The pacifism and anti-militarism among the Japanese public remained strong, and the Japan's defense budget did not exceed one percent of its GDP until 1985, and subsequently has not exceeded it by much.

In 1968, then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato made a pledge known as the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, that is, not to produce, possess or allow nuclear weapons into Japan. This policy statement won support from an overwhelming majority among the public, which has not shaken to this day.

Furthermore, in the same year, Prime Minister Sato also pledged not to export weapons to areas of conflict, which was later consolidated to a total ban on the export of arms in general. The basic tenet of this policy, which kept Japan from entering the world arms market, is still being upheld today, and has become a unique hallmark of Japan's pacifist and anti-militaristic posture.

### **Becoming an Economic Power**

Let's move to the fourth point that stands out in Japan's 150-year modern history.

Postwar Japan quickly recovered economically and re-emerged on the international stage, developing both as a commercial, trading nation as well as a non-nuclear weapons, non-

military and peace-oriented country, eventually becoming an economic superpower to rival even the United States.

- (1) International recognition of Japan progressed from the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, entry into GATT in 1955, the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration as well as entry into the United Nation in 1956, joining the OECD in 1964, normalizing relations with the Republic of Korea in 1965 and normalizing relations with China in 1972. European recognition of Japan was slower in coming, but was achieved with Japan becoming one of the G-6 Summit countries in 1975.
- (2) As early as the mid-1950s, the Japanese economy surpassed its prewar peak periods, and for each of the subsequent 20 years posted close to 10 per cent growth, rapidly making Japan one of the world's major economic powers.

Its relations with the United States played a critical role in Japan's economic recovery. First, by relying on the U.S. for its security, Japan was able to minimize its defence outlay, and devote its resources toward economic growth. Second, for its export-driven growth, the United States served as a large and relatively open market. Third, Japan was able to take advantage of technology transfer from the United States. And fourth, financial assistance from the U.S. and U.S.-led international institutions were greatly helpful.

- (3) On the other hand, the rapid increase of Japanese exports to the United States soon became the source of periodic trade friction. In 1971, Japan instituted self-imposed regulations relating to its export of textiles to the U.S. In subsequent years, trade friction also arose around automobiles, steel and semiconductors. As the Japanese economy continued to gain momentum, by the latter half of the

1980s, Japan was even referred to as the threat to the U.S. to replace the Soviet Union of the Cold War era. In other words, it took only 40 years since the end of the Second World War for Japan to reach an economic status to which it had aspired, but never was able to gain, before the war: i.e., an economy comparable to that of the United States.

- (4) Under normal circumstances, becoming a major economic power would lead to taking on greater roles in the field of international politics and security as well. However, Japan continued to rely on the United States for its security, and increased its military role only to the extent necessary to maintain trust in its alliance with the Americans. The majority of the Japanese public was also reluctant to do anything more militarily.

With respect to international economic affairs, Japan could not help but play the role of a major power, and actively participated in maintaining the world economic order. Particularly with respect to development assistance, it became the world's largest provider of Official Development Assistance through the 1990s. However, beyond economic affairs, the appetite for gaining influence or taking leadership in the international community did not grow much and its participation in global issues was mainly through providing financial contributions for international efforts. Few political leaders were comfortable with diplomacy, and the limitations of its bureaucracy also seemed ill suited to place the country in a leadership position.

## Seeking a New Role

The fifth and final point that stands out relates to Japan's new role.

Not long after the late 1980s when voices were heard proclaiming, "Japan as No. 1", the country once again suffered setbacks in the early 1990s. One was the bursting of the bubble economy, and the other the humiliation Japan met in relation to the Gulf War of 1991. But again, these two setbacks, negative as they were, proved to be significant as they changed Japan with lasting effects.

- (1) Japan's rapid economic growth stagnated upon entering the '90s with the burst of the economic bubble, plunging the country into what would be later known as the "lost decade". Also during this time, the world witnessed the growth of developing countries, most notably China and India. Although Japan continued to hold the position of the second major economic power in the world, its presence, relatively speaking, diminished greatly. Japan would not recover from its economic doldrums until 2004.

However, the economic downturn after the bubble burst was not simply 10 years wasted. Actually, during this time Japanese politics changed greatly so pork-barrel, vested-interest, behind-the-scene-brokerage politics quickly lost ground, and younger policy-versed politicians became prominent. Japanese financial institutions rid themselves of bad loans, and Japanese industries were streamlined. The most fundamental change of all was how the public became intolerant of a system that was unable to make real reforms, bound as it was by outdated norms and practices and vested interests. The Japanese strongly directed their leaders to make changes in Japan, even painful ones. The strong popular support for the unconventional Prime Minister Koizumi for the last four years,



and the victory of his Liberal Democratic Party this past September is a testament to this change in attitude.

- (2) With respect to Japan changing direction toward actively taking part in international politics and security, the most important factor was the Gulf War of 1991.

