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Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe is on track to become the longest serving leader in Japan's modern history. In his campaign for reelection as leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)—the ruling party in Japan—Abe has committed to revising Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution that renounces war and forbids the use of force to resolve international disputes. If that revision occurs, Daisuke Akimoto, in *The Abe Doctrine: Japan's Proactive Pacifism and Security Strategy*, argues that Abe will manifest his vision of a new grand strategy for Japan.

The Abe Doctrine provides a comprehensive documentation and analysis of security policy formation under the second Abe administration since 2012. Akimoto contends that the Abe administration has been developing this new grand strategy, characterized as “proactive contribution to peace” and defined by the adoption of security legislation enabling the exercise of collective self-defense. Japan's adherence to “absolute pacifism” or “negative pacifism” following World War II implied that Japan could not take actions to contribute to international peace and stability. The renunciation of war was in effect a rejection of the military. Akimoto explains that over time, leading policy experts in Japan began to explore “positive pacifism,” i.e. actions that contribute to peace such as United Nations peacekeeping operations. This concept evolved into the “proactive contribution to peace,” a policy enabling Japan to come to the aid of an ally, respond to attacks against aid workers during United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations (PKO), and take clearer action to defend Japan in a grey-zone situation affecting territorial security.

Akimoto does not present this development with a whole-hearted embrace of Abe's objectives, perhaps reflecting his connection to the Komeito Party in Japan—the party in coalition with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Throughout the consideration of reinterpreting Article 9 of the Constitution and enacting new legislation based on this interpretation, the Komeito Party served as a balancing force to moderate the pace and scale of some of the reforms considered. Akimoto adopts a similar approach in his book; it is explanatory, providing balanced representation of supportive and opposing views in Japan on the reforms, and refrains from judging the value of Abe's policy goals. The author layers this policy review with a theoretical analysis to weigh whether it is in line with Japan's post-World War II commitment to pacifism. While Akimoto does not apply this theoretical analysis throughout the book, it provides a helpful reference point at the beginning for understanding how Japan's security has developed over the years and how to define it within the parameters of pacifism.

The book's greatest strength is in its details. For example, Chapter 3 outlines the arguments surrounding “15 Cases,” a series of case studies examining how the adoption of collective self-defense might be put into use. The 15 Cases were considered useful simulations for preparing the Peace and Security Legislation passed by the Diet in 2015, and Akimoto's review of them resulted in a meaningful examination of the practical implications of Abe's proactive contribution to peace through the opinions of leading policymakers and experts. Moreover, *The Abe Doctrine* brings many Japanese sources into English and should be acknowledged for its representation of the Japanese debate. The cases are divided into three categories: grey-zone situations, international peace and security, and situations related to the use of force. Akimoto explains each of these cases, how force might be used in responding to each of the cases, and what limitations would be placed on that use of force. He lays out critiques of each scenario, presenting the reader with a spectrum of policy views from leading Japanese policymakers and academics.

Akimoto also explores an oft-missed aspect of Japan's security policy debate—the role of the Diet. Most examinations of recent Japan's security reforms focus on executive action, such as the Cabinet reinterpretation and renegotiation of the U.S.-Japan security cooperation guidelines. Akimoto devotes a chapter to documenting the legislative debate and process in the Lower House and Upper House of the Japanese Diet. It was widely assumed that once Abe committed to the security legislation, its passage was a done deal, given the ruling coalition with the LDP and Komeito. However, the debate in the Diet and the exercise of publicly discussing the ramifications of this new policy was important to building public consensus and demonstrating transparency in governance. This analysis is informed even more by Akimoto's personal experience working as a Policy Secretary in the Lower House (House of Representatives) for a Komeito representative. Legislative process matters, even if adoption of the law was a foregone conclusion, and Akimoto's account of the debate illustrates that the LDP attempted transparent, public discussion on the matter, even if it did not result in consensus among the Diet.

Akimoto uses three case studies to examine the implications of the Peace and Security Legislation, enacted in September 2015. First, he examines the consequences for ballistic missile defense (BMD) in Japan. This defense of the homeland is affected by the adoption of collective self-defense because, under the new legislation, Japan has expanded its options for responding to missile threats, primarily from North Korea. This strengthens the deterrent effect of its BMD system.

Second, Akimoto argues that the United States and Japan are moving to become more equal allies under the revised U.S.-Japan security cooperation guidelines. Japan can now undertake collective self-defense actions with U.S. forces to defend Japan, and can engage in expanded peacetime cooperation, intelligence sharing, and grey-zone cooperation to enhance deterrence. However, he points out that the United States and Japan never will be fully equal allies until the Constitution is revised, and the U.S.-Japan alliance is revised to allow Japan to come to the defense of the United States.

Finally, Akimoto examines the global implications of Abe's security reforms through Japan's participation in UN PKO, namely the operation in South Sudan. With the Peace and Security Legislation, UN peacekeepers from Japan are now authorized to protect and rescue UN civilian and non-governmental (NGO) staff working PKO missions. This is a significant step for Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) who, until this point, were only authorized to use self-defense if under attack, but not allowed to come to the aid of other UN or NGO forces who may have been serving in the same area. As Akimoto explains, the theory of "proactive contribution to peace" was tied to the Preamble of the Constitution emphasizing peaceful cooperation. Now, Japan can more effectively contribute to international peacebuilding operations.

In this example, Akimoto highlights an area that deserves more study: the strain of participating in security operations on the personnel involved in carrying out those missions. Akimoto cites a report that 56 members of the SDF sent overseas to support operations in Iraq and the Indian Ocean committed suicide. Indeed, in my own research in Japan during the 2015 legislative debate, a Japanese official indicated that the risks to SDF personnel through more active security operations could not be discussed publicly. Yet, under the legislation's expanded authorities, the strain of overseas deployments or combat-related activities during PKO or expanded collective security operations and training will increase. It is incumbent upon the SDF to provide the resources within the SDF necessary to prepare personnel for these risks, and to offer programs for treatment, if needed, upon their return. From a policy perspective,

understanding the cultural shift occurring in the SDF as a result of these risks, and developing suicide prevention programs within the SDF is an obligation the government has to its personnel.

Drawing from these examples, Akimoto makes a compelling case that the Abe Doctrine is emerging, and that this new grand strategy is repositioning Japan to address threats to its security while also enabling it to be a more active partner in international peace efforts. Whether Abe can consolidate the strategy through a Constitutional revision is yet to be seen, but given the steps taken thus far, he is on his way.

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