

Peter Van Ness 著 「Japan, the Indispensable Power in Northeast Asia」

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## THE UNIQUENESS OF JAPAN

Pressures have been growing for years, both within and outside of the country, for Japan to adopt the international role of a so-called “normal nation,” turning its formidable economic might into political and military influence, and even deciding to go nuclear, if necessary, to assert its position in the global power hierarchy. But Japan is not a normal nation. It is unique in many important ways, a fact that provides significant opportunities to play an importantly different land of role in international affairs.

### 1 . How is Japan unique?

Just prior to the modern period, Japan was purposefully isolated from outside influences by its Tokugawa leaders for 250 years - a period during which a characteristic Japanese cultural distinctiveness was shaped.

### 2 .Admiral Matthew C. Perry's“ black ships ”broke down the Tokugawa barriers to commerce with the West in the middle of the 19th century, and Japan subsequently became the first non-Western country to industrialize successfully.

### 3 . Turning that industrial power into military might, Meiji Japan became the only non-Western imperialist power in the modern period, for a time competing successfully with Russian, British, German, and American imperial interests in East Asia.

### 4 . Defeated in World War II, Japan was the only country in history to be attacked with nuclear weapons, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

### 5 . The Japanese Constitution, which was adopted under the occupation by the Allied powers, includes the unique provision in Article 9 that states “the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.”

### 6 . Successfully re-industrialized after World War II, Japan has served as an economic model for

other developing Asian countries, joined the influential Group of 7(G-7) industrial countries as the only non-Western member, and became the second largest economy in the world.

7 . Finally, during the 65 years since 1945, Japan has lived in peace with its neighbors, was the world's number-one bilateral foreign aid donor, and has made major contributions to United Nations institutions and international peacekeeping operations.

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[コメント]

改めてピータ・バン・ネス氏によって示された日本のユニークさは、自らを振り返る上で参考になる。有難い指摘。大事にしたい。

- 2010年2月12日 林明夫記 -