

Asia-Pacific Policy Papers Series

JAPAN'S ASIANISM, 1868-1945 DILEMMAS OF JAPANESE MODERNIZATION

By Yukie Yoshikawa



THE EDWIN O.
REISCHAUER CENTER
FOR EAST ASIAN STUDIES
WASHINGTON D.C.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COCOM	Coordinating Committee on Multilateral Export Controls
EAS	East Asian Summit
FTA	Free Trade Agreements
G8	Group of Eight
G20	Group of Twenty
IBJ	Industrial Bank of Japan
KMT	Kuomintang
MHI	Manchurian Heavy Industries
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SEA	Southeast Asia
SMR	Southern Manchuria Railways Company
WWI	First World War
WWII	Second World War

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A NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

Japanese personal names throughout the text are presented in Japanese form – that is, with the surname followed by the given name, in reversal of standard Western practice. Macron marks have been used where relevant in all cases except where the word in question appears so commonly in English discourse without macrons that such usage has become relatively standard. Tōkyō and Kyōto are the two major cases in which macrons would be relevant where this convention is employed. Most figures are given in yen, but when currency translations are undertaken, they are made at contemporary exchange rates for the item in question, unless otherwise indicated.

PREFACE

In Japan, Asianism as a field of study is relatively unexplored. There is little consensus on the definition of the term and only a few books dealing with its history, even in the Japanese literature. Rather, many scholars have chosen to study and write on one specific Asianist or Asianist organization, by themselves often a fascinating subject. Many Asianists were unique, dynamic, and creative, eager to put their thoughts into practice. The occupations of the twenty Japanese Asianists along with 75 related people that this monograph discusses are rich in variety, ranging from scholars, diplomats, military officers, business people, politicians, and journalists to revolutionaries, coup plotters, communists, spies, and the head of a right wing group.

This trend of focusing only on individual Asianists has, however, avoided serious analysis of Asianism as a whole, including its impact on Japanese society during 1868-1945, its successes and failures, and possible lessons for Japan's future and the rest of the world. The diversity of Asianist thinkers has made a systematic categorization challenging. In fact, I was advised not to attempt to categorize them because experts on each Asianist thinker would have differed with me. Still, I decided that there should be some kind of categorization of Asianism to help in grasping the big picture, and because comparisons among little-researched Asianists should be encouraged for an improved understanding of Asianism as a whole. It was difficult to finalize my thoughts on categorization, going through eight different versions before settling on the final form; however, I believe it was well worth doing.

Another reason why the study of Asianism has been lacking in Japan is that it was denied by the international community after the Second World War and is considered, as one colleague characterized it, an obscure, "dangerous"

topic. This impression, compounded by prejudice against certain controversial Asianists and a lack of understanding of the topic, has made many intellectuals in Japan shy away from the field as a whole. In order to avoid such prejudice, I imposed on myself a rule to read at least one writing by each Asianist author, and I have mostly done so with the very few exceptions due to the availability of literature.

In that sense, this monograph has explored a new field. I sincerely hope this monograph will help Asianism to be studied more seriously, and for readers to extract many lessons from it. There are many facts that contemporary Japanese choose to forget, both good and bad. But history repeats, if lessons are not properly learned.

I would like to thank Dr. Kent Calder for supporting me to the end, and giving me innumerable advice to improve the quality of this monograph. I also thank the Reischauer Center for its support and for providing me with a great opportunity to publish this monograph. I likewise appreciate advice from Dr. Gotō Ken'ichi at Waseda University, Dr. Inoue Toshikazu at Gakushūin University, Dr. Matsuura Masataka at Hokkaidō University, and Dr. Marukusu Kyōichi at Mejiro University, all of whom were most generous with their time in Tokyo during the summer of 2007. Last but not least, I would like to thank my colleagues, Mariko de Freytas and Michael Boyd for editing this monograph, literally line by line.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's world system, there are signs of historic change along several dimensions. The Group of Eight (G8) is slowly being superseded by the Group of Twenty (G20) in terms of political credibility. The Iraq War and operations in Afghanistan have considerably eroded American global hegemony. At the regional level, integration is deepening in areas ranging from Europe to East Asia and Latin America.

In East Asia, a multitude of regional forums with varying member nations are now active, including the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the East Asian Summit (EAS). In bilateral relations as well, Free Trade Agreements (FTA) are proliferating in the region, including China-ASEAN and Japan-ASEAN deals. China, Japan and the ROK are now considering feasibility studies on a possible Northeast Asian FTA.

Once a powerful advocate of regionalism in Asia during the pre-WWII period and remains one today, Japan has been thinking about regional integration since its modernization began during the Meiji period. Yet, Japan continues to face concerns from the Chinese and the Koreans over history issues ranging from textbooks to the Yasukuni shrine and comfort women -- more than sixty years after the end of the Second World War. Although China and Korea brandish the "history card" partly for domestic reasons, Japan still feels somehow uncomfortable in Asia, discouraging Tokyo from being more proactive and playing a leading role.

True enough, in the pre-WWII period, there was a daunting gap between the political and economic weight of Japan and the rest of Asia. It did not make

sense for non-Japanese Asians to be enthusiastic about the hierarchical regionalism that Japan proposed. Now the situation has changed, with many Asian countries following Japan in their economic development and increasing their political assertiveness. Political-economic interactions and human exchanges have deepened since the days when Asian delegates to the Tokyo Conference in 1943 were moved by the fact that they had seen their neighbors for the first time.

Today, we are at a point where other East Asian countries have also found interest and strategic merit in deepening regional integration. In other words, the time is ripe. Hence, with all these proceedings and with more than 60 years having passed since WWII, Japan should have overcome the history issue long time ago.

What is it about the history issue that stops Japan from moving toward deeper cooperation in the region? Through the series of history disputes between Japan on the one hand and China and Korea on the other, we can observe that the Japanese tend to offset or whitewash the Chinese and Korean claims of atrocities with Japanese “goodwill” and efforts to “liberate” Asia from colonization in the pre-1945 period.

Thus, here we propose to explore the history of Asianists, who created and propagated the ideological support of Japanese claims of solidarity with Asia, in order to assess how Japanese “goodwill” is compatible with the annexation of Korea and the Second Sino-Japanese War. In other words, what went wrong with Asianism in the pre-WWII period? Unless Japan objectively considers this question, it would not be able to face the rest of Asia, or for that matter the rest of the world, with the required self-understanding and self-confidence. This is especially true regarding the history concerns raised by the Chinese and the Koreans. Japan should promote further regional

integration and take a proactive role in the current rapidly changing world, not allowing the history issue be an obstacle to its in playing a key role in global transformation.

We also suggest listening to Asianists' voices on regionalism, since they pondered regionalism quite seriously and very dynamically during the Meiji and early Shōwa periods (1868-1945). A history of their thoughts would provide rich insight into contemporary discussions of regional integration. Some Asianists explored the way in which Japan sought a more equitable relationship between the East and the West during the late 19th and the early 20th century, curbing capitalist exploitation and narrowing the income gaps of riches between haves and have-nots by promoting economic development in Asia. Unfortunately, after the Pacific War, the Japanese chose to forget these earlier discussions. The negative image of Asianism associated with the Great East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere was pronounced, even though only one variant of the concept was responsible for such impressions, while other camps were not. We can draw lessons from that once-forgotten experience as contemporary Japan promotes regionalism in Asia today.

Reviewing Asianism then gives us insight into how we should address Japan's classic identity issue:¹ does it belong to Asia or is it an honorary member of the West? This dilemma is deeply related to Japan's attitude toward Asia and Asian regionalism and must be resolved in order for Japan and its neighbors to move forward.

Structure of the Monograph

¹ We are discussing here the identity issue not from a geographical viewpoint, but rather from an ideological perspective. The fundamental problem is the gap between Japanese self-image as a world Power/ developed country and the broader Asian self-image of the continent being a colonized and under-developed region, though this is fading today.

In Section II, we review the personal history of key Asianists from the Meiji period to the end of World War II (1868-1945). Looking at their life histories, we can clearly see a generational transition from Meiji to Shōwa during which time Japan transformed itself from a trivial Asian archipelago into a major colonial power.

In Section III, we then reflect on the nature of Asianism as a whole and its social role in pre-WWII Japan in order to see how this concept evolved and what legacy remains. Japan found itself trapped in a controversial situation: as Asians the Japanese were indignant against the West for exploiting their fellow Asians, yet it was the West that brought modern technology and showed benevolence in finance and in other respects that made possible Japan's victory in its war against Tsarist Russia.

Further, as Japan modernized itself, it needed markets in which to sell its burgeoning heavy-industrial products that were not competitive with those of the other Powers. In order to prioritize its exports, Japan expanded its territory and sphere of influence to Taiwan, Korea, and northern China, as these were the only areas on which the other Powers had not yet made legal claims, at least within reach of Japan. These actions implied exploitation of fellow Asians, just like the Western empires, and this modernization dilemma further complicated Japan's identity dilemma.

In grappling with this situation, Asianists developed four basic approaches, according to my categorization:

- (1) **Cosmopolitan** – Yoshino Sakuzō and others proposed pro-West/ anti-exploitation of Asia
- (2) **Asian Monroe Doctrine** – Matsui Iwane and others supported pro-West/ accommodating toward exploitation of Asia

- (3) **Final War** – Ishiwara Kanji and others were anti-West/ anti-exploitation of Asia
- (4) **Imperialistic Compassionate** – Nakatani Takeyo and others were anti-West/ accommodating toward exploitation of Asia.

In Section IV, we outline the three key lessons from the history of Asianism. The first is that the East Asian region should pursue equitable relations both internally and externally. History has denied all approaches except the Cosmopolitan: it was impossible to totally ignore the West economically, and few Asians outside of the Japanese supported a simple transposition of colonial master from Europe to Japan.

Japan should make efforts to allay the suspicions of non-Asians about Asian regionalism, since Asia is today home to rising powers such as China and India. Despite the fact that Japan was no match for the United States, directly after Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 the United States Government and public grew worried about the "Yellow Peril." Today, the combination of Japan, China and India would be more than sufficient to again alarm extra-regional powers. Care must be taken on all sides not to re-ignite such parochial tensions.

Second, fusion of East and West in Japanese style is the essence of Japan's identity. Rather than a simple question of Japan belonging to either East or West, some Japanese Asianists succeeded in adding their original values or new concepts of human welfare through intensive interactions with Western culture. In other words, such Asianists thought that excessive lust for riches by capitalists harmed societies, whether in Japan or China or anywhere else, and that the anti-Japanese sentiment that spread in China was caused by Japanese imperialism. Thus they pursued ways to alleviate such sentiments, mostly through giving the government a proactive role in regulating

capitalism and assisting the vulnerable. These original values should also be regarded as products of Japan, not narrowly defining traditional Japanese culture and nature as the only thing original to Japan.

The third lesson from the Asianist experience is that Japan needs to maintain a more objective and well-balanced worldview. The last point is especially relevant to avoid repeating the mistakes of Showa-era Asianist thinkers by disregarding inconvenient facts. For example, Tōyama Mitsuru, the powerful and compassionate protector of Asian exiles like Sun Yatsen, could not criticize Japanese capitalists and politicians for hurting Asia through economic exploitation despite pleas from his protégés. History repeats, especially when the lessons are not fully learned. As contemporary international circumstances are increasingly similar to those of the 1930s, we need to remind ourselves of lessons from the past, in order not to repeat the same mistakes in future.

Of course, it is hard to have a deep understanding of both the East and the West. Still, it is encouraging to know that some Japanese in earlier generations succeeded in doing so. For example, although Shidehara Kijūrō focused on the West and had little direct experience of Asia, he had a balanced understanding of both, and helped China revise unequal treaties with the Powers. Yoshino Sakuzō studied in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany for three years to be a political scientist, ultimately the University of Tokyo, after living in China for three years as a tutor to a son of Yuan Shikai. More such cosmopolitan individuals are needed today.

As in the early 20th century, today we also see symptoms of significant change in Asia and the world order. In reflecting on the development and application of Asianist thought, let us hope that the lessons learned might help Japan chart a wiser course today.

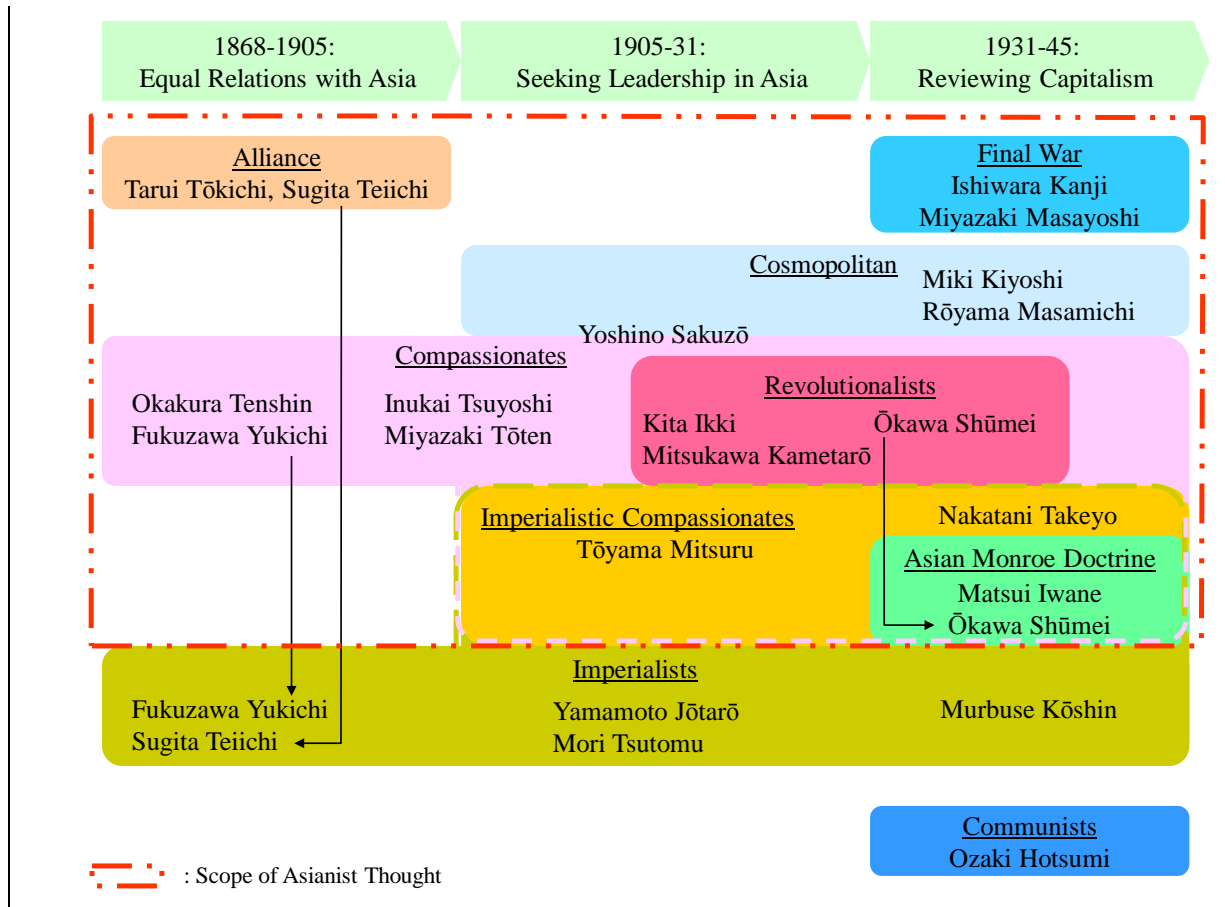
II. AN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF ASIANISTS FROM MEIJI TO THE END OF WWII

There is no single way to define Asianism, which has as many definitions as there are dictionaries.² Here we define it as a body of ideas addressing what Japan should do with respect to Asia in the face of Western imperialism.

One of the reasons why it is so hard to define Asianism is that the concept did not become fully coherent in the rapidly changing international environment of the early 20th century. Thus, here we have divided the period into three parts: pre-Russo-Japanese War; from the Russo-Japanese War to the Mukden Incident (the Japanese army's invasion of Manchuria in 1931); and from the Mukden Incident to the end of the World War II. We have also categorized the key figures into several groups (see Figure 1), which will be elaborated upon later.

² Matsumoto, Ken'ichi. Takeuchi Yoshimi "Nihon no Ajia Shugi" Seidoku [Thorough Reading of Takeuchi Yoshimi's book, Japan's Asianism]. Tokyo: Iwanami, 2000. 2-3.

Figure 1: Intellectual Map of Asianists



In the first period, Japan recognized itself and was regarded as a petty Asian country whose primary objective was not to be colonized. In those early years, two school of Asianist thought were born. One group was compassionate towards Asians suffering from colonialism. The early backers of this “Compassionate” approach merely advocated moral support; but as Japan modernized, the meaning of “support” came to include financial and military aspects. The other group advocated an alliance with other Asian sovereign states (China or Korea) in order to resist the Western imperialists. The “Alliance” group soon changed their tone for three reasons. Namely, their potential allies were not interested, since such an Asian alliance was unprecedented and they clung to a traditional, China-centered order. Japan’s

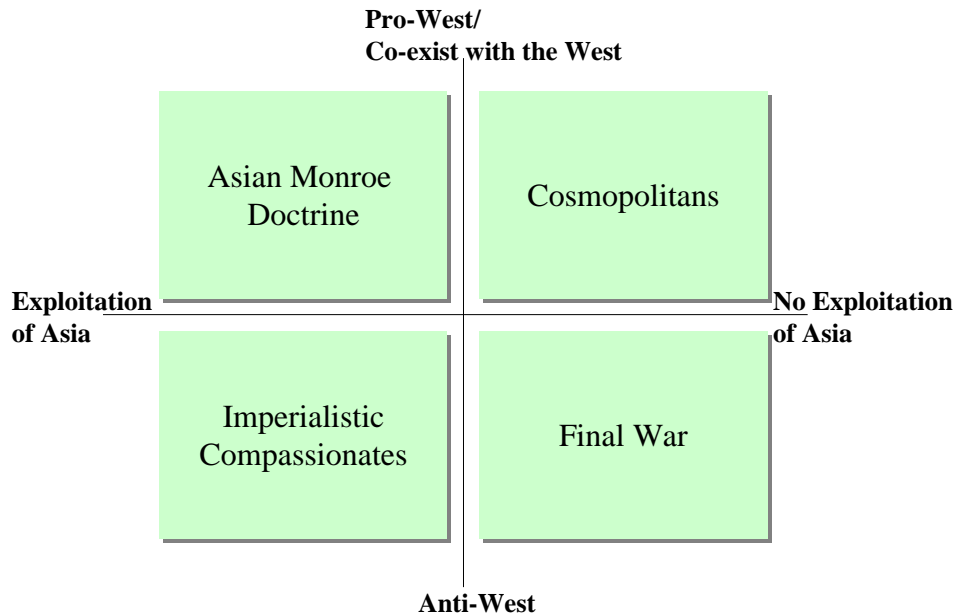
need for such allies declined after the Anglo-Japanese alliance was consummated, and Japan came to be recognized as a Power in its own right after the Imperial military's dramatic victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5.