In the wake of the Gulf War, Japan received little expression of appreciation from the rest of the world, despite the fact that Japan contributed U.S. \$13 billion in aid of the allied effort. The message was that throwing money around, without shedding real sweat and blood, was not enough to win the respect of the international community. This was almost as shocking as losing another war, and indeed was described by some as Japan's "second defeat" – after its defeat in 1945 – and prompted national debates about its foreign policy with lingering effects to date.

Thus, in the past 10 years or so, Japan has participated in peacekeeping operations in Cambodia, Mozambique and East Timor. It has sent observers to such historic elections as those in South Africa and Palestine. It has assisted in providing fuel to ships involved in the anti-terrorist campaign in Afghanistan. Japanese forces have been dispatched for humanitarian efforts in Iraq, and to assist victims of the tsunami in Southeast Asia in December 2004. The Japanese team has also been active in the wake of the recent earthquake in Pakistan. Japan's self-defense forces have played a major role in many of these operations. Some pundits have said that this means Japan was becoming a "normal" country at long last.

(3) I believe that the reactive, rather than proactive, tendency of postwar Japan in international relations is due in great part to the long shadow cast by the experience of defeat in the Asia Pacific War. This shadow made Japan negate taking any military role on the world stage. The strong aversion among the Japanese of anything military possibly hindered the country from taking an active role until after the “second defeat” in the Gulf War. From the bitter memory of the Asia Pacific War came the fear among a substantial portion of the public that Japan’s armed forces being active overseas, for peacekeeping missions or even humanitarian aid, may lead the country down a path it has traveled once before. But the lessons learned from these defeats have been important and potent in steering Japan towards playing a unique and positive role in the world

(a) First, although losing the Asia Pacific War forced Japan to give up its approach of trying to expand its spheres of influence, its subsequent growth into a major economic power made clear that establishing global economic ties, rather than a regional economic block, was ultimately practical to the country’s needs.

Japan’s postwar policy orientation of not seeking hegemony in the region was beneficial to Japan, and contributed to the stability of Asia. It will certainly be the proper, guiding principle for Japanese diplomacy in the future too.

(b) Secondly, since losing the war, Japan has been taking the posture of non-nuclear arms, non-military and peace-oriented country, and has done so with strong support from its citizens. This choice has served to keep tensions in Asia from worsening. Because the attitude toward nuclear

weapons is as much a political choice for status and influence as it is a military choice for security, Japan's renouncement of such weapons expresses how the nation intends to define its identity and role in the world. By adhering unwaveringly to its renunciation of nuclear arms, Japan can also advance significantly on the process of reckoning for having brought about calamity and hardship to its neighbouring countries through the war

As Reischauer points out, "Japan probably will remain a peripheral player in this great military drama, but through its strong support of peace, coupled with its firm cooperation with the U.S. and championing of international cooperation everywhere, it can help tip the world away from unproductive military expeditions and toward a better utilization of human resources."

Indeed, Japan today not only enjoys peace and prosperity, but it also attracts people from around the world even by its intellectual and cultural contents. It is increasingly a soft power state with all its charms.

### **Epilogue:**

Japan at present is drawing the world's scrutiny from two perspectives. The first is in relation to whether Japan will be forced eventually to go nuclear. The second has to do with the question of whether Japan will be able to maintain its peaceful co-existence with China and thereby safeguard stability in Asia. These two issues, while separate and individually complex, are also interlinked.

If there is one message that I would like to impart to you today, it is that Japan will indeed be able to deal appropriately with these challenges.

This faith I hold in Japan is rooted in the country's modern history. Through its 150-year modern history, Japan unquestionably has become one of the world's most mature industrial democracies. The maturing of Japan into the country it is today was not something that occurred smoothly, but was tempestuous to the point of making it remarkable to the rest of the international community. The sacrifices of the Japanese populace were not small. It crossed the sword with the major powers of the world. It also caused suffering to its neighbouring countries. Through incurring these huge costs in terms of human lives and material destruction, Japan ultimately transformed itself into the mature industrial democracy it is today.

The commitment of the Japanese public to the national identity of a non-nuclear arms, non-military, peace-oriented trading nation is deep-rooted, precisely because it stems from bitter experiences. Through the bitter experiences of collective failures, the nation has learned such attitudes as valuing balanced views on issues, keeping emotions in check, placing priority on rationality, practicing patience, overcoming nationalism and rejecting fanaticism. I often refer to these attitudes as being engraved even into the DNA of the Japanese people.

Diplomacy cannot be conducted by one country alone. The foreign policy of a nation is a function of a larger international situation. The responsibilities relating to Japan-China relations will be borne by both Japan and China. While a certain degree of uncertainty surrounds the future of China, I am confident that Japan's commitment to its national identity – as well as its attitudes behind this commitment – will make it possible to resolve the issues with which the world is watching how Japan would deal.

I would like to thank you for listening attentively to my lecture, and would like to close by saying that what I have expressed here today are my personal views, which do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Japan. I do hope, however, that my own insights to this subject have provided you with some food for thought in considering Japan's past, present and future. Thank you.

Reference: [Japanese History Table](#)