Victory in the Russo-Japanese War had a considerable impact on Asianism in Japan since it boosted Japanese self-confidence in general and encouraged Asianists to rethink their excessive worship of the West. The new “Cosmopolitans” sought a more equitable relation between the East and the West. The war that eliminated Russian influence from the Korean Peninsula, however, also opened the door to annexation of Korea and the construction of Manchukuo, Japan’s puppet state in Manchuria. By doing so, Japanese intellectuals aped the Western countries they had earlier so bitterly criticized. As Japanese imperialism came to harm fellow Asians, the Compassionate school divided into two subgroups: “Revolutionaries” who criticized Japanese imperialism and tried to foment a revolution in Japan to contain the harm of imperialism, and “Imperialistic Compassionates” who were silent about the ills of Japanese imperialism but kept up their criticism of the Western variety.

The Mukden incident was another watershed, since it was in a sense the beginning of Japan’s isolation from the international community. This isolation led to the Japanese focus on Asia, in reaction to the previous efforts to assimilate with the West. This isolation, along with a gradual stalemate in the course of the unplanned military expansion in China, created another two factions: a “Final War” faction who believed Japan should integrate economically and politically with Manchukuo (and later China) in preparation for a war against the West; and the “Asian Monroe Doctrine” group, which was close to the Imperialistic Compassionate camp but differed in the sense that they believed Japan could co-exist with the West as long as

it did not interfere in Asian matters. The characteristics of the various Asianism factions on the eve of WWII are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Asianist Factions on the Eve of World War II



In tracing Asianists and their thoughts through history, we can see that the main bodies of thought have shifted. This can be attributed to various historical events as well as a generational difference in worldviews between pre-imperial and post-imperial Japan. Before Japan was recognized as an imperialist nation, it was quite easy for the Japanese to be consistent in denouncing imperialism and to show compassion toward fellow Asians. Once Japan had colonies, however, Japanese Asianists were challenged by the logical inconsistency of denouncing Western imperialism while tolerating Japan's.

To better understand Asianism in the context of the modern history of East Asia, we thought it useful to include some relevant government policies,

historical events and background. In addition, short introductions of the major historical figures described in this monograph can be found in the Appendix.

A. Meiji Restoration to the Russo-Japanese War (1868-1905)

The early Meiji government was led by a handful of the founding fathers of Meiji Japan, or *Genrō*, who in their youth had experienced limited wars against European countries in the late Edo period (1603-1867). Notable among these early leaders were Itō Hirobumi and Yamagata Aritomo. Once the new government was established most of them toured Europe and the United States as the Iwakura Mission (1871-3). They shared an awareness that the West was much stronger than Japan, and that Japan could end up as a colony of any Western country unless it strengthened itself.

Above all, revising the unequal treaties with the Powers -- including extraterritoriality and Western denial of Japan's tariff rights that the Meiji government had inherited from the Edo Shogunate -- was Tokyo's first priority. In order to achieve revision, the *Genrō* were determined to modernize Japan, ranging from introducing a constitution, democracy, and western legal systems to enhancing their nation's military power (also known as *Fukoku Kyōhei*), and following the "international rules of the game," defined by Europe.

The "international rules of the game" that Japan learned began with the Powers making "legal" diplomatic and/or trade demands of weak countries. Once these demands were accepted, the Powers converted them into treaties. Through this procedure, whatever the Powers did was legalized, and the weak were obliged to "respect the commitments described in the treaties" semi-permanently. If a weak country did not like the new rules, it had to become strong enough to change them. The rules were flexible for the Powers, which did not hesitate to change them to further their self-interest, as "logical consequences of events."³

³ Mears, Helen. Mirror for Americans, Japan (Japanese translation). Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 2005. 154-5.

To be sure, Japan did launch a legal battle against the international norm of condoning a Chinese indentured laborer market in Macao during 1872.⁴ In the *Maria Luz* incident, Foreign Minister Soejima Taneomi ordered a Peruvian ship, *Maria Luz*, which stopped at Yokohama, to release more than 200 Chinese indentured laborers, from a humanitarian standpoint, upon the plea by a Chinese coolie who escaped from the ship seeking help. Japan was an important stopping point for ships carrying coolies from Macao, the largest Chinese coolie market. This incident led to the demise of a route for the Chinese coolie trade.⁵ However, this situation was exceptional.

Basically, Tokyo followed the “international rules of the game” in Asia as defined by the Powers. Tokyo provoking gunboat diplomacy against Korea by signing the Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity (an unequal treaty) after a battle at Ganghwa Island in 1875, exactly as the British did against the Japanese two decades before in Kyūshū. Regarding China, although Japan signed a treaty with the Qing Dynasty in 1871 that treated both parties as equals, Japan soon became aggressive, resulting in the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894-5.

Shortly thereafter, Russia and its allies France and Germany demanded that Japan return its newly won Liaodong Peninsula because they had territorial designs of their own in China. Soon after this Triple Intervention, Russia leased Liaodong’s major cities, Port Arthur and Dalian. This move angered the Japanese government and public, because the peninsula had been won at high cost by the Japanese military during the war. The situation gave rise to the slogan *Gashin Shōtan* (remember the humiliation and endure hardship to

⁴ This legal battle was waged in a court in Yokohama, which adjudicated extraterritoriality in Japan. The judges and jury were all foreigners.

⁵ Ashizu, Uzuhiro. Dai Ajia Shigi to Tōyama Mitsuru [Asianism and Tōyama Mitsuru]. Kamakura, Japan: Ashizu Jimusho, 2005. 13.

revenge), which kept the Triple Intervention in the popular consciousness and stoked a desire for revenge. Japan settled scores a decade later.

The First Sino-Japanese War in the end cost the Chinese Empire an indemnity worth 200 million Kuping Taels of silver (17 million lbs.) and the loss of Taiwan. This money, which could have been used to modernize China, was ultimately spent instead to further modernize Japan. One beneficiary was the Yahata Steel Works, whose construction marked the start of heavy industry in Japan. Further, in 1900 Japan sided with the Western Powers to oppose the Boxer Rebellion.

Through these actions, Japan demonstrated its modernization and its rigid adherence to European “international rules of the game.” In return, Japan was rewarded with not only the revision of the unequal treaties (ending extraterritoriality in 1894 with the United Kingdom and gaining tariff rights in 1911 with the United States), but also with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902.⁶ This alliance with the world’s greatest power thrilled the Japanese so much that 1,500 Keio University professors and students paraded from their campus at Mita to the Imperial Palace, the British Embassy, and the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs (MOFA), singing a song celebrating the alliance, and shouting *Banzai* at the end.⁷

The situation was a Plank of Carneades dilemma⁸ for Meiji Japan: although these achievements were not possible without sacrificing Japan’s neighbors, they could not be shared with others. Without these achievements Japan

⁶ Since the Powers included the most favored nation status in the unequal treaties with Japan, if Japan could delete an unequal provision, it could be applied to other Powers.

⁷ Hirama, Yōichi. Nichiei Dōmei: Dōmei no Sentaku to Kokka no Seisui [The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: Choosing the Alliance and the Rise and Fall of a Nation]. Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūjo, 2000. 42-3.

⁸ The Plank of Carneades dilemma involved the question of being guilty or not when a ship wrecked and two passengers in the water found a plank floating in the sea. One took the plank for his/her survival, knowing that the other would be drowned as a consequence of his/ her action.

might well not have survived as an independent state. In fact, the Japanese victory in the First Sino-Japanese War silenced the discussion inside Britain about allying with the Qing Dynasty.⁹ Without the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan could never have imagined winning a war against Russia. Tokyo would have had no choice but to fearfully watch the Trans-Siberian Railway's completion in 1904, and the likely subsequent mass transportation of Russian troops capable of swallowing Manchuria, Korea, and even Japan.

This fear was compounded by the fact that Qing Dynasty officials were easily bribed. The powerful Qing politician Li Hungchang was rumored to have accepted a Russian bribe of \$1.5 million to sign the unequal Sino-Russian Secret Treaty against Japan in 1896,¹⁰ allowing Russia to build the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria despite the fact that if connected with the Russian Trans-Siberian Railways, it would present a serious threat against not only his country but also Korea and Japan. Korea, originally leaning toward Russia in order to balance Japan, was incapable of denying foreign troops entry into its territory. The major battlefields of the First Sino-Japanese War were mostly in Korea, not in China or Japan.

China and Korea were either unwilling to or incapable of siding with Japan against Russia to protect their independence. Russia had no intention of being satisfied only with Manchuria, as became obvious by St. Petersburg's refusal of Itō's proposal to mutually recognize Russian special interests in Manchuria and those of Japan in Korea. Japan felt that it had to declare war preemptively against the Russian Empire before the Trans-Siberian Railway's completion.

⁹ Scott, David. China and the International System, 1840-1949: Power, Presence, and Perceptions in a Century of Humiliation. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2008. 107-27.

¹⁰ Fairbank, John K. and Liu, Kwang-Ching ed. The Cambridge History of China. Vol. 11, Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911. Part 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 112.

It was in this context that Fukuzawa Yukichi wrote his editorial titled “Datsua Ron [Farewell to Asia]” that said “Korea and China are too obsolete to look at the reality in which they now sit,” and insisted that Japan should focus on developing itself so it can “get out of Asia and join the West.”¹¹ At first, he supported Kim Okgyun in his campaign to reform Korea along Meiji lines, imitating the Meiji period in Japan. Once Kim’s efforts failed in 1884,¹² however, Fukuzawa concluded that neither Korea nor China was in a position to ally with Japan to fight against the West, and Japan could not afford to help them.

Sugita Teiichi agreed. Insisting that Asia should be free from the Western yoke, Sugita went to Shanghai to pursue the possibility of allying with the Qing Dynasty during the Sino-French War (1884-5).¹³ After visits to China and the West, however, Sugita concluded that the Chinese were too stubborn to understand the gravity of their own situation. He saw that before all Asians dominated by the Great Powers, Japan should join the ranks of the Western imperialists.¹⁴ Tokutomi Sohō soon also came to the same conclusion. He realized how powerless Japan really was when it succumbed to the Triple Intervention by Russia and its allies (Germany and France), and returned the Liaodong Peninsula to China after winning the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895.

Although Fukuzawa, Sugita, and Tokutomi understood that Japan would exploit Asia by joining the Great Powers, they believed there was no viable alternative for Japan to preserve its independence. Should we call them

¹¹ Fukuzawa, Yukichi. “Datsua ron” [Farewell to Asia]. 1885. Jiji Shimpō.

http://www.jca.apc.org/kyoukasyo_saiban/datua2.html

¹² Igawa, Satoshi and Kobayashi, Hiroshi. *Hito Arite: Tōyama Mitsuru to Genyōsha* [He was the Man: Tōyama Mitsuru and Genyōsha (Dark Ocean Society)]. Tokyo: Kaichōsha, 2003. 145.

¹³ Yamamuro, Shin’ichi. *Shisō Kadai toshite no Ajia: Kijiku, Rensa, Tōki* [Asia as a Subject for Thoughts and Studies: Cornerstone, Link, and Project]. Tokyo: Iwanami, 2001. 61-62.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 62.

impatient because they were unable to wait for other Asians to stand up for themselves? Instead of answering the question directly, here I simply present a few facts. First, it took fifteen years from Commodore Perry's 1853 visit for Japan to transform its political regime into a more efficient political system. In China's case, eighty-eight years passed between the Qing Dynasty's first battles with Great Britain in the First Opium War in 1840 and Chiang Kaishek's completion of the Chinese Revolution and establishment of the Nanjing government in 1928.

In the intervening years, the Great Powers began their semi-colonization of China. Forty-three years passed between the time Fukuzawa published the *Datsua Ron* editorial and the day that the Nanjing government was established. Since Fukuzawa died in 1901, he did not even live to see the fall of the Qing Dynasty.

There were, however, others who were much more patient than these three. Another Asian alliance advocate, Tarui Tōkichi, promoted the idea in 1893 that Japan and Korea should first be united into one country as equal partners, and later ally with China so as to strengthen Asia's position against the Western Powers. He even created a neutral new word, *Daitō*, for the new country, so that Japan and Korea would not dispute the new country's name - either Japan-Korea or Korea-Japan.¹⁵

Even if these thinkers did not advocate an alliance with other Asian countries, there were many who sympathized with the Asian plight. The degree of sympathy to other Asian nations varied from Okakura Tenshin to Tōyama Mitsuru. Originally an artist whom the Meiji government picked as the leader for Japan's art community to learn from Western arts, Okakura,

¹⁵ Tarui, Tōkichi. "Daitō Gappō ron (Japanese translation)". *Kageyama Masaharu Zenshū* [Kageyama Masaharu Complete Works], Ed. Kageyama Masaharu. Tokyo: Kageyama Masaharu Zenshū Kankōkai, 1992, 12-3.

together with Ernest Fenollosa, an American philosopher who was invited to Japan, found more value in Oriental art than in following the governmental policy of appreciating and imitating Western art. While distressed that Buddhist arts were poorly preserved in India, the cradle of Buddhism, Okakura was touched by the fact that the residue of Indian Buddhist art was preserved in the Hōryūji temple in Nara, prompting him to claim that “Asia is one.”¹⁶ He meant this in the sense that all Asian countries shared similar difficulties in dealing with the West, rather than meaning to disregard the diversity of Asian culture. Okakura took the position that each Asian country should help itself, rather than expect Japan to chip in with more than just sentiment.

Miyazaki was a pure supporter of the Chinese Revolution, shuttling among Sun Yatsen and other Chinese students in Japan who looked at one another with mutual mistrust, partly due to differences in their desired political regime for China. Miyazaki tried to persuade them to unite for the greater cause of the Chinese Revolution, and they formed the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance in 1905. He was passionate enough to accompany the revolutionaries to China in their attempts to overthrow the Qing dynasty. Yamada Yoshimasa felt similarly and even joined the Chinese Revolution, becoming the first Japanese to fall in that struggle. The sincerity of these early Japanese Asianists is said to have earned Sun and his party’s respect, and they built a monument in honor of Yamada in his hometown.¹⁷

Tōyama was also a passionate supporter of Asian exiles and students. Rather than an intellectual with his own theories, he was primarily a charismatic man with great empathy. He appreciated Asian patriots not necessarily because he supported their beliefs but because he appreciated their true

¹⁶ Okakura, Tenshin. *The Ideals of the East*. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1983. 11.

¹⁷ Ashizu. *Dai Ajia Shigi* [Asianism]. 71-3.

passion for their countries. Many Asians viewed him as their leader and he was surrounded by many who would give up their lives for him if asked. His followers included Kurushima Tsuneki and Ōi Kentarō. Kurushima assaulted Ōkuma Shigenobu, then Foreign Minister, and killed himself right after that attack in 1889. Ōkuma had negotiated to accept foreign juries in Japanese courts in return for abolishing the extraterritoriality provisions in treaties with the Great Powers, thereby infuriating Tōyama and many other Japanese. Tōyama built a monument to honor Kurushima's sacrifice. Ōi Kentarō, furious that the Korean government allied itself with Russia rather than with Japan, organized an armed group to go to Korea to support pro-Japan Korean groups who wanted to imitate the Meiji Restoration. He was arrested in Osaka before reaching Korea. The existence of numerous devotees behind Tōyama, some of whom were later members of Genyōsha (Black Ocean Society) and ready to serve as suicidal terrorists, intimidated his enemies and reassured his friends of his utmost reliability.

Surviving a series of rebellions in the early Meiji period and inheriting the anti-Western spirit (*Jōi*) of the late Edo period, Tōyama strongly supported Asian patriots. He provided financial support, but also assured their personal safety, even as they engaged in illegal activities. His Asian protégées included political refugees: Kim Okgyun, the Korean exile mentioned above; Sun Yatsen, the Father of modern China; and Rash Behari Bose, an Indian independence activist. As for Sun, when he was wanted by the British authorities he came to Japan as a place of refuge, only to be denied asylum in 1913. Tōyama ordered one of his followers to kidnap and hide Sun until Tōyama successfully negotiated with MOFA to drop the deportation order.

Tōyama did something similar for Bose: when Bose was ordered by the authorities to leave Japan in 1915, Tōyama hid him in Nakamura-ya Bakery (a famous Tokyo bakery that still exists today) and moved him to various

hideouts until the deportation order was rescinded and Bose finally became a naturalized Japanese in 1918. Tōyama all the while protected him from the British secret service. Bose decided to continue his independence campaign in Japan, and ultimately married a daughter of the owner of Nakamura-ya Bakery. Nakamura Bakery's Indian curry has been served according to Bose's recipe ever since. It was called "a taste of love and revolution" in the Taishō period, and continues to be loved by the Japanese.¹⁸

Tōyama's negotiations with the government succeeded partly because of his ally, Inukai Tsuyoshi, a Seiyūkai¹⁹ politician who became prime minister in 1931. Like Tōyama, Inukai supported Kim Okgyun, Sun Yatsen, and R.B. Bose. He was also involved in a campaign to sell weaponry to a revolutionary leader in the Philippines, Emilio Aguinaldo, which failed when the ship carrying the weapons was wrecked in the Pacific. Inukai suggested to Phan Boi Chau and around one hundred of his freedom fighters from northern Viet Nam that they first study modernization rather than import weaponry to fight against the French. After they studied in Tokyo, they opened a school named Tonkin Gijuku (Tokyo School) in their home country, which was later closed by the French authorities.

Inukai also funded the publication of the Koran by Bashkir Turkic exiles from Russia. Although European authorities denied the Bashkir Turks' attempts to publish the Koran in Europe several times, Japan allowed the publication quite easily, which impressed many Muslims. In Egypt, an extra newspaper edition was published and in Afghanistan the governmental magazine similarly issued a special edition to spread this happy news.²⁰

¹⁸ Nakajima, Takeshi. Nakamura-ya no Bose: Indo Dokuritsu Undō to Kindai Nihon no Ajia Shugi [Bose at Nakamura Bakery: The Independence Movement and Asianism in Modern Japan]. Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 2006. 149-51.

¹⁹ One of two major political parties in the Meiji and early Shōwa periods.

²⁰ Bokudō Sensei Denki Kankōkai ed. Inukai Bokudō Den [Inukai Bokudō Biography] vol.2, Tokyo: Tōyō Keizaisha, 1939. 771-811.

The Bashkir Turks also dispatched delegates led by Mehmet Kurbanali to Japan several times, meeting with politicians including Ōkuma Shigenobu, *Genrō* and ex-Prime Minister. The Turks liked Japan, finding similarity between themselves and the Japanese, and viewed it a safe asylum, unlike their homeland. Ōkuma supported Kurbanali, who eventually defected to Japan after the Russian Revolution. Along with Hayashi Senjūrō, Ōkuma became one of the two pre-WWII Prime Ministers who deeply understood Muslims.²¹

Konoe Atsumaro was another prominent Asianist sympathizer. Father of Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro in the Shōwa period, he was the head of the noble family second only to the imperial family of Japan. In 1903, Konoe became the head of Tōa Dōbunkai, a non-profit organization promoting better understanding between Japan and China, which was later renamed Kazankai and remains active today. Konoe also organized Tairo Dōshikai, a sweeping civil campaign mobilizing most Asianists and many other Japanese intellectuals to stand against the Russian invasion of Manchuria. It directed public attention to this issue, arguing that the expanding Russian military presence in the area would endanger the independence of Japan. The organization also advised Qing Dynasty officials to forbid Russia to lease any part of Chinese territory.²²

²¹ Kobayashi, Fujio. Nihon Isuraamu Shi [History of Japan's Relation with Islam]. Tokyo: Nihon Isuraamu Yūkō Renmei, 1988. 59-63.

²² Yamamoto, Shigeki. Konoe Atsumaro: Sono Meiji Kokka-kan to Ajia-kan [Konoe Atsumaro: His view on the Meiji Japan and Asia]. Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 2001. 126-42.

B. From Victory in the Russo-Japanese War to the Mukden Incident (1905-1931)

The Japanese triumph in the Russo-Japanese War had fatal consequences for Japan and the world's view of Japan. The victory satisfied many Japanese as retribution against Russia for the Triple Intervention, and gave Japan status as the first non-white world Power. Many Asians were deeply impressed as well, taking Japan's decisive victory as proof that "coloreds" were not racially inferior.

"Sun Yatsen, for example, was amazed and pleased to receive congratulatory gestures and messages from Egyptians during his passage through the Suez Canal during the war. He reported how, as a Chinese nationalist, he established bonds of solidarity with ordinary Egyptians, who also thought it appropriate to congratulate a Chinese passenger on the news of the Japanese victory."²³ India's Nehru also touched upon how much the Japanese victory affected him in his speech when he welcomed Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke in 1957. "The Japan that stopped the European invasion into Asia looked as an Asian hero in my eyes. Then Japan stood as an icon of Asia's firm determination to stand against the European Powers. This sentiment led me to think about Asia, and I thought India should be independent, and then help other Asians to free themselves from Europe's yoke."²⁴

A famous Egyptian poet, Hafez Ibrahim published a poem *A Beautiful Japanese Girl*, describing a Japanese military nurse on the battlefields of the Russo-Japanese War devoting her service for her nation. This poem showed up in the textbooks of Lebanon and other Middle Eastern Arabian countries,

²³ Aydin, Cemil. The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. 72-3.

²⁴ Nakatani Takeyo. Arabu to Watashi: Nihon Arabu Kōryūshi [Arab and I: History of Interaction between Japan and Arab]. Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1983. 13.

at least until the 1980s.²⁵ In 1906, two Turkish military officials highly evaluated the Japanese victory in their book, The Russo-Japanese War.²⁶ “The numerous articles and commentaries of Turkish, Arab, Persian, Indian, Vietnamese, and Chinese nationalists on the meaning of the Japanese victory popularized a shared interpretation of the war as proof of an Asian awakening and disproof of the Western claim to permanent racial and cultural superiority.”²⁷

Many Asians, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and even Turks and Egyptians went to Japan. They numbered from 7,000 to, by some accounts, 20,000 (Chinese alone).²⁸ Many of the students among them later became prominent back in their mother countries, including Chiang Kaishek, Wang Jingwei, and many other Chinese senior/working-level government officials. Among the members of the first Chinese parliament convened in 1913, 67 out of 596 members of the Chinese House of Representatives (11%) and 165 out of 274 members of the Chinese Senate (an astounding 60%) had experience studying in or visiting Japan for research.²⁹ The chairmen of both houses of Parliament were alumni of Japanese schools. Out of the 30 members from each legislative branch selected for a committee to draft the Constitution, 20 of the House of Representatives members and 26 of the Senate members had experience studying in Japan.³⁰

The victory also triggered rising cries of “Yellow Peril” in the West, especially in the United States. Although Japan was forced to forego an indemnity from Russia, it did win Sakhalin’s southern half. Domestically, the Japanese

²⁵ Kobayashi, Fujio. Nihon Isuraamu [Japan’s Relation with Islam]. 50-1.

²⁶ Ibid. 51.

²⁷ Aydin. The Politics of Anti-Westernism. 73.

²⁸ Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject for Thoughts]. 320.

²⁹ Ibid. 332-42; Tung, William L. The Political Institutions of Modern China. The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1964. 32.

³⁰ Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject for Thoughts]. 332-42.

regained their confidence and more Japanese came to question whether Japan needed to continue a policy of hasty absorption of Western technology and culture.

While the Meiji *Genrō*, powerful patrons of a pro-Western policy, gradually passed from the scene, Tokyo maintained the policy stance to which they had adhered, and annexed Korea with the Western powers' understanding. The government knew that victory in the Russo-Japanese War had only been possible with British and American support, though this information was withheld from the Japanese public. Nearly half of the cost of the war, after all, was financed by British and American bankers.³¹ Further, the United States was friendly enough to mediate peace negotiations at the optimal time for Japan – while Japan occupied Sakhalin and before Russia discovered that Japan was almost bankrupt.

Thus, Japan could not afford to overtly harbor Asian activists for colonial independence. This was a realistic approach for two reasons: first, Japan was a treaty ally of the greatest colonial power and, second, there were no independent Asian countries except ailing China and Thailand with which to create an anti-Western bloc. In that sense, Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō and other MOFA officials were correct in sticking to their pro-Western policy.

Still, the advocates of pro-Western policies made fatal mistakes. First, they largely disregarded Yellow Peril sentiment in the West, and made few efforts to alleviate such anti-Japanese feelings. This passively clearly contradicted Itō Hirobumi's foresight, as demonstrated in the Russo-Japanese War. On the very day the *Genrō* agreed to war, he dispatched two emissaries to the United

³¹ Kashima, Morinosuke. *Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 7: Nichiro Sensō* [History of Japan's Diplomacy Vol. 7: The Russo-Japanese War]. Tokyo: Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūjo, 1970. 127-8.

States and Great Britain, to sway public opinion in both countries towards Japan while assuaging the “Yellow Peril” fears. Baron Kaneko Kentarō, a Harvard classmate of American President Theodore Roosevelt, went to the United States while Baron Suematsu Kenchō, Itō’s son-in-law who studied at Cambridge University, went to the United Kingdom. Kaneko was viewed as especially important, since the United States would be the only possible future mediator between Japan and Russia that could potentially be favorable to Japan. Britain and France would support either of the belligerent nations, while Germany would side with Russia, as Wilhelm II emphasized the Yellow Peril.

Indeed, Kaneko stayed in the United States throughout the Russo-Japanese War, explaining the Japanese stance and alleviating the racist sentiments of the President and other influential people in Washington and New York.³² Japan needed a positive political environment in the United States because it had not yet established itself as a Power. The more powerful Japan came to be—especially after vanquishing Russia—the more efforts it needed to make to alleviate anti-Japanese sentiments among the Powers.

Second, Shidehara, then ambassador plenipotentiary to the 1921-2 Washington Naval Conference, agreed to abolish the Anglo-Japanese alliance, based on the assumption that the United States would not consent to a military alliance between Japan and the United Kingdom.³³ He allowed this to happen despite the fact that a trilateral alliance had been discussed with both the Americans and the British.³⁴ Losing the United Kingdom as an

³² For detail, see Matsumura, Masayoshi. Nichiro Sensō to Kaneko Kentarō: Kōhō Gaikō no Kenkyū [The Russo-Japanese War and Kaneko Kentarō: A Study on Public Diplomacy]. Tokyo: Shin’yūdō, 1987.

³³ Shidehara, Kijūrō. Gaikō 50 nen [50 Years in diplomacy]. Tokyo: Chūōkōron, 1992. 63.

³⁴ Nish, Ian H. Alliance in Decline: a Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1908-23. London: Athlone Press, 1972. 369.

ally and as a mentor in the “Byzantine” ways of European diplomacy³⁵ also implied the loss of a powerful lobbying force in U.S. political circles.

Third, the pro-Western policy failed to solve Japan’s serious domestic population issue. Unlike today, Japan faced an explosively growing population, requiring considerable emigration to foreign lands, as pointed out at the time by Tokutomi Sohō. He wrote that Japan’s average population growth rate during 1887-92 was 1.17%.³⁶ The population of 40 million in 1887 grew to 71 million half a century later.³⁷

By the early 1930s, the American and Australian bans on Japanese immigration demonstrated to many Japanese the limitations of pro-Western diplomacy. In his memoir, Shidehara wrote that he and Morris, an ex-American ambassador to Japan, had a series of discussions in 1920-21 on the immigration issue, with the consent of U.S. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby. Shidehara was unable to deal with the issue after that, as he and the new U.S. Secretary of State, Charles E. Hughes, were too busy with the Washington Naval Conference.³⁸ Although Shidehara tried to divert Japanese emigration to Latin America,³⁹ he should have taken more seriously the local friction engendered by emigration and anti-Japanese sentiments.

³⁵ Japan had been struggling with understanding the European foreign affairs, especially after Great Britain ceased advising Japan. For example, Prime Minister Hiranuma Kiichirō was shocked at the news of German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact in 1939, and resigned with a phrase that “European affairs are Byzantine.”

³⁶ Tokutomi, Sohō. “Shin Nihon Bōchō Ron [New theory of bloating Japan]”. *Tokutomi Sohō Shū* [Tokutomi Sohō Collection], Tokutomi, Sohō. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1978. 247.

³⁷ This figure is strikingly high compared with current Japan’s population growth rate of 0.2% during 2002-7. Ibid; Statistic Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications website: <http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/List.do?bid=000000090004&cycode=0>

³⁸ Shidehara. *Gaikō 50 nen* [50 Years in diplomacy]. 37-43.

³⁹ Hattori, Ryūji. *Shidehara Kijūrō to Nijusseiki no Nihon* [Shidehara Kijūrō and Japan in the 20th Century]. Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 2006. 98.

Meanwhile, Japan's China policy changed to one of opportunistic imperialism. In 1905, Japan won the right to lease the Liaodong Peninsula and a part of the Russian railways in Manchuria, and in 1910 Japan officially annexed Korea. In 1911, Japan participated in a syndicated loan to Yuan Shikai, the second President of the Republic of China, along with the United Kingdom, France, Russia, the United States (which later withdrew), and Germany.

In 1915, while the European Powers were preoccupied with the First World War, Japan forced China, then under the rule of Yuan Shikai, to accept the Twenty-One Demands. This document included demands that China extend the lease terms on the Liaodong Peninsula and transfer German interests in the Shandong Peninsula to Japan. Japan occupied the German concession during the war, as an ally of the United Kingdom. The British Foreign Ministry was unimpressed, however, as it viewed the move more as an opportunistic invasion of China than as genuine assistance for London.

Among the overly ambitious wishes in Tokyo's Twenty-One Demands was the clause that China hire Japanese political and military advisors. These demands infuriated the Chinese, and also alarmed the Americans and the British, who had been consulted beforehand but were not informed about the overtly ambitious provisions. In 1918, Tokyo gave Duan Qirui, Yuan's successor, a substantial loan of 145 million yen (\$7-8 billion today), known as the Nishihara loan.⁴⁰ This was offered without collateral via Japanese businessman as a part of an appeasement policy, and ultimately ended up in default.

⁴⁰ Kashima, Morinosuke. Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 11: Shina Mondai [History of Japan's Diplomacy Vol. 11: China Issue]. Tokyo: Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūjo, 1973. 550.

Japanese diplomacy then changed course towards non-intervention into Chinese internal affairs for most of the 1920s under what is known as Shidehara Diplomacy. In 1925, Shidehara strongly supported an international conference proposed by China to allow tariff autonomy, and contributed to finalizing an agreement to raise Chinese tariffs. In 1926, he again took the initiative to organize an international conference to abolish the extraterritoriality rights of the Great Powers in China. However, both efforts came to naught due to a coup against Duan Qirui by Feng Yuxiang, a Chinese military officer.⁴¹ Interestingly, these facts were not fully appreciated by Asianists, who were eager to criticize the Japanese government as being too biased toward the West and not helping the rest of Asia.

Shidehara Diplomacy was interrupted during 1927-29, however, when Vice Foreign Minister Mori Tsutomu promoted active diplomacy against China under the Tanaka Giichi cabinet. Formerly a businessman in China, he was deeply concerned about Japanese interests in China being eroded by Chinese Communists, and in 1927 sent troops to northern China in order to defend the Japanese living there. Triggered by armed conflict between the KMT and the Japanese Army, Japan occupied Jinan city. After that, the primary target of the Chinese boycotts shifted from British to Japanese products.

How did Japanese Asianists' thoughts and actions develop during this period? The Compassionate Asianists, such as Tōyama Mitsuru and Miyazaki Tōten, as previously mentioned, encouraged their beloved Sun Yatsen to precipitate a revolution in China during 1911. However, Sun's revolution did not go smoothly. He succeeded in overthrowing the Qing Dynasty (the first Chinese Revolution) in 1911 after a backroom political deal with Yuan

⁴¹ Kamimura, Shin'ichi. *Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 17: Chūgoku Nashonaruzumu to Nikka Kankei no Tenkai* [History of Japan's Diplomacy Vol. 17: The Evolvement of Chinese Nationalism and Sino-Japanese Relations]. Tokyo: Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūjo, 1971. 124-36.

Shikai, the commander of the Qing Dynasty's military. The Republic of China itself was founded in 1912.

Soon, Yuan replaced Sun as President, proclaimed himself as a new emperor, and suppressed Sun and his party. After failing to overthrow Yuan (the second Chinese Revolution), Sun was forced to retreat to Japan in 1913. Yuan's empire did not last long, and China was beset by warlords and civil war. Finally, Sun returned to China to found another Republic of China in Guangzhou province during 1921 (the third Chinese Revolution), and gradually regained territory in northern China.⁴² He died in 1925, before his government could reclaim the whole of China.

In this messy Chinese domestic situation, every time Sun and his comrades came to Japan, the Compassionate Asianists had dangerous rendezvous with Japanese capitalists to arrange arms sales for the revolutionaries. In return for such sponsorship, the Asianists had to help secure stakes in China for the sponsors. At first, Tōyama and Genyōsha members, linked with Miyazaki and others in China, prevented the Japanese government from selling weapons to the Qing Dynasty while tolerating sales to the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance, which the latter group highly appreciated.

Those involved in the arms trade and made, who considerable profits, included Yamamoto Jōtarō and Mori Tsutomu of the Mitsui Corporation, which was and is one of the largest trading companies in Japan, and which gradually built its stake in China. The two Japanese businessmen were stationed overseas and felt strongly that national prestige made a difference in their business; they were quite patriotic. They competed with Russian firms in Shanghai, a center for procurement during the Russo-Japanese War,

⁴² For the background of the Chinese Revolution then, see Fairbank, John K. and Feuerwerker, Albert ed. The Cambridge History of China. Vol. 13, Republican China, 1912-1949. Part 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 9-10.

by buying critical supplies before the Russians did. They also collected intelligence on the route of the Russian Baltic Fleet. They in fact sent the first telegrams to the Imperial Navy regarding the Russian fleet's location.⁴³

At the same time, however, the executives were also typical capitalist imperialists, conflating Mitsui's interests with those of Japan. Later, Mori went as far as to wish for the Yangtze River region in southern China -- a region in which the British already had a strong stake -- to come under Japan's sphere of influence.⁴⁴ Among these two businessmen's more imperialistic deals were offers to Sun Yatsen of loans worth 150,000 yen to buy arms from Mitsui in 1911, and 2 million yen and equipment for two divisions in return for Manchuria in 1913, which Sun agreed to after only half an hour of consideration.⁴⁵

As southern Manchuria itself was developed by the Japanese, many Compassionate Asianists leaned towards imperialism. Still, they did not undergo total conversion from Compassionate to Imperialist. After the Triple Intervention in 1895, Sun told Tōyama that he had no objection to Japan's taking Manchuria from Russia, as the land had not traditionally belonged to China. The imperial family of the Qing dynasty happened to be from Manchuria, and they had conquered China, to rule it as the Qing dynasty. As Manchurians did not want to have Chinese immigration into their homeland, Manchuria remained sparsely populated, peopled by only the nomadic Manchurians. Thus, Sun reasoned that if Japan took Manchuria, that massive territory could serve as a buffer area between China and Russia. He

⁴³ Kojima, Naoki. Yōjō no Ten: Jōhō Senryakuka Mori Tsutomu no Hansei [A Dot in the Ocean: Life of Mori Tsutomu, an Information Strategist]. Tokyo: Chūōkōron, 1982. 7-23

⁴⁴ Ibid. 25.

⁴⁵ Jansen, Marius B. The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954. 146, 165-6.

also thought that the Qing dynasty would be at least strong enough to maintain control of its Manchurian motherland.⁴⁶

Before the Russo-Japanese War, Russia encouraged the Chinese to immigrate to Manchuria to provide a labor force capable of developing the area as a frontline base for conquering China, Korea and Japan.⁴⁷ Only then did the Chinese recognize Manchuria as a part of their territory. The Congress in Beijing decided to demand that Japan return Port Arthur and Dalian to China. Sun thus faced a dilemma in the early 1920s.

Sun's Japanese friends supported him and his revolution, and he knew that without Japanese help he could not have accomplished what he had. In fact, he might have been killed unless protected by his Japanese friends during his asylum in Japan. It was thus extremely difficult for him to deny Japanese interests in Manchuria. Interests in the land were first given to Russia after the Triple Intervention, and then Japan won them in 1905 from Russia in the settlement to the Russo-Japanese War. The Qing dynasty simply gave retrospective approval of this situation. The Japanese believed the Chinese had little cause to blame Japan, since Japan did not take the land directly from the Qing, unlike the British who colonized Hong Kong and other parts of China directly, after the Opium War of 1840-42.

Japanese Asianists took great pride in Japan's victory over the Russians in the Russo-Japanese War. Japan fought Russia, which was planning to invade China, Korea and Japan, so the Asianists regarded the conflict as a just war. As a result, Japan received interests in Manchuria as compensation. The Asianists were frustrated that their interests in the land and European colonialism were discussed in the same breath. After the exposure of the

⁴⁶ Chiang Kaishek claimed in his memoir that Sun's words were a Japanese fabrication. Here, we focus on what the Asianists thought based on such "fact", rather than whether Chiang's claim is true or not.

⁴⁷ Ashizu. Dai Ajia Shigi [Asianism]. 180-1.

aggressive Twenty One Demands against Beijing, however, anti-Japanese sentiments among the Chinese became widespread, and the Chinese tried to re-take Manchuria through alliance with the United States or the United Kingdom. This further angered the Asianists.⁴⁸

In 1924, Sun visited Japan to see Tōyama to discuss the Manchurian issue. Tōyama acknowledged to Sun that while the Japanese interests in Manchuria should eventually be returned to the Chinese, the time was not right, as Sun's government had not been fully established and warlords were still quarrelling amongst themselves. If Manchuria were returned to China, it could easily be transferred to another imperial Power; further, it would not be wise to spur antagonism against China in Japan. He proposed that the two countries should cooperate in helping to promote Indian independence after the Chinese revolutionary government established itself, because through such a process China and Japan would deepen their friendship. Then, Japan could return Manchuria. The two countries should not be bonded simply by anti-Western sentiments, but should construct a better civilization. Simply retaliating against the West would only engender a vicious cycle of retaliation between East and West.⁴⁹

The following day, Sun did not mention the Manchurian issue in his famous speech in Kōbe, Japan. Instead, he warned Japan that it would be up to the Japanese to choose to be “the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of Might [sic] or the tower of strength of the Orient.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 187-9.

⁵⁰ Kashima, Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 11 [History of Japanese Diplomacy Vol. 11], 153; Sun, Yatsen. China and Japan: Natural Friends - Unnatural Enemies. Shanghai: China United Press, 1941. 151. (recitation from Jansen. The Japanese. 211.)

How should we consider Tōyama and his group? Here, these groups of Asianists are categorized as Imperialistic Compassionates. They are indeed imperialistic in the sense that Japan coveted land over which it had little claim. Still, in their minds, in order to defend Korea as a part of the Japanese Empire, Manchuria had to be in friendly or at least neutral hands in order to be a buffer against Russia. The Chinese central Government, if it indeed existed in any coherent form from the fall of the Qing Dynasty until the establishment of the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, did not have the capability to assure its own territorial integrity, including that of Manchuria. A return of the land to China would be devastating: if China was incapable of meeting Japan's security demands, Tokyo would have to provide for them itself. This self-righteous logic, however, is very controversial. If applied not only to Manchuria but also to China as a whole, even the Twenty-One Demands could be defended as a Japanese commitment to prevent any further division of China by the Great Powers.

The Imperialistic Compassionate Asianists still maintained their sympathy for and support of their protégé, while at the same time campaigning for better Sino-Japanese relations. In 1927, Chiang Kaishek, then commander-in-chief of the KMT military, resigned to take responsibility for his failure in the Northern Expedition to unite China. He then went to Japan and lived for some time next to Tōyama. Later in 1927, he was persuaded to return and complete China's unification. Tōyama's son, Shūzō, shuttled between Japan and China many times, engaging in peacemaking efforts between the two countries.⁵¹

There is no doubt about the Imperialistic Compassionate-Chinese revolutionary friendship. For example, when Sun died in 1925, Tōyama and

⁵¹ Igawa and Kobayashi. Hito Arite [He was the Man]. 234.

Inukai went to Nanjing to attend his funeral.⁵² When Tōyama died in 1944, flags were hung at half-mast and events to mourn his death were held in Chongqing, Nanjing, and other parts of China,⁵³ despite the ongoing Second Sino-Japanese War. In 1978, Tōyama's grandson, Okisuke, went to China as a secretary of Sonoda Sunao, then Foreign Minister of Japan, in a trip to sign the Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty. Liao Chengzhi, known as the Chinese signatory to a trade agreement between Japan and China in 1962 before the Japanese recognition of the PRC, came to his airplane to personally greet Tōyama, asking how his family members were doing even before greeting Foreign Minister Sonoda. Liao's parents were involved in the Chinese Revolution and while they took asylum in Japan they often visited Tōyama's home.⁵⁴ It would be hard to find a pro-China Japanese politician today whose grandchildren would be treated as respectfully as Tōyama Okisuke.

How, then, can imperialism and compassion be compatible? Nakajima Takeshi, the author of a biography of the Indian exile R.B. Bose, concluded that the Imperial Compassionates lacked specific principles and instead based their decisions on emotions and spirituality stemming from a sense of humanity, justice, and morality. Thus, Nakajima reasons that such Asianists could embrace Asians with various viewpoints, which was both good and bad.⁵⁵⁵⁶ Igawa and Kobayashi, authors of a book on Tōyama, point out that Asianists' only criteria for support was whether a person had a sincerity so real that he would sacrifice himself for the public good as he or she perceived

⁵² *Ibid.* 180.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 250.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 182.

⁵⁵ Nakajima. *Nakamura-ya* [Nakamura Bakery]. 173.

⁵⁶ For example, it was good of Tōyama and others to protect Sun, Bose and other Asian revolutionaries, while it was dangerous for them to do so because in contemporary terms it could be likened to providing asylum to Osama bin Laden. Their actions could have endangered Japan's relationship with the United Kingdom, a powerful Japanese ally.

it. Whether left or right, specific political thoughts were regarded as secondary.⁵⁷

Chinese residents in Japan, if not involved in the Chinese Revolution, were critical of Japanese imperialism and conscious of anti-Japanese sentiments and Chinese nationalism in China. A Chinese student who came to Japan after the Russo-Japanese War to study criticized Japan as “a common enemy of Asia” and wrote: “In order to protect peace in Asia and to achieve the independence of weak Asian races, it is needless to say that white authoritarianism should be eliminated; however, Japan should also stop despising Asia with its own authoritarianism.”⁵⁸

The protégés of Compassionate Asianists and foreign students in Japan also voiced their opposition. For example, Bose wrote in 1926 that “what we regret the most is that Japanese intellectuals who cry for free Asia and an alliance among colored people, despise China, insist on invading China, and even think that colored people are inferior to whites by nature, like the whites. Among the China experts in Japan, only a few really know themselves and understand Asia.”⁵⁹ The number of foreign students studying in Japan plummeted from more than 7,000 in 1906 to less than 1,500 a decade later,⁶⁰ partly due to Tokyo’s joining the ranks of the colonial Powers.⁶¹

Of course, some Japanese did criticize Japanese imperialism. Ishibashi Tanzan, the noted economist who later became prime minister (1956-57),

⁵⁷ Igawa and Kobayashi. Hito Arite [He was the Man]. 261.

⁵⁸ Liu, Shipei. “Yazhou Xianshi Lun [Contemporary Asia]”. Tianyi [Justice of Heaven]. No. 11-12, 1907. (Re-citation from Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject for Thoughts]. 354-5)

⁵⁹ Bose, Rash B. “Ajia Niron [Two Asia]”. Gekkan Nihon [Monthly Japan], June 1926. (Re-citation from Nakajima. Nakamura-ya [Nakamura Bakery]. 175)

⁶⁰ Foreign students in Japan, 1896-1947 (General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Civil Information and Education Section, Analysis and Research Division. Special Report, 11 September 1947-12 November 1947). 29. (Re-citation from Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject as Thoughts]. 533.)

⁶¹ Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject as Thoughts]. 355.

claimed that there was little economic benefit of including Korea and Taiwan in the Japanese Empire.⁶² Kōtoku Shūsui and Tokuda Kyūichi opposed imperialism from socialist and communist viewpoints, respectively.

Kita Ikki was another to point out that Japanese imperialism harmed China. In his book recording his experience and thoughts on the Chinese Revolution during his time there between 1911 and 1913, Shina Kakumei Gaishi [Unofficial History of the Chinese Revolution], Kita criticized Japanese imperialists as lackeys of the British. According to Kita, Japan contributed to British imperialism by recognizing the British sphere of influence in southern China through alliance with London. The British undermined China's financial independence by collecting tariff and salt-tax revenues,⁶³ and kept in power the easily-bought President Yuan Shikai and other traitors.⁶⁴ Kita also pointed out that the Five Power Loan to China in 1911, of which Japan was a syndicate member, was nothing but an imperialistic tool to debilitate China economically.⁶⁵ He went so far as to assert that once Japan joined the imperialist camp, it lost prestige in the eyes of both the Chinese revolutionary party and Chinese aristocrats, while the British conversely increased their prestige by denouncing Japan in China. He lamented that neither China nor Japan recognized the British colonial policy of "divide and rule."⁶⁶

⁶² Ishibashi, Tanzan. "Dai Nihon Shugi no Gensō [The illusion of Greater Japanism]". Ishibashi Tanzan Chosakushū 3: Dai Nihon Shugi tonō Tōsō [Ishibashi Tanzan Collection 3: Fight against Expansion of Japan], Ed. Ōmu Takehiko. Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shimbunsha, 1996. 70-1.

⁶³ Kita, Ikki. "Nihon Kaizō Hōan Taikō Daisankai no Kōkan Hanpu ni Saishite Tsugu [Notice on the occasion of the distribution of the third publishing of Guideline of a bill to reform Japan]". Shina Kakumei Gaishi, Kokka Kaizō Genri Taikō, Nihon Kaizō Hōan Taikō [Unofficial history of the Chinese Revolution, Principle guideline for national reform, Guideline of a bill to reform Japan], Kita, Ikki. Tokyo: Misuzu Shobō, 1959. 173.

⁶⁴ Kita, Ikki. "Shina Kakumei Gaishi [Unofficial history of the Chinese Revolution]". Shina Kakumei Gaishi. 93-4.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 108.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 96-7.

This anti-British Japanese revolutionary opposed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and suggested instead an economic alliance with the United States and an alliance with China against Russia. Kita expected that American businesses would want to invest in China but needed Japanese “underwriting,”⁶⁷ while Japan would need American capital for the development of China (especially railroads).⁶⁸ As for an alliance with China, believing the territorial integrity of China would benefit Japan, Kita proposed that China take Mongolia, which would be necessary to assure Chinese territorial integrity against Russia, while Japan would take Manchuria in return for aiding China against Russia. And Japan would receive it not as a result of the Russo-Japanese War, in which China had no say, but as part of a deal in which China would be an active player.⁶⁹ In this sense, Kita was insightful enough to understand that an unresolved Manchurian controversy could harm both countries, although he disregarded both the Mongolian and the Manchurian right of self-determination.

Kita saw rising Chinese nationalism as a sign that the Chinese people were finally standing up to re-establish themselves as an independent state. He believed that the only positive influence Japan had on the Chinese Revolution was that the Meiji Restoration inspired the Chinese Revolution. Japanese nationalism taught China that those who seek to ruin one’s country must be expelled and that it is better to die than to be ruled by other races.⁷⁰ Although such sentiments may sound awkward today as we witness China’s rising nationalism, nationalism is at root a Western concept. Looking back on Chinese history, the Chinese people were traditionally too practical to embrace nationalism, caring less about *who* ruled than *how* they ruled. For

⁶⁷ By “underwriting,” Kita meant Japanese technology, which was cheaper than the West’s and superior to China’s, and Japanese better understanding of China than the United States and Europe.

⁶⁸ Kita. “Shina Kakumei” [Chinese Revolution]. 193.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 184-5.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 16.

China, benevolent foreign emperors were better than corrupt Chinese emperors. In fact, foreign dynasties such as the Yuan (originally from Mongolia) perished not due to nationalistic campaigns but rather due to bad governance.

In this sense, Kita cautioned that other Japanese Asianists that the Chinese revolutionaries were thankful and wished for aid from Japan, trusting its beneficence toward their cause but not asking to put their country under Japan's control.⁷¹ Kita was concerned that Sun relied too much on Japan, which would give Tokyo an incentive to intervene in Chinese domestic affairs.⁷² If Japan intervened, he feared that it would be portrayed as merely another empire exploiting China. Rather, he displayed an understanding of anti-Japanese sentiment in China provoked by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.⁷³ Despite many Asianists' negative reaction to the anti-Japanese sentiment engendered by rising Chinese nationalism, it was, for Kita, a prerequisite for a possible alliance with China against Russia.

Kita faced a tension between his passion for the Chinese Revolution and his sense of guilt about Japanese imperialism. His solution was to attempt a revolution in Japan to contain Japanese imperialism's harm. He wrote another book, titled Nihon Kaizō Hōan Taikō [Guideline of a Bill to Reform Japan], which was his draft of a temporary constitution for Japan to be used for three years if a revolution occurred. His book attracted Asianists, including Ōkawa Shūmei who welcomed Kita back to Japan from China; Mitsukawa Kameakira, with whom he and Ōkawa created an underground governmental organization called Yūzonsha to promote revolution; and many young military officials, who later actually attempted to realize a Shōwa

⁷¹ Ibid. 73.

⁷² Ibid. 13.

⁷³ Ibid. 179.

revolution during the February 26th incident in 1936,⁷⁴ as considered in more detail later.

Kita was not the only person to deal with this dilemma and the competing visions for the future of Japan and Asia then prevailing in the world. Some Cosmopolitan Japanese took other approaches. For example, Miyake Setsurei insisted that the mission for Japan was to make the world better by amassing wisdom from around the world, promoting justice so as not to allow weaker countries to be overrun by stronger countries, and creating a philosophy with which the world could live with peace, justice and prosperity for all.⁷⁵

Another Cosmopolitan, Yoshino Sakuzō, a major opinion leader of the day as a University of Tokyo professor, mostly known as a strong supporter of Taishō Democracy,⁷⁶ was a tutor of a son of Yuan Shikai and had some experience of China as well. He viewed the collapse of the Qing Dynasty as a sign that the Chinese were realizing they must take the initiative in fighting imperialism. Yoshino further believed that the Chinese could effectively help themselves, quite contrary to Fukuzawa in the early Meiji period. Yoshino sharply criticized the Nishihara Loan, the Siberian Intervention of 1918-24,⁷⁷ Japan's management of Manchuria, and arms sales to warlords in China. Because the Chinese viewed the Siberian Intervention as part of a chaotic Manchuria policy complete with multiple enigmatic Japanese plots, Yoshino claimed that the Japanese government had a moral responsibility not to allow such indecent Japanese to execute their dangerous schemes. He

⁷⁴ Inspired by the Meiji Restoration, a handful of military officers attempted a coup d'état wherein several cabinet members were killed, in order to implement a "Shōwa Restoration." This would be a better society with less income disparity and no political corruption. Emperor Shōwa expressed displeasure with the coup and it was crushed as a revolt against the nation.

⁷⁵ Miyake, Setsurei. "Shinzenbi Nihonjin [Sincere, Good, and Beautiful Japanese]" Miyake Setsurei Shū [Collection of Miyake Setsurei], Yanagida Izumi ed. Tokyo: Chikuma, 1967. 207-20.

⁷⁶ A democratic movement in Japan during the 1910s and 1920s.

⁷⁷ The Powers intervened in the Russian Revolution when the Soviet Union was established, and Japan invaded Siberia as well.

concluded that these Japanese actions were purely militaristic imperialism, which rightly angered the Chinese, and that Japan should take measures to allay their sentiments.⁷⁸

Yoshino wished to inform Chinese students participating in the anti-Japanese, anti-Treaty of Versailles May Fourth Movement⁷⁹ about the reality in Japan: Japanese who supported the Chinese warlords and bureaucrats were a distinct minority, and most Japanese were a peace-loving people. He hoped that once the Chinese students knew the reality of the situation, they would stop their anti-Japanese campaigns. He succeeded in publishing his thoughts in China, with some positive response from Chinese students hopeful of healthy cooperation with Japan. As a University of Tokyo professor, Yoshino organized a student exchange program with Beijing University in 1920, although it faded due to strong warnings by the Japanese government.⁸⁰

Yoshino also wrote that he would welcome an Asianism under which Japan would be a cultural leader in Asia. However, if it meant for “yellow people” to bond together against “white oppression,” it was just an anti-“white” thought, with a clash of civilizations being the obvious ultimate outcome. Rather, he believed, “hereafter, a principle of Asianism that can solidify Asian races must have broad hospitality that can establish partnership even with the West.”⁸¹ Thus, a new, more accommodating culture was imperative for Japan,

⁷⁸ Yoshino, Sakuzō. “Taishi Mondai [China Issue]” Yoshino Sakuzō Senshū 7 [Yoshino Sakuzō Selection 7]. Yoshino Sakuzō. Tokyo: Iwanami, 1996. 391.

⁷⁹ Chinese campaign against the government on the result of the Treaty of Versailles and the Japanese who pressed China for the Twenty-one Demands.

⁸⁰ Ozaki, Mamoru. Yoshino Sakuzō to Chūgoku [Yoshino Sakuzō and China]. Tokyo: Chūōkōron sha, 2008. 250-3.

⁸¹ Yoshino, Sakuzō. “Wagakuni no Tōhō Keiei ni Kansuru Sandai Mondai [Three Big Issues in the Management of the Eastern Area of Our Country]”. Yoshino Sakuzō Senshū 8 [Yoshino Sakuzō Selection 8], Yoshino Sakuzō. Tokyo: Iwanami, 1996. 311-3.

as the American presence in Asia was increasing and an anti-“white” backlash could trigger cultural conflicts between Japan and America.

But reality did not go as Yoshino had thought. In actuality, Japan at the time imitated Western culture and technology to such a degree that its intrinsic values were buried.⁸² While Asian students were initially attracted to Japan, they were sorely disappointed by the Japanese failure to enrich the world with a new hybrid East-West culture. Subsequently, the lack of such a hybrid culture in Japan led other Asian students coming to Japan to study not Japanese but the authentic Western culture and technology. The lack of understanding of this reality among Japanese Asianists contributed to the previously noted Chinese student’s criticism of Japan as “a common enemy of Asia.”

This Cosmopolitan approach was nevertheless a minority. People more commonly anticipated a future clash of civilizations, or a world war to end all wars. For example, Alfred T. Mahan, the American Navy officer and strategist, regarded a war between the United States and Japan as inevitable.⁸³ Ishiwara Kanji, one of the brightest officers in the Japanese Imperial Army, wrote a book to the same effect.⁸⁴

⁸² Yamamuro, *Shisō Kadai* [Subject as Thoughts]. 400.

⁸³ For details, see Mahan, Alfred T. *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1805*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980.

⁸⁴ For details, see Ishiwara, Kanji. *Saishū Sensō-ron* [The Last War]. Tokyo: Tamai Labo, 1986.

C. From the Mukden Incident to the end of WWII (1931-1945)

From a security perspective, Japan wanted the Korean peninsula as a buffer between itself and the other Powers, especially an aggressive Russia. After all, “Korea lies like a dagger ever pointed toward the very heart of Japan.”⁸⁵ Japan then annexed Korea, because it did not have enough power to maintain its independence, and Japan could not tolerate any Western occupation of the peninsula. Once it held Korea, Japan then needed Manchuria as a buffer. During the Russo-Japanese War, Japan suffered from uphill battles because the Trans-Siberian railway continuously replenished Russian soldiers, ammunition, and provisions. This implied that unless Japan evicted the Russians from Manchuria, Korea was not safe. Although Japan had pressed China to enhance Manchuria’s defenses ever since the Meiji era, given the confused state of the Nanjing government China was totally incapable of doing so.

It was then that Ishiwara Kanji, a gifted military officer assigned to a small force of about 10,000 called the Kwantung Army, planned and implemented a plot to kill a Chinese warlord with 1.4 million troops under his command. The Kwantung Army was originally responsible for defending the South Manchuria Railway (SMR), according to the provisions of the peace treaty of the Russo-Japanese War allowing Japan to develop railways in the region. Ishiwara’s troops occupied Manchuria in 1931. Ishiwara implemented his plan in order to keep Manchuria from the Russians without direct orders from the central government in Tokyo. In the following year, Manchukuo was founded as a country independent from China, under Japanese influence.

⁸⁵ Okakura, Tenshin. The Awakening of Japan. New York: Japan Society, 1904. 208.

Ishiwara anticipated total war between Japan and the United States, probably in alliance with the Soviet Union, around the 1970s.⁸⁶ Thus, he drafted a vision of a tightly integrated Japanese Empire, including Korea, Taiwan and Manchuria, in preparation for the forthcoming war. In order to knit together the economy of the Japanese Empire and its sphere of influence, Ishiwara recognized a need for a spiritual force or a culture that would match Western culture and unify the various ethnicities in the Japanese bloc. He envisioned Manchukuo as a state that epitomized his dream of equality among ethnicities, including Japanese, Chinese, Manchurians and Mongolians. He did not wish the Japanese to be arrogant and stand above other ethnicities. He viewed such attitudes as identical to that involving the whites against Asians, an attitude he understood as unfamiliar to Asian culture. In the “East Asian Federation” [*Tōa Renmei*] he sought to create, Japan would help the politically independent but economically integrated Manchukuo to defend its border against the Soviets, while Korea and Taiwan would maintain their political and economic union with Japan proper.

He believed in an East Asian Federation in which member countries would demonstrate the ideals of Asian culture, or *Ōdō Bunka*: a world in which the strong help the weak but are humble enough not to abuse their strength and thus win respect and support from the weak. This thought was his vision of a better future and his solution to Japan’s mission to draft a blueprint for the future of Asia. He maintained this vision from the Mukden Incident to the end of his life, and it was reinforced after he recognized that Chinese nationalism was the basis for China’s resistance against Japan.

⁸⁶ Ishiwara, Kanji. *Tōa Renmei Undō: Ishiwara Kanji Senshū* [East Asian Federation: Ishiwara Kanji Selections]. Tokyo: Tamai Labo, 1986. 228.

Even after Ishiwara left the military in March 1941, he continued to disseminate his thoughts through speeches all over Japan until the end of the Pacific War. In 1939, *Tōa Renmei Kyōkai*, or the East Asian Federation Association, was established in Tokyo and succeeded in collecting several tens of thousands of followers, not only in Japan but also among Chinese and Korean students. Wang Jingwei, the head of Japan's puppet Nanjing government, became the head of the China branch.⁸⁷ Wang's and the Korean students' cooperation, despite the fact that Ishiwara and Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki were by then on bad terms, is notable because it demonstrates that Ishiwara's thought, which included politically independent Asian countries, was a Japanese Asianist concept acceptable to some Koreans and Chinese.

In Ishiwara's anticipated future war between Japan and the United States, he believed that Japan would require a large number of airplanes and tanks. In Japan proper, however, the automobile and aviation industries were still at an early stage of development. He thus concluded that these industries would need to be developed by the 1960s, preferably in Manchukuo, where they would be near the battlegrounds of the coming war.

Although Ishiwara did not have much knowledge of economics, he found a highly -qualified person to advise him: Miyazaki Masayoshi. One of the very few Japanese to experience the Russian Revolution in St. Petersburg, Miyazaki was the best researcher on Russia and the Soviet Union working at the research department of the SMR. Admiring the Soviet-style economic plan that initially succeeded so brilliantly in rapidly industrializing the country, Miyazaki drafted his own plan in which the government provided companies with appropriate natural resources for them to produce desirable amounts of products. Unlike the communists, he did not dismiss capitalists and private property rights. Rather he saw the need for capitalists to ensure

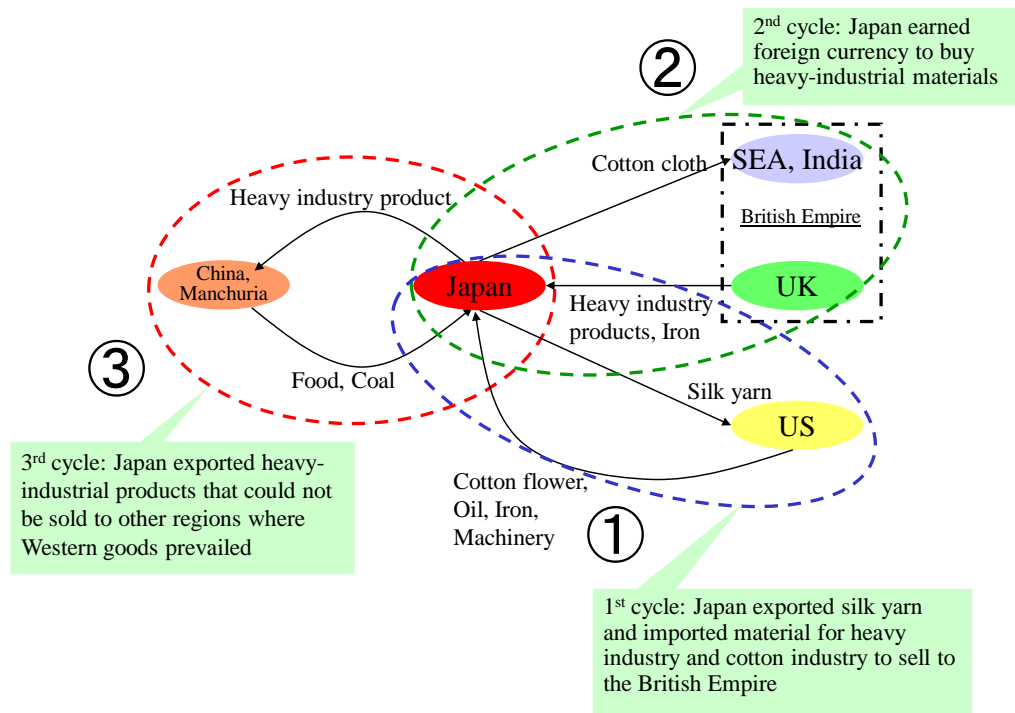
⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 231.

efficient management of companies. Ishiwara was highly impressed. Miyazaki supported Ishiwara for the rest of his life, even promoting the East Asian Federation campaign until the end of the Pacific War. Miyazaki himself wrote a book, *Ajia Renmei-ron* [On Asian Federation], supporting Ishiwara's thoughts.

As Miyazaki needed business people to implement his plan, Ishiwara reached out to them in Japan. The established *zaibatsu*, or the Japanese business conglomerates, were found much more in central or southern China than in Manchuria, as they viewed a country lacking international recognition as too risky.

Nawa Tōichi, a professor at Osaka University of Commerce, published a paper in 1937 that described Japan's trading pattern of the 1920s, illustrated in Figure 3. He pointed out that there were three cycles in Japan's trade. The first cycle was with America, which imported silk yarn and exported raw cotton, oil, iron and machinery, indispensable for Japanese light and heavy industry. In the second cycle, Japanese light industry exported cotton cloth to Southeast Asia and India in order to earn hard currency. In turn, Japan imported heavy-industrial products and iron from Great Britain, with which Japan could incubate its nascent heavy industry. In the third cycle, Japanese heavy-industrial products were sold to China and Manchuria, where Western goods were expensive but of very high quality, while Japanese products had reasonable price and quality.

Figure 3: Three Cycles in Japan's Trading Patterns of the 1920s



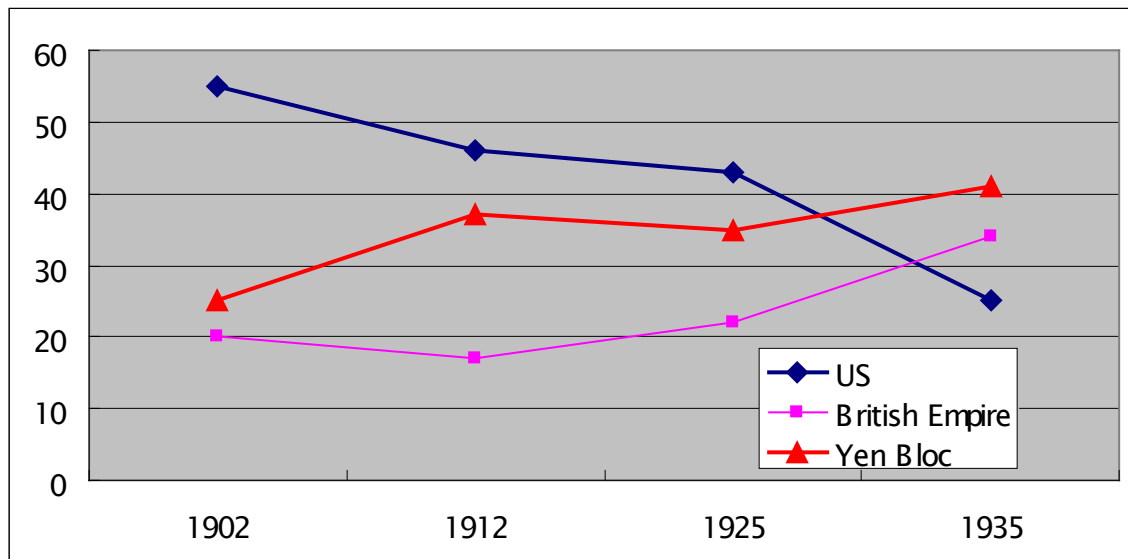
Note: 1) Created by Yukie Yoshikawa based on Morimoto, Tadao. Hinkoku Kyōhei: Tokkō he no Michi [Poor Nation, Strong Army: Path to Kamikaze Attack]. Tokyo: Kōjinsha, 2002. 41-6.

2) SEA stands for Southeast Asia.

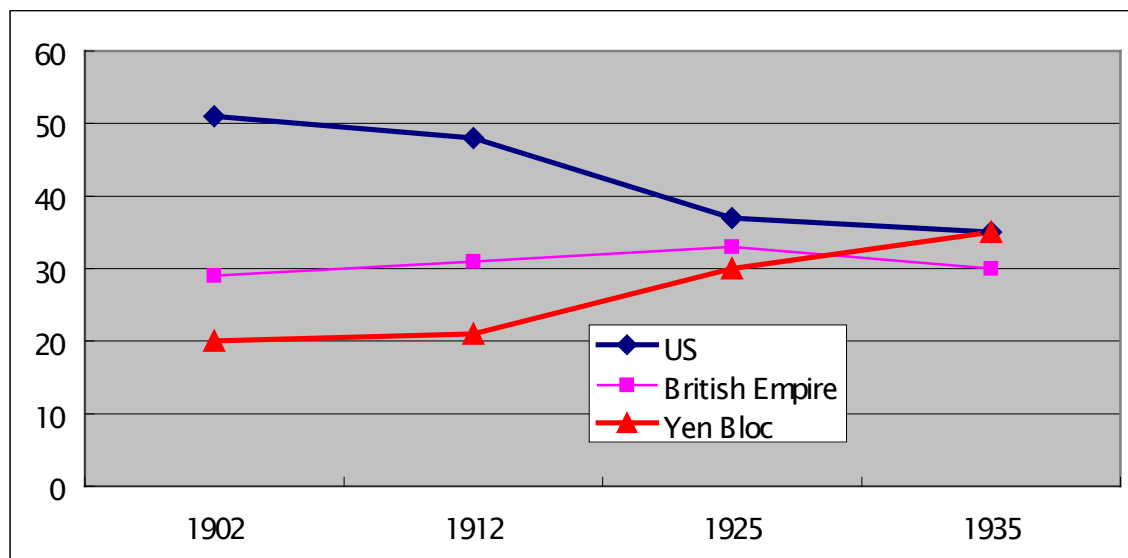
Further, trade volume within the Yen bloc could not be dominant for Japan. Japan indeed needed the United States and European Empires for its sustainable economic growth, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Yen Bloc Never Became Dominant in Japan's Trade

A. Exports



B. Imports



Source: Maeda, Shōzō and Yukizawa, Kenzō. *Nihon Bōeki no Chōki Tōkei* [Long-Term Statistics of Japan's Trade]. Tokyo: Dōhōsha, 1978. 186-9.

With such a trade pattern in mind, the established Japanese business people would not think of investing heavily in Manchukuo for fear of American retaliation. Besides, the *Zaibatsu* were not the Kwantung Army's first choice to develop the new-born country. The junior officers and soldiers of the

Kwantung Army were generally from poor families. When asked about their families, they could not talk about them without becoming emotional, because of the high infant mortality and/or because some of their sisters were sold for prostitution to feed the rest of their families. On the other hand, a handful of *Zaibatsu* families enjoyed luxurious lives while exploiting the poor.

The Kwantung Army recruited successful non-*Zaibatsu* business people as collabortors, and succeeded in bringing Nissan Auto founder Ayukawa Yoshisuke and others to Manchukuo. Ayukawa demanded *carte blanche* for his business activities from the Kwantung Army, and in 1937 was allowed to build Manchuria Heavy Industries Co. (*Mangyō*), which dominated heavy industry in Manchukuo. Although *Mangyō* was asked to build only strategically important industries there, for Ayukawa it was simply impossible to do so as the automobile and airplane industries would require many kinds of suppliers. Thus, he needed the government's full commitment to develop entire industries and the Northeast Asian regional economy as a whole.

Although Ayukawa received verbal assurances, he could not do as he pleased: he was prohibited from inviting American capitalists, who he thought were the only people who could fund such a large project. For the Kwantung Army, Manchuria was the land of the Meiji Emperor's heritage,⁸⁸ and Western infringement was totally unacceptable. Although Ayukawa's business sense was not compatible with the Kwantung Army's stubborn nationalism, he did his best in both incubating industry and bettering relations with America. He planned to invite American capital, to introduce American style management of farming in Manchuria, and even take a trip to the United States in order to see President Franklin Roosevelt. These plans could not be realized due to

⁸⁸ Since the Russo-Japanese War occurred during the time of the Meiji Emperor and was won with great sacrifice by the previous generation of the Japanese military, the Kwantung Army regarded the land as sacred.

opposition from the Kwantung Army, the Governments of Japan and the United States.⁸⁹

Regardless of his intentions or faithfulness to his mission of defending Japan as a military official, Ishiwara's arbitrary actions were highly controversial and vastly misunderstood in many senses. The largest problem of all was that his action was not in any way approved by the Japanese central government. At that time, Shidehara Kijūrō was Foreign Minister, putting friendly relations with the Powers as his first priority. The Mukden Incident was a fatal blow to him, as the Powers' conference diplomacy, with which Shidehara was comfortable, could not affect the China issue. With the fall of the Qing dynasty and the mal-functioning of the nominal central government that succeeded it, Chinese warlords fought against one another, and utter confusion reigned. After Shidehara resigned in 1931, he was unable to return to power and was completely forgotten, until the United States designated him as prime minister in 1945.

Ishiwara scoffed at Shidehara Diplomacy. He believed that once Japan was determined to solve the China issue among Asians without outsiders, it was capable of doing so as there was little Western military presence in the region, contrasting to Japan's substantial military capability in Continental Northeast Asia. His military action simply demonstrated this state of affairs. And the Western club was shocked to see Japan walk out of the League of Nations in 1933.

Still, no matter how well Ishiwara made his point, the central government was determined to minimize the Mukden incident. The Kwantung Army's dislike for the *zaibatsu* also had the political implication of reducing its

⁸⁹ Kojima, Naoki. Akai Yūhi no Shōwa-shi: Ayukawa Yoshisuke-den [Shōwa history in the Sunset: Ayukawa Yoshisuke Biography]. Tokyo: Nihon Keiei Shuppankai, 1967. 102-46.

leverage in Tokyo political circles, where the *zaibatsu* weighed substantial influence. During the Taishō democracy period, the two large political parties, *Seiyūkai* (Friends of Constitutional Government) and *Kenseikai* (Constitutional Party)/ *Minseitō* (Constitutional Democratic Party), were deeply related with the *zaibatsu*, especially Mitsui and Mitsubishi. If the Kwantung Army had accepted either of those *zaibatsu*, the central government could not have shown such determined opposition to them. Still, the Kwantung Army could act independently by resorting to force and creating *fait accompli*, which far-away Tokyo could not restrain, especially after the military headquarter lost dignity after the State Secretary Henry Stimson leaked to the press the upcoming Imperial edict ordering the Kwantung Army to withdraw from Jinzhou. That edict was supposed to be secret until announced, but Shidehara had confided it to Stimson so as to relieve the United States.⁹⁰

In 1931, Inukai Tsuyoshi came to power as Prime Minister. He was known as a powerful supporter of Sun Yatsen and other Asians, and soon contacted the Chinese government via a personal emissary to try to achieve a breakthrough, bypassing MOFA. His plan was to return Manchuria to China, while 1) Japan and China would be responsible for the economic development of the region in equal measure, 2) China would crack down on anti-Japanese activities, and 3) Japan would defend the border of the region to forestall Soviet designs of southern expansion. However, Inukai's clandestine action was discovered by Mori Tsutomu, then the Administrative Vice Foreign Minister, who informed the military and sabotaged Inukai's plan.⁹¹ In 1932, while Inukai was resisting the Army Ministry's demand to recognize Manchukuo, the May 15th incident erupted. In that attempted coup, Inukai

⁹⁰ Hattori. *Shidehara Kijūrō*. 168-72.

⁹¹ Tokitō, Hideto. *Inukai Tsuyoshi: Riberaizumu to Nashonarizumu no Sōkoku* [Inukai Tsuyoshi: a Conflict Between Liberalism and Nationalism]. Tokyo: Ronsōsha, 1991. 230-47.

was killed, and thereafter the central government no longer had any semblance of control over the Kwantung Army.

Ironically, another Asianist was also involved in the May 15th incident: Ōkawa Shūmei. Originally a scholar of Islam, he was also deeply involved in supporting Indian exiles and their independence campaigns. He published articles on the brutal British suppression of Indian resistance. His book, Some Issues in Re-emerging Asia, published in 1922, became a classic of Asianism, and is said to have contributed to downgrading British image in Japan. He also worked for a time in the SMR Research Department, contributing to the study of colonial policies of the West. (The SMR served in the same capacity as the East India Company for the British Empire.) This workplace provided him with a chance to be close to the Kwantung Army and a variety of military officers in Tokyo.

Ōkawa, however, came to be concerned about domestic social unrest, such as the Rice Riot of 1918,⁹² political corruption, and the deep division between rich and poor within Japan. This drove him to think that a revolution to correct these ills was necessary in Japan before considering the future of other countries. He brought Kita Ikki, a revolutionary who witnessed the Chinese Revolution and could tell him how to execute such a revolution, back from Shanghai to Tokyo to found an NGO, *Yūzonsha*, together with Kita and Mitsukawa Kametarō, to prepare for a revolution.

Kita provided Ōkawa with a plan for revolution -- a book titled Nihon Kaizō Hōan Taikō [Guideline of a Bill to Reform Japan]. In it, Kita advocated interrupting constitutional government for three years to revolutionize Japan, in part using local veterans' associations for security purposes. His

⁹² The rioters demanded lower rice prices, which were the target of speculation on the eve of the Siberian Intervention.

plan gave the military some part to play, and is said to have ideologically influenced the masterminds of the February 26th incident in 1936, another coup by a group of military officers. For the Yūzonsha, the incident was a fatal blow, as they were accused of inciting it. Of the founders, Ōkawa was imprisoned for five years for his involvement in the May 15th incident, and Kita was sentenced to death as a theoretical leader of the February 26th incident, in which Ishiwara was in charge of the crackdown. The last founding member, Mitsukawa, died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1936.

In 1932, Japan recognized Manchukuo. Facing international condemnation at the League of Nations, Japan withdrew from that organization the following year. Tokyo signed an armistice with China at Tanggu that same year. After Ishiwara drafted his blueprint for Manchukuo, he was soon called back to Tokyo in triumph to be Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations. The tragedy is that after he left, Tōjō Hideki, Kishi Nobusuke and others ruled Manchukuo like a Japanese colony, with Japanese bureaucrats dominating the key governmental positions and Japanese capitalists exploiting the local population. Ishiwara's dream of *Ōdō Bunka* was never realized in Manchukuo. Ishiwara was soon followed to Tokyo by Miyazaki, who was charged to plan a similar authoritarian economic plan for mobilizing people and resources across the entire Japanese empire on the Manchukuo model.

In Japan proper, withdrawal from the League generated a deep sense of disappointment among the Japanese people at large, as they felt that they were not understood by the international community, despite all their efforts to learn to be like the West. Japanese popular interest returned to Asia once again. Such Japanese interest in Asia was embodied in the formation of the Dai Ajia Kyōkai [Great Asia Association] in 1933. The members included people from a variety of fields, including Konoe Fumimaro (to be Prime Minister in 1937), Hirota Kōki (former Foreign Minister to be Prime Minister

in 1936), Tokutomi Sohō, Nakatani Takeyo (the organizer), and Matsui Iwane (a retired Imperial Army officer and later the head of the organization).

The Great Asia Association was solely devoted to Asianism, to an even greater extent than other organizations previously mentioned, such as Tōyama's Black Ocean Society or Ōkawa's Yūzonsha. The ground rules of the Black Ocean Society never mentioned Asianism, simply exhorting members to respect the Emperor, to love Japan, and to protect people's rights.⁹³ The Black Ocean Society members took various actions, including but not totally devoted to, support of Asian exiles, students, and their independence campaigns. Although the Yūzonsha's founding charter declared that after the group succeeded in implementing a revolution in Japan it would also support revolutions in other Asian countries, Yūzonsha's primary focus lay in Japan.

The Great Asia Association's charter maintained that it was Japan's mission to lead the Asian races to independence and solidarity, to improve overly Europe-centric international institutions, and to create a new world order based on racial equality and equitable access to resources. For this purpose, it contended, Japan should first form the Great Asia Coalition. Therefore, the Great Asia Association would contribute to the cause by researching Asian culture, politics, economies, and other information to improve relations between Japan and other Asian countries and introduce Japanese culture to those countries.⁹⁴

From its establishment in 1933, the Great Asia Association organized seminars and speeches to spread Asianism, and founded its magazine, *Dai Ajia Shugi* [*Pan-Asianism*], to introduce to the Japanese general public the difficult situation not only of Manchukuo and China but also of Southeast

⁹³ Igawa and Kobayashi. *Hito Arite* [He was the Man]. 65.

⁹⁴ Dai Ajia Kyōkai. "Charter of the Great Asia Association". *Dai Ajia Shugi*. May 1933, 3-5.

Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. In 1943, the group was integrated under government pressure into the *Dai Nihon Kōa Dōmei* [Great Japan Asia Construction Alliance] to unite many similar Asianist groups.

Here we cannot ignore Japanese interests in Southeast Asia, or Nanshin-ron [Thoughts on Going South], that *Pan-Asianism* introduced into the discussion. Nanshin-ron was written by Murobuse Kōshin, a journalist and social/political critic, strongly arguing that Japan should focus on Southeast Asia while ending the imperialistic approach to China and instead reconciling and allying with it. For Murobuse, it was unbelievable that vast forest of the Dutch East Indies were left “virgin” with rich resources, while Japan was suffering from overpopulation and lack of natural resources. He demanded that the world (or the Powers) release land and resources, increase the utilization of nature, and support the freedom and equality of races.⁹⁵

Still, his book devoted many more pages to Southeast Asia’s attractiveness than to the difficult situation that the locals faced or to the role that Japan should play. Murobuse used statistics and figures to stress the richness of the region’s natural resources, the sparse population, and the depth of the region’s trade with Japan relative to trade with colonial mother countries. Thus, it would be fair to say that he used Asianism to embellish his imperialistic demand, on behalf of Japan, for Southeastern Asian natural resources and markets.

We can say that unlike other Asianists who paid little attention to the Power’s military strength, Murobuse came to the conclusion that his demands should be made to the Powers after considering the relative military (naval) capability of the United Kingdom, the United States, and Japan. Still, he did not realistically consider what reactions such policy proposals would

⁹⁵ Murobuse, Kōshin. Nanshin-ron [On Going South]. Tokyo: Nihon Hyōron sha, 1937. 265-6.

bring from the colonial mother countries, and what countermeasures Japan should then take. He wrote that there was no reason to fight the British. However, he did not present any measures to allay British fears that if Japan went for the Dutch East Indies, next door to British Malaya and Singapore, there was no reason to rule out the possibility that Japan's next target would be Britain's own colonies nearby.

The Imperial Navy combined this "Go-South" concept with oil-security concerns in the 1930s, because of Japan's growing political isolation from the international community and growing economic enclosure by the Powers through building their exclusive economic blocs. Further, Ishiwara's "brilliant" success in annexing Manchukuo inspired some Navy officers to "catch up" with the Imperial Army and pursue a similar achievement.⁹⁶ According to one such naval officer:

It is necessary to utilize a vast southern lands and rich resources. ... And it is Japan's responsibility as the Asian leader, to release the southern races from a dire situation. ... He (southern races) sells materials, and we (Japan) sell products. This complementary relation is the necessary condition for the development of Great Asia.⁹⁷

In fact, some Navy officers visited South East Asia (the Dutch East Indies in particular), which of course irritated the local authorities. It is worth noting that this Go-South concept became the impetus for the Imperial Navy to launch the Pacific War against the United States in the Philippines, the British in Malaya and Singapore, and the Dutch in their East Indies.

In this period, Japan was clearly becoming increasingly estranged from the West and its imperialist global order. Interestingly, for this very reason some

⁹⁶ Gotō, Ken'ichi. *Shōwa-ki to Indoneshia: 1930nendai "Nanshin" no Ronri, "Nihon-Kan" no Keifu* [Shōwa Period and Indonesia: History of Logic in "Go-South" and How Indonesia Viewed Japan]. Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1986. 25.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 27.

Muslims came to Japan to find support for their countries' independence. Important Turkic Muslim figures, including Ayas Ishaq, Racid Ibrahim Bay and Tofir Pasha, lived in Japan for several years. Racid Ibrahim Bay competed with Mehmet Kurbanali, who had also been in Japan for a while, to turn Japan into a Muslim state. With help from Japanese Muslims and other Asianists, they built schools for Islam and mosques in Japan and began missionary work in Manchukuo.⁹⁸ The Japanese military also welcomed this trend, partly because some of these Islamic groups were pursuing in an independence campaign for East Turkistan in the Xinjiang region. Both groups also had some interest in Inner Mongolia, next to Manchukuo, as a gateway to the Silk Road. In 1938, Dai Nihon Kaikyō Kyōkai [Islamic Association of Great Japan]⁹⁹ was established, headed by former Prime Minister Hayashi Senjūrō and listing a hundred celebrities as its board members.¹⁰⁰

As the head of the Great Asia Association and a retired army officer, Matsui Iwane visited China in 1936 to see important political figures, including Chiang Kaishek, T.V. Soong (Chiang's brother-in-law), and anti-Chiang politicians in southern China. Matsui, who was said to be the Imperial Army officer who best knew China, thought China must be united and strong enough to fight against communism, for which Japan could give a helping hand. He warned in his book, Ajia Renmei Ron [On Asia Federation], that:

As far as China hesitates to understand its past mistakes and to accept the Japanese helping hand, China should recognize its own destiny as being one of the following: internal division; falling under international control; a second Balkans as a melting pot of

⁹⁸ Kobayashi, Fujio. Nihon Isuraamu [Japan's Relation with Islam]. 78-91.

⁹⁹ "Kaikyō" is a Japanese word meaning Islam that originally came from China with a derogatory connotation. Using this term shows the limitation of the Japanese sensitivity toward Islam.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 94.

international conflicts; or communization and becoming a second Soviet Union.¹⁰¹

While admitting that both Japan and China were too narrowly focused on immediate national interests, he insisted that the two countries should cooperate, thereby creating the basis for an Asian Federation. He believed that “one of the primary reasons why the two countries significantly diverged was because of the Chinese being dazzled by Western thoughts and culture. Therefore, it is imperative that we should cooperate and promote the renaissance of our Eastern culture, morals, and thoughts.”¹⁰²

Here, we categorize Matsui as a member of the Asian Monroe Doctrine group. He wrote,

The mission of Asianism lies in strengthening regional self-rule in order to enable global cooperation. ... A coalition of Asia should aim to enhance international cooperation and the bases of world peace. In other words, an Asia coalition would cooperate with the British Commonwealth, the Central European nation group including France, Germany, and Italy, America and its sphere of influence by the name of the Monroe Doctrine, and the Soviet Union and its allies. Thus, all such nation groups would contribute to human welfare and world peace.¹⁰³

In other words, Matsui sought an independent Asia while establishing good relations with the West. Without Western Powers showing the slightest indication of releasing their colonies at that moment, an independent Asia would be difficult to realize without avoiding strains in relations with the Powers, he argued.

Still, Chiang had not yet united China, and Matsui tried in vain to persuade both Chiang and his opponents to unite and build a better relationship with

¹⁰¹ Matsui, Iwane. Ajia Renmei-ron [On Asia Federation]. Tokyo: Dai Ajia Kyōkai, 1933. 11.

¹⁰² Ibid. 13.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 7.

Japan. He envisioned a China with two well-established governments, northern and southern, bordered by the Yangtse River.¹⁰⁴ There were, however, deep emotional conflicts and mistrust between the Nanjing government and Guangdong province.

Soon after Matsui went back to Japan, the Xi'an Incident occurred in 1936. Chiang was put under house arrest by Chang Hsuehliang and forced to agree to cooperate with the Communist Party to fight against Japan. Exactly as Matsui had feared, Chiang announced the next year his position as “accommodating the Communist Party and resisting Japan.”

That year, 1937, also marked the start of the second Sino-Japanese War. It was triggered in July by the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, a battle between Japan and China in a suburb of Beijing. Responding to the limited military conflict, Tokyo decided to dispatch three Army Divisions, which encouraged the hard-liners and made peace negotiation impossible. Ishiwara, who was basically against war with China, agreed with the substantial dispatch of forces to minimize further damages, only at the news of exaggerated damage on the Japanese side. In August 1937, the Battle of Shanghai erupted after Chiang's violation of the 1932 Shanghai Truce Agreement.

Interestingly, there was tacit understanding between the Japanese Army and the Navy of their respective turfs, with the Army responsible for northern China and the Navy for southern China. The Navy demanded that the Army enhance its military capability in Shanghai, which forced a hesitant Ishiwara to agree to dispatch another two divisions. According to him, “it can be said that the Navy dragged the Army down to the war.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Hayase, Toshiyuki. *Shōgun no Shinjitsu: Nanking Jiken – Matsui Iwane Jinbutsu den* [Truth of the General: Nanjing Massacre – Story of Matsui Iwane]. Tokyo: Kōjinsha, 1999. 45.

¹⁰⁵ Okada, Yūji. *Nicchū Sensō Urakata Ki* [Stories Behind the Scene of the Second Sino-Japanese War]. Tokyo: Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha, 1974. 69.

Ishiwara saw the Mukden Incident he had implemented as being totally different from the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. In creating Manchukuo, he had the clear purpose of establishing Japan's defense at the Sino-Soviet border. He did a prudent prior feasibility study to make sure that the Soviet Union would not interfere, as it was too busy stabilizing and industrializing itself, and confirmed that the troops of the Chinese warlords lacked allegiance to their employers. With such definitive purpose, he had a clear strategy for keeping the scope of the battle confined within Manchuria, and not getting involved in KMT China. Thus, an armistice with China had been possible in 1933.

On the other hand, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937 had no other cause but the bloodlust of the rest of the Kwantung Army. Ishiwara's success misled the military officers in the Kwantung Army to believe that if they could succeed in enlarging the Imperial territory, they would be heroes, free from taking responsibility for their arbitrary actions. There was no prudent planner like Ishiwara being the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. No one had any idea of where to stop, when to deal for peace, and on what conditions. They had not considered what Shidehara had feared, "the Chinese multiple hearts": because China has such a vast territory, its government could move to inner areas and continue to resist, and it would therefore be next to impossible to conquer China entirely.¹⁰⁶

Ironically, it was Ishiwara who ordered the Kwantung Army to stop the irresponsible military actions at the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937. However, his order was met with cynicism and simply ignored in Manchuria; was not he the one who had first ignored Tokyo's orders only six years before? Of course, for Ishiwara, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident was not comparable

¹⁰⁶ Kamimura. Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 17 [History of Japan's Diplomacy Vol. 17]. 179-80.

with the Mukden Incident, especially in terms of cause and preparedness. Still, he had to accept criticism, as the mastermind of the Mukden incident for setting an example of defiance of central authority, which in 1937 led the Kwantung Army badly astray.

Another irony was that the commander of the two divisions sent to Shanghai in 1937 was to be Matsui Iwane. He succeeded in expelling Chiang's army from Shanghai and waited a short period between Shanghai and Nanjing to observe the development of peace negotiations conducted via the German Ambassador to China. With a series of victories in hand, however, the hard-liners in the Army forced the Cabinet to raise the bar for peace, changing the initial position of returning control of northern China to the Nanjing government to an unacceptable level of reparations and keeping northern China largely under Japanese control. The negotiations officially broke down in January 1938.¹⁰⁷

By this time, ambitions within the Imperial Army were beyond Ishiwara's control. Although he was again assigned to the Kwantung Army, his ex-colleagues and subordinates no longer listened to his policy of not expanding the front to southern China. He was also disappointed by the evolution of Manchukuo, which was to be the embodiment of his ideal of *Tōa Renmei*, or East Asia Federation. While Ishiwara was in Tokyo, Tōjō and Kishi had deformed his dreamland into just another Japanese colony, tightly controlled by the Japanese bureaucracy and highly exploitative. Completely disenchanted, Ishiwara soon left the Army to devote himself thereafter to his *Tōa Renmei* campaign.

¹⁰⁷ Kamimura, Shin'ichi. *Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 20: Nikka Jihen Vol. 2* [History of Japan's Diplomacy Vol. 20: The Second Sino-Japanese War Vol. 2]. Tokyo: Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūjo, 1971. 183-201.

Matsui's troops conquered Nanjing, the capital of the Chiang's KMT government, in the same month. He made sure his troops would not destroy Sun Yatsen's grave in Nanjing. Although he ordered his troops not to hurt civilians in China, the Nanjing Massacre nevertheless occurred. An underestimate of the damage was reported to him, and he punished dozens of responsible officers. When he was first told of the extent of the atrocities in Nanjing at the Tokyo Tribunal, he was visibly moved and is said to have wept.

Five days after the occupation of Nanjing, Matsui left for Shanghai, where he planned to establish a new Japanese-supported Chinese government that was not a Japanese puppet. He hoped for a non-Communist Chinese government.¹⁰⁸ However, his ideas were far from acceptable to the Imperial Army, and he was soon dismissed. Back in Japan, he built a ceramic statue of the Goddess of Kannon, goddess of mercy, using the soil of both Japan and China to enshrine both Japanese and Chinese war dead, in Izu, Japan. The statue was named Kōa-Kannon [Goddess of Mercy to Construct Asia], and every Ambassador from the ROC to Japan comes to visit it when he or she arrives to Japan.¹⁰⁹

Regretting having made a statement in January 1939 that Japan would “no longer deal with” the Chiang Administration, Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro issued another statement in November 1939 on building a “New Order in East Asia,” proposing that Japan, Manchuria, and China cooperate in political, economic, and cultural matters. Rōyama Masamichi, Miki Kiyoshi, and other members of Shōwa Kenkyūkai, Konoe's private advisory group, tried to add historical meaning to the “New Order” efforts to create an alternative to capitalism, communism, and fascism.

¹⁰⁸ Hayase. *Shōgun no Shinjitsu* [Truth of the General]. 151.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 204.

Rōyama Masamichi addressed the following three agendas in terms of Asia regionalism: how to align Japan with China; how to alleviate suspicions of Asian regionalism by Europe and especially the United States; and how to balance Japan's New Order in East Asia with collaboration with the Western Powers. His responses to these challenges were to develop economic ties between Japan and China; to create an open regionalism not excluding other parts of the world; and to revise the Nine-Power Treaty signed in 1922, that agreed on an open-door policy in China to demand that member states maintain a more cooperative commitment to stability in China.¹¹⁰

Rōyama further claimed that Japan needed a new organizing principle for world politics, since Japan was trying to repudiate the conventional principles of colonialism that dominated the international relations of East Asia.¹¹¹ In other words, it was impossible to have concerted diplomacy between Japan and China unless Japan decided to return to the international community and restart alliance diplomacy, departing from its prevailing isolationist diplomatic course.¹¹² To be more concrete, in thinking of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Japan decided to plan in the following three areas: external relations of the Sphere, including trade, customs, finance, currency, and transportation, as well as the necessary infrastructure; domestic planning, including regional development and resource distribution; and regional planning including political structure, economic markets, purchasing power of locals, and social security.¹¹³

Miki Kiyoshi, a prominent philosopher at Kyoto University, recognized the world trend toward conflict between irrational nationalism and abstract

¹¹⁰ Rōyama, Masamichi. Tōa to Sekai [East Asia and the world]. Tokyo: Kaizō sha, 1941. 189-92.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 193.

¹¹² Ibid. 249.

¹¹³ Ibid. 357.

globalism, finding limitations in both. In other words, he found that the deeper globalization became, the more nationalism was spurred. The cycle of conflicts would result in humanity's self-destruction, because globalization was not mature enough to resolve cultural gaps through peaceful and mutually beneficial means, and because nationalism would excessively constrain external interactions.

Thus, Miki expanded his conception of nationalism into regionalism, or the collective nationalisms of various countries, where the rational nationalisms of each member state could be accommodated without conflicts and then bonded with universal values. These universal values could come from traditional Asian culture, which valued moral strength more than military power and love higher than calculation. For example, although Miki found virtues in familism (as opposed to individualism), at the same time he was compelled to criticize the feudalistic characteristics in it.¹¹⁴ If familism became rational enough to minimize its feudalistic element, it could serve as a universal value, to be shared not only within one country but also across East Asia or even throughout the rest of the world.

In the context mentioned above, Miki regarded Japan's nationalism and accommodative culture highly. It even found a way, for example, to make Shintō¹¹⁵ and Buddhist beliefs peacefully compatible, which he saw as an outstanding achievement. Still, he did not forget to warn that Japanese nationalism should not be self-righteous, and especially that Japanese imperialism should not harm East Asia. He instead hoped for the East Asia

¹¹⁴ Shōwa Kenkyūkai Jimukyoku. Shin Nihon no Shisō Genri [Ideological Principles of New Japan]. Tokyo: Shōwa Kenkyūkai, 1939. 14-6.

¹¹⁵ In Japan's ethnic religion tells myths comparable with those of the Greeks and Romans. Its tenets claim that there are eight million gods, each in charge of one thing, and that one therefore needs to pay homage to everything. It also says that the Emperor is the offspring of god, which was not taken seriously while the Samurai ruled Japan. However, during the early Shōwa period, fanatic nationalists abused this religion to deify the Emperor, and to attack political opponents for not paying enough respect to the Emperor, which resulted in stifling freedom of speech for many sensible intellectuals.

Community to be built based on Japan's constructive mission of integrating Asian races, and not Japanese egoism.¹¹⁶

Another Shōwa Kenkyūkai member, Ozaki Hotsumi, a reputed China expert, had a different view. He was highly controversial, as he was an informant for Soviet spy Richard Sorge. Ozaki envisioned a communist Asian coalition, and he developed a large volume of analysis papers on China. He voluntarily cooperated with the police after his arrest, and the resulting police reports were voluminous.

Ozaki repeatedly warned that the Japanese were not paying enough attention to rising nationalism in China. Indeed, he sympathized with the East Asia Federation concept or other ideas of aligning with China, and determined that such concepts were born in the reflection of Japanese imperialistic capitalism.¹¹⁷ However, he foresaw that achieving such an ideal would require a drastic change in Japan to contain the Japanese imperialistic lust for external markets, as well as to secure full Chinese support. For that to happen, China would have to experience a sustained period of racial and revolutionary conflict.¹¹⁸ And for Ozaki, such idealistic concepts did not properly consider the required domestic changes and were thus too naïve to implement.¹¹⁹ He admitted that Japan should have a special position in East Asia. Still, he maintained that Japan should not fall into exclusionism, which would make the Powers deeply suspicious.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Shōwa Kenkyūkai Jimukyoku. Shin Nihon [New Japan]. 28.

¹¹⁷ Ozaki, Hotsumi. "Tōa Seikyoku ni Okeru Ichijiteki Teitai to Arata naru Hatten no Yosō [A Temporary Stagnation and a Hunch for a New Development in East Asia Politics]". Ozaki Hotsumi Jihyōshū [Ozaki Hotsumi Selection of Contemporary Critics], Ozaki, Hotsumi. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2004. 218.

¹¹⁸ Ozaki, Hotsumi. "'Tōa Kyōdōtai" no Rinen to Sono Seiritsu no Kyakkanteki Kiso [The Concept of "East Asia Community" and the Objective Bases of its Birth]. Ozaki Hotsumi Jihyōshū, 195.

¹¹⁹ Ozaki, Hotsumi. "Tōa Shin Chitsujo-ron no Genzai oyobi Shōrai [Discussion of New Order in East Asia, Today and Tomorrow]. Ozaki Hotsumi. 241.

¹²⁰ Ozaki, Hotsumi. "Tōa Kyōdōtai" [East Asia Community]. 201.

Instead, Ozaki must have supported Communism as the only way to realize the drastic domestic political-economic changes required to achieve an East Asia Federation, and anticipated that a communist world would come about eventually. According to his police report, in the progression to a communist world, he envisioned a close coalition among Japan, the Soviet Union, and China, which would involve the core establishment of an Asian (racial) community. At that point, Japan would overcome capitalism, and the Chinese Communist Party would become a hegemonic power in China. Still, in the course of forging the coalition, he thought that neither Japan nor China had to be a communist state, but rather that the three states had to closely align with one another to achieve the emancipation of Asian races. The free Asian countries, whatever political structure they might adopt at first, would then establish a close partnership in terms of politics, economy, and culture.¹²¹

In the meanwhile, the Army took a major initiative unchecked by any other governmental organs. In 1938, the *Kōa-In* [Institute for the Construction of Asia] was established. It was the governmental organization overseeing the administration and development of the occupied areas of China. Although Japanese prime ministers assumed leadership of this organization, it was set up by the military in order to exclude the MOFA from occupied China. In fact, the then-Foreign Minister quit in protest, and the directors of the organization were all army or naval officers. Nakatani Takeyo was involved in *Kōa-In* as one of the founding members. Later, he was stationed in Shanghai, promoting his concept of Asianism while supporting Wang Jingwei's puppet government in Nanjing.

According to Nakatani, the Army had to face the fact that unless Japan imposed military rule in China, it had no choice but to respect Chinese

¹²¹ Ozaki, Hotsumi. ““Tōa Shin Chitsujo Shakai” ni Tsuite [On “A New Order Society in East Asia”] (excerpt from the police report)” Ozaki Hotsumi. 412-4.

nationalism, which would lead to a Chinese government led by KMT members. The Army persuaded Wang Jingwei, a prominent rival of Chiang Kaishek in the KMT government, to establish a new administration in Nanjing.¹²²

In 1938, Wang left Chongqing, the KMT's capital, in order to establish a new government in Nanjing, supported by the Japanese forces led by Col. Kagesa Sadaaki. According to Nakatani's memoir, Kagesa said he knew Wang and Chiang were secretly communicating, and that he did not mind. This thought was shared by Konoe.¹²³ As a condition for going to Nanjing, Wang got what China wanted from Japan: a promise of the withdrawal of the Japanese army from China, north of the Great Wall. Further, Konoe stated that Japan would not demand from China any land or reparations, and that Tokyo was considering the return of leased territory and the abandonment of extraterritoriality.¹²⁴

Wang's Nanjing government was formally established in 1940, and Japanese advisors flooded into the new government. For example, Kagesa was the supreme military advisor, occupying virtually the highest office in the Wang administration, and Aoki Kazuo, a former Finance Minister of Japan, became the Supreme Economy Advisor, and led a group of experts for financial and economic development, including the rising Ministry of Finance official Fukuda Takeo, later to become Prime Minister of Japan (1976-8).¹²⁵

The Japanese, however, betrayed Wang. His administration became a puppet with little credibility either in or out of China. As stated by Nishi Yoshiaki, a

¹²² Nakatani, Takeyo. Shōwa Dōranki no Kaisō: Nakatani Takeyo Kaisōroku [Memory of Shōwa Upheaval Period: Memoir of Nakatani Takeyo], Vol. 2. Tokyo: Tairyūsha, 1989. 666-7.

¹²³ Ibid. 672.

¹²⁴ Kamimura. Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 20 [History of Japanese Diplomacy Vol. 20]. 282-3.

¹²⁵ Shigemitsu, Mamoru. Shōwa no Dōran [Shōwa Upheaval] Vol. 2. Tokyo: Chūōkōron, 2001. 20; Fukuda, Takeo. Kaiko Kyūjū-nen [Memory of 90 Years]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995. 48.

Japanese who was involved in maneuvering Wang, Chinese who lost their businesses and other means of livelihood because of the Second Sino-Japanese War were miserable, and starving people have little choice but to embrace nationalism. While stimulating Chinese nationalism, Japan expanded its war for the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosper Sphere (a concept of an Asian bloc led by Japan). “It was impossible to establish the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere by hurting the Chinese. By killing Chinese people there is no Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, and by denying China, there is no Sino-Japanese cooperation,” Nishi maintained.¹²⁶

Chiang Kaishek became increasingly reliant on the United Kingdom and America, especially after his government retreated to Chongqing in 1937. As Japan had not declared war against China, the two Anglo-Saxon powers were free to support Chiang via Indochina. This triggered Japan’s northern Indochina Expedition in September 1940 and southern Indochina Expedition in July 1941, in order to stop American and British aid. Nakatani welcomed these Japanese actions, stating that “Japan, as an Asian nation, had cut into the white colonial territory for the first time, implying the start of military warfare to release Asia from white imperialism.”¹²⁷

Further, Japan took actions that crossed a red line for the United States. In 1940, the Tripartite Pact was signed, and the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact followed in 1941 under the leadership of the controversial Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke. With a peculiar taste for brinkmanship, and over-confidence that he could control even the Army, Matsuoka had a grandiose plan. As Japan was not strong enough to compete by itself against America or other Powers, it would be unwise to negotiate with America

¹²⁶ Inoue, Toshikazu. Nicchū Sensō-ka no Nihon [Japan Under the Second Sino-Japanese War]. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2007. 153.

¹²⁷ Nakatani. Shōwa Dōranki [Shōwa Upheaval Period]. 722.

directly without first properly preparing; he based this conclusion on his own personal experience in the United States. Then, he faced racial discrimination and hardships by poor English.¹²⁸ He believed that Americans do not respect those who smile from the beginning, and that in order to gain their respect he would need to jab them first and then offer a hand in friendship. Matsuoka conceived of the two Axis treaties as such jabs. If Japan first became good friends with Germany and the Soviet Union, the British and the Americans would not think about going to war against Japan, he reasoned.¹²⁹

Matsuoka thought that when the Anglo-Saxon countries feared Japan would go south, that would be the best time to propose a peace agreement. He even prepared the northern Indochina Expedition so as to make the Japanese withdrawal from the region a “carrot” for the ensuing peace negotiation. Then, he planned to get on a plane to Chongqing, where he would meet Chiang for peace talks. Then, both leaders would fly to Washington D.C., in order to have a trilateral meeting with Roosevelt to discuss the East Asia issue. There, he would propose that Japan withdraw from the continent, while retaining China north of the Great Wall as a buffer area, while the United States and China would recognize Manchukuo. When accepted, he would make another proposal for signing non-aggression treaties between Japan and the United States on the one hand, and also between Japan and China, on the other.¹³⁰

The Hull Note of November 1941, which Japan regarded as an ultimatum, proposed a multilateral non-aggression pact among the United States, Japan,

¹²⁸ Matsuoka had to work part-time at various businesses, including a law firm and a newspaper company, while studying in a high school and University of Oregon. See Toyoda, Minoru. Matsuoka Yōsuke: Higeiki no Gaikōkan Jōkan [Matsuoka Yōsuke: A Tragic Diplomat Vol. 1]. Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1983. 49-61.

¹²⁹ Miwa, Kimitada. Matsuoka Yōsuke: Sono Ningen to Gaikō [Matsuoka Yōsuke: His Characters and Diplomacy]. Tokyo: Chūōkōron, 1997. 173.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 178.

China, and other nations. It also demanded the Japanese military's withdrawal from China and Indochina; Japan's recognition of the Chiang administration; and Japan's withdrawal from the Axis treaties.¹³¹ Matsuoka could have had chances to cut a deal based on this note, if the United States could have agreed to exclude Manchukuo from "China," and recognize the puppet kingdom, which Washington did consider doing until just before the Note was actually delivered.¹³² Rather, David J. Lu, the biographer of Matsuoka, ascribed this Foreign Minister's failure to his twisted view of the United States, in maintaining "a resolute stand to confront the America of the 1940s, but the attitude he held and the means he wanted to employ belonged to the 1890s."¹³³

In terms of Asia, Matsuoka envisioned an economic bloc: the Greater Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. He first advocated the concept in August 1940. His concept was essentially to establish an economic bloc among Japan, China, and Manchukuo, led by Japan and based on *Kōdō shugi*, a kind of extreme Japanese nationalism.¹³⁴ However, this Japanese nationalism is not compatible with Asianism, since Asianism intends to engender sympathy and the understanding of Asians based on Oriental culture. While the core concept is based on Japanese nationalism, it would be nothing but a Japan-centered concept, and could not accommodate other Asian races.

Matsuoka's greatest diplomatic mistake occurred when Germany invaded the Soviet Union: he (as well as the Imperial Army) trusted German propaganda and blindly believed in German victory. He was even betrayed by his boss,

¹³¹ U.S. Department of States. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941 Vol. IV The Far East. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956. 637-65.

¹³² The November 22nd version of the Note demanded that Japan withdraw from the portion of "China" not including Manchukuo. This clause was, however, deleted in the final November 25th version. See *Ibid.* 645-65.

¹³³ Lu, David J. Agony of Choice: Matsuoka Yōsuke and the Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire, 1880-1946. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2002. 242-3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 162-6.

Konoe, who gave Matsuoka a free hand in diplomatic initiatives, which was the condition Matsuoka demanded from Konoe before agreeing to serve as his foreign minister. Yet Konoe conducted side negotiations with the United States without notifying Matsuoka, and ultimately fired him in July 1941. Matsuoka never again returned to power.

Brinkmanship can work only when a given player knows the precise location of other actors' "red lines". Fearing possible intervention by the Army, Matsuoka kept his ideas mostly to himself, and no one else quite knew his intentions. Without a map of such "red lines," after Matsuoka was gone Japan started the Pacific War. Matsuoka was said to have regretted signing the Tripartite Treaty upon hearing the news of the outbreak of the Pacific War.¹³⁵

Nakatani was among the minority who truly believed that the Pacific War was originally intended to release Asia, and was ecstatic at the news of Pearl Harbor.¹³⁶ Most Asianists were more realistic in their understanding of the great power differential between Japan and its new enemies. Besides, with the exception of the Philippines and a few other small islands, Asia lay under the yoke of the British and other European empires, not the United States. Even Murobuse Kōshin said that Japan should establish good relations with the United States, and that there was no reason for Japan to fight against the United Kingdom.¹³⁷ Ōkawa even acted to secure a loan and oil imports from America in order to maintain a track-two channel during the late 1930s, which did not quite succeed. He was far from wishing for a war against the U.S.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Miwa, *Matsuoka Yōsuke*. 187.

¹³⁶ Nakatani, *Shōwa Dōranki* [Shōwa Upheaval Period]. 726-7.

¹³⁷ Murobuse, *Nanshin-ron* [On Going South]. 203-8.

¹³⁸ Ōtsuka, Takehiro, *Ōkawa Shūmei: Aru Fukko Kakushin Shugisha no Shisō* [Ōkawa Shūmei: Thoughts of a Reactionary and Innovative Man]. Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1995. 163-9.

It is true, however, that once the war erupted, some Asianists decided to support government policy out of patriotism. Although the Shōwa emperor's declaration of the Pacific War to the Japanese public did not put it in such terms, Ōkawa was one of the first to describe the mission of the war as to secure the release of Asia from white imperialism. They believed that this situation solved the Japanese Asianist's dilemma: while offering to help Asians, Japan was in fact invading China. By directly confronting the Western Powers, Japan could now say it was fighting the common enemy of Asia and their puppet Chinese administration.¹³⁹

A week after the war broke out, Ōkawa gave a series of a dozen lectures on a NHK radio program to explain how the British Empire and the United States invaded Asia, and Japan's reasons for fighting them. In these lectures, he said that Japan had been fighting in order to protect its own culture and the endangered Eastern culture in China from the West. However, instead of fighting together with Japan against the destroyers of Asia, China had sided with Asia's enemies and continued to fight against Japan, the defender of Asia. Although it was sad that Chiang and his government did not understand Japanese intentions, it was understandable; one could see similar confusion if one looked back at Japan at the end of the Edo period, when the people were divided and confused between opening the country and expelling foreigners. He predicted that the Chinese people would eventually understand their mistake. He concluded that Japan had to fight whatever the cost, until China corrected its mindset, India reasserted its independence, and they could together establish a new Asian order.¹⁴⁰ In this way, he legitimized the Japanese war in Asia as a war of liberation, and described the resisting Asians as mistaken people who would soon come to their senses.

¹³⁹ Matsumoto, Ken'ichi. *Ōkawa Shūmei*. Tokyo: Iwanami, 2004. 225.

¹⁴⁰ Ōkawa, Shūmei. *Ōkawa Shūmei Zenshū* [All Works of Ōkawa Shūmei] Vol. 2. Tokyo: Ōkawa Shūmei Zenshū Kankōkai, 1962. 766.

The magazine *Dai Ajia Shugi* soon followed suit. In the January 1942 edition, Nakatani said that the Japanese declaration of war against the Americans and the British was a declaration of war by all of East Asia, and a declaration of the release of all Asian races from white enslavement. Further, he added that the war included the element of reconstructing Asia, an Asian renaissance. Nakatani asserted that the Chinese view of Japan had been changing since the advent of the Pacific War. The Chinese were angry with Japan because it only attacked China, rather than the common enemies of Asia. Now that Japan was fighting against Asia's real enemies, the Chinese opinion of Japan would change, he hopefully maintained.¹⁴¹

Meanwhile, Matsui was more prudent in reminding the Japanese people that it would be impossible to conquer the American continent or the entire British Empire. Still, he emphasized that the purpose of the war was the self-defense of the Japanese Empire and the construction of a new order in Greater East Asia. He argued that the war should not end up with the Japanese expelling the white colonizers in order to simply replace them as insensitive occupiers. He insisted that Japan should instead encourage a renaissance of traditional Asian culture, reminding Asians of the dignity and pride of Asian people, and asking that the Japanese people share their destiny with Asia.¹⁴²

Ishiwara wrote a note titled "A Guideline for Leading the War" on December 9th, 1941, in which he insisted first on the independence of Asian nations and that Japan provide strong support for their independence.

¹⁴¹ Nakatani, Takeyo. "Ajia no Kaihō to Sekai Ishin: Kaihōsen narabini Kensetsusen toshite no Dai Tōa Sensō [The Release of Asia and the World Reform: the Great Asia War, as an Emancipating War and as a War of Constructing Asia]". *Dai Ajia Shugi*, January 1942. 2-5.

¹⁴² Matsui, Iwane. "Taishō wo Kashikomi Dōjin ni Tsugu [Listening to the Announcement of the Pacific War and Talking to My Colleagues]". *Dai Ajia Shugi*, January 1942 edition, 7-8.

First policy: make clear to the world that Japan would respect the independence of races with original cultures based on the principle of the East Asian Federation, as the operations in Southeast Asia proceed. In other words, A) Instead of occupying the Philippines, declare its independence immediately, and conclude a non-aggression treaty with it; B) Build independent countries for races in Java, Sumatra and other areas according to their conditions, and limit Japanese guidance depending on local capabilities. It is extremely important to relieve Chinese residents and cooperate with them.

This statement reflects Ishiwara's belief that Japan could not win the war without all of Asia's support and the potential power flowing there from.¹⁴³

Although Tōyama Mitsuru was still alive in 1941, he had by then lost the power he previously enjoyed. In September 1941, for example, teaming with Prince Higashikuni, Hirota Kōki (a former Prime Minister), and Ogata Taketora (then Asahi Shimbun's Chief Editor), Tōyama failed to persuade Prime Minister Tōjō to allow Tōyama to meet with Chiang in Chongqing to stop the war, even though Chiang had already agreed to see him. According to Prince Higashikuni, Tōyama abhorred the taking of another country's territory, especially when that nation was in decline. He was against the Korean annexation and the Mukden Incident, and furious about the Second Sino-Japanese War.¹⁴⁴ Apparently, Tōyama did not want to cooperate with the government on the Pacific War either.

Looking at the relationship between the Asianists and the Pacific War, the Asianists were not for the war before it broke out. Only after the onset of hostilities did Ōkawa, Matsui, and others decide to support or were asked to support it. They then described the conflict as a war of liberation, a notion

¹⁴³ Ishiwara. Tōa Renmei [East Asian Federation]. 14-6.

¹⁴⁴ Igawa and Kobayashi. Hito Arite [He was the Man]. 236-7.

which was criticized later as an embellishment of the war. (Under wartime censorship, they could not say “Please support the war despite the fact that the government was stupid enough to start a war against the Allies.”) Meanwhile, they remained independent-minded enough to include an appeal to the Japanese people to implement their long-standing goals: to help other Asians to stand up by themselves and to allow independence for the former Western colonies.

During the war, Matsui and other Asianists visited occupied Asia and tried to disseminate their idea of an Asian renaissance. Some sought peace negotiations through unofficial channels between Japan and the Chiang administration. However, these endeavors were simply utilized by the Chiang government to lessen prospects of any Japanese attack, according to Shigemitsu Mamoru, a diplomat to be touched upon later.¹⁴⁵ Indian fighters for independence, such as R.B. Bose, cooperated with Tokyo, especially in the fight in Singapore where many Indians were drafted as soldiers. There, when an Indian campaigner for independence shouted to the Indian troops to surrender to the Japanese Army and to join the Indian National Army supported by Japan, a thousand Indian troops surrendered to the Japanese Army in a day.¹⁴⁶ In 1943, another activist for the Indian independence, Subhas Chandra Bose was transferred from Germany as far as the Indian Ocean, at which point he boarded a Japanese submarine, which was waiting to transport him to Japan. He subsequently established the Provisional Government of Free India in Singapore.

Meanwhile, in order to more easily control Asianists’ activities, the central government ordered the various Asianist organizations to unite to form one organization, the *Dai Nihon Kōa Dōmei* [Great Japan Asia Construction

¹⁴⁵ Shigemitsu. *Shōwa no Dōran* [Shōwa Upheaval]. 273-4.

¹⁴⁶ Nakajima. *Nakamura-ya* [Nakamura Bakery]. 274.

Alliance], in July 1941. Nakatani's *Dai Ajia Kyōkai*, Ishiwara's *Tōa Renmei Kyōkai*, and 51 other groups were forced to join the new umbrella federation. Likewise, the government reorganized *Kōa-In*, related departments in the MOFA, and in other ministries, in order to establish the Ministry of Greater East Asia in November 1942, despite opposition by MOFA, which insisted on a consistent, unified diplomatic apparatus.

The largest contributor to the actual implementation of Asianists' ideals inside MOFA would be Shigemitsu Mamoru, a China expert in MOFA. According to his memoir, when Shigemitsu went to Nanjing as Ambassador to the Wang Jingwei Government in early 1942, the Japan's economy was growing and Sino-Japanese trade was smooth. He thought that while Japan was comfortable in its relationship with China, Tokyo needed to change the course of its diplomacy: to treat China as an independent country by abandoning unequal treaties; to withdraw the Japanese military; and to return all special concessions that it held there. Shigemitsu's strategy was based on the belief that Sino-Japanese relations had to be defined as equal and mutually respectful. While Japan was intoxicated with its initial victories, he took a chance by proposing his thoughts to the Japanese leadership for about a year, and succeeded in winning the Emperor's support, which had a strong influence on Tōjō.¹⁴⁷

In April 1943, Shigemitsu joined the Tōjō cabinet as Foreign Minister. In that capacity, he defined the purpose of the Pacific War as Asia's emancipation and reconstruction. He also claimed that once Asians could free themselves to establish independent countries and acquire equality with other countries, Japan would be satisfied. By defining the war's ultimate purpose, he also

¹⁴⁷ Shigemitsu. *Shōwa no Dōran* [Shōwa Upheaval]. 182.

clarified the exit criteria, or the basis for ending the Pacific War,¹⁴⁸ at least theoretically.

Based on Shigemitsu's contentions, Tokyo decided to allow the nominal independence of several Asian countries. Burma and the Philippines were recognized rapidly as independent nations. The Provisional Government of Free India led by Chandra Bose was also recognized, and Japan presented it with the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the only British Indian territory that Japan had occupied. Japan even tried to pave a military route to India but failed at the Battle of Imphal in 1944.

Japan also prepared for Indonesian independence, which was planned to be announced on August 17th, 1945. Japan likewise forced the French army in Indochina (Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia) to disband itself, and to return administrative rights to the independent local government. The situation in that colony was complicated by the fact that Japan recognized Vichy France as an ally of Germany, and so it could not simply expel the French by force. Furthermore, Japan allowed the Koreans and Taiwanese to send representatives to the Japanese Imperial Diet under the Koiso cabinet (July 1944 – April 1945).¹⁴⁹

In January 1943, Shigemitsu succeeded in uniting the fractious Japanese government to abolish its unequal relations with China, including the return of exclusive Japanese settlements in Tianjin and other cities and abandonment of the right to station Japanese troops in Beijing and other areas. The unequal tariff issue had already been resolved in 1930.¹⁵⁰ Although he hoped these actions would lessen Chiang's reason to oppose

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 194-5.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 196, 280-1.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 190.

Japan, Shigemitsu knew too well that Chiang would continue his opposition with American and British support.

The Greater East Asia Conference was convened in Tokyo during November 1943. At the conference, Japan outlined the war's purpose in idealistic terms, and promised mutual respect of territorial integrity as well as mutual cooperation for development of Asia, freedom of trade, cultural interaction, and the emancipation and reconstruction of Asia as a whole. Delegates from Thailand (Japan's only independent Asian ally since 1941), Burma, the Philippines, Manchukuo and the Nanjing government all attended.¹⁵¹ The common impression of all the attendees was one of communal identity: they saw their Asian neighbors at close range for the first time, heretofore being focused on their respective mother countries. Before then, they had little awareness of their neighbors' existence.¹⁵² This experience illustrates how late Asia was up to the mid-1940s, in developing a sense of regionalism.

Shigemitsu's policy was too late, implemented after the Pacific War was well-underway. If he could have promoted his policy earlier, war might have been averted. Further, his change in foreign policy mattered little on the actual battlefield or in occupied areas, as it was the army and navy that actually implemented policy, rather than the MOFA. He was perfectly aware of this fact.¹⁵³ In that sense, his foreign policy initiative had little impact during the Pacific War itself. Rather, it was only at the Tokyo Trial that the transition toward support for Asian self-determination was invoked in Japan's defense.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.* 201.

¹⁵² Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūjo ed. *Nihon Gaikōshi Vol. 24: Dai Tōa Sensō/ Senji Gaikō* [History of Japan's Diplomacy Vol. 24: Greater East Asia War/ Diplomacy during the War]. Tokyo: Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūjo, 1971. 487.

¹⁵³ Hatano, Sumio. *Taiheiyō Sensō to Ajia Gaikō* [The Pacific War and Japanese Diplomacy toward Asia]. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1996. 295.

Still, why did Shigemitsu implement his Asia diplomacy? “The Pacific War is a war against the Anglo-Saxon world order, and in essence, a war of worldview,” he maintained. Thus whatever the result of the war might be, “the total return to the old order would be impossible.” In particular, the ideology and partially-realized reality of Asian emancipation could no longer be denied by the enemy. Then, we can regard the war as “a partial victory of our point of view.”¹⁵⁴

Shigemitsu asserted that the following three points were key factors to a successful change of course of Japan’s Asia policy. According to Shigemitsu, first, close to a million young Japanese men went to China as soldiers, and they could not find reason to fight against China. Instead, they concluded that the two countries should cooperate and co-prosper. In other words, the Japanese people came back to reason. Secondly, the Japanese worldview was broadened by the war, and they thought their exploitation of the sacrifice of Chinese people was against the mission of Japan. The Japanese finally realized that rather than being obsessed with small issues in China, Japan should be friends with Asians and establish mutually beneficial relations with them. Thirdly, as the war proceeded, Japan came to lack goods and desperately needed voluntary Chinese cooperation, not only economically but also in other respects.¹⁵⁵

Indeed, a million of the young Japanese soldiers who went to China viewed China and its public and society as they were, not as intellectuals saw them, which was a perception unlike that of many of the Asianists mentioned above. The China the Japanese soldiers saw was poor, and they did not feel like despising the Chinese, but rather found commonality with the poor Japanese rural areas from which many of them had come.

¹⁵⁴ Shigemitsu. *Shōwa no Dōran* [Shōwa Upheaval]. 295.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 183-4.

For example, a Japanese soldier recorded his experience in China in a Japanese military magazine. One morning after the Japanese army occupied the city of Canton, two patrolling soldiers observed Chinese laborers walking the streets, and described their legs as thin as a wire and yet tough enough to walk on stones as easily as a dog might. They felt the Chinese looked just like Japanese people, and felt sorry for their difficult circumstances. When they found a female laborer with a package wrapped in newspaper, they stopped her to inspect it. They saw it was three sweet potatoes, and smiled in relief to find that it was nothing dangerous. Feeling pity that she had such a meager meal and realizing that they themselves would probably have the same were they home in rural Japan, they helped her re-wrap the potatoes. The soldier was curious about her, as she looked poor but somewhat relaxed and without fear. She was also wearing black shoes that only small kids would wear, which the soldiers viewed as lovely, and their feeling gradually changed to trust. Finishing wrapping, she said “thank you” in Japanese, which surprised them and they smiled in relief.¹⁵⁶

Another soldier wrote that he had read Pearl Buck’s The Good Earth and saw the movie. When he arrived in China, he saw that the China Buck had described was indeed the real China. Her movie was popular in Japan. As Nanjing was about to fall, the largest movie theater in Japan was filled to capacity with people watching the movie. Soon, Japanese writers on China were criticized as only understanding China superficially. The public felt that there was a need for literature by Japanese writers that matched Buck’s. On the other hand, Buck herself regarded highly a popular Japanese writer, Hino Ashihei, who authored Mugi to Heitai [Wheat and Soldier], recalling his experiences in China as a soldier.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Inoue. Nicchū Sensō [Second Sino-Japanese War]. 54-5.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 57-60.

The Japanese military authorities sent a group of popular cultural intellectuals to China as a part of its propaganda efforts. After the trip, one of the writers, Kishida Kokushi, wrote that he was surprised at the Christian churches in China, which were expanding even in small towns. He was further surprised by the fact that it was Westerners, not Japanese, who “demonstrated cultural superiority” by winning the trust of Chinese through Christianity. Believing Japan should at least make the same effort, Kishida wrote a fierce criticism of the Japanese culture-promotion campaign. He was indignant about superficial efforts displaying Japanese nature scenes or emphasizing the uniqueness of Japan, and the childish formula of portraying Western culture as materialistic, while that of the East as spiritual. He could not stand the excessive emphasis on the uniqueness of Japanese culture, because the campaign was unable to present universal values to which others could relate, and thus he concluded that it was imperative to create a new culture in Japan.¹⁵⁸

Some Japanese soldiers in China felt even more viscerally that Kishida’s view was correct. Once the combat phase shifted toward stabilization under Japan’s occupation, the soldiers had to become a bit more sophisticated in order to fulfill their duties. Anti-Japanese slogans could be found literally anywhere, even on walls and floors of primary schools. Such soldiers had to act as “cultural soldiers” to reduce anti-Japanese sentiment by showing respect for Chinese nationalism and cooperating with China, just as the American military learned a similar lesson in Iraq applying counter-insurgency doctrine during 2007. They tried to alleviate antagonistic sentiments by promoting economic development projects on flood control, agriculture, medical systems, and school construction to support the improvement of Chinese living standards. Some hoped to create a new East

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 83-4.

Asian culture or community through this intensive interaction between Japanese and Chinese or other Asian peoples.¹⁵⁹

Such economic cooperation is a means to erase the income gap between the rich and the poor; it is also a policy that is friendly to the weak. In Japan, the practices of volunteering one's time and donating one's money to good causes are not as common as in Western societies where these concepts are included in Christianity and treated as something to be cherished. Japan needed a new tool that would alleviate the ravages of crude capitalism and imperialism, in order to prevent the weak from being overly exploited or starved to death.

While Christianity plays a major role in the West, in the absence of a comparable religion in Japan, the military and the government decided to assume that role. They first experimented in China. Development aid aimed at alleviating anti-Japanese sentiments among the Chinese public was strikingly different from previous aid. An example of previous aid methods can be seen in the Five Power Loan that Kita sharply criticized as an imperialistic deal, in return for political influence in Chinese political circles or with tax revenue as the mortgage. In this sense, Japanese soldiers could claim that the new forms of economic development aid were a "new culture" in the sense that Kishida and Yoshino wanted. However, it must be noted that Japan sadly came to this realization through its atrocious invasion of China.

Then, if the Japanese Army implemented economic development aid in China, why not do the same in Japan? The soldiers who came back from China and their families, namely factory workers, farmers, and women, became more vocal in their demands for better treatment and more equality.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 92.

These demands ranged from guarantees that drafted soldiers would be able to return to their original workplace in Japan after their service, and subsidies for the families of the drafted soldiers, on the one hand, to lowering farm rent, peasant proprietorship, farm insurance, and daycare for children, on the other. The labor unions went as far as eliminating internal discrimination against Korean laborers in order to advance worker unity. All this was made possible by the war, or the need for wartime unification of the empire. In 1938, Diet member Asō Hisashi¹⁶⁰ of the laborer- and farmer-oriented Socialist Mass Party (Shakai Taishū-tō) claimed that although he was against imperialistic war, he would support the Second Sino-Japanese War to advance domestic reform, and to reduce capitalism's perverse impact on social inequality.¹⁶¹

How did this claim for social equality end up? As the outlook for the Imperial military became more dire, so too did the people's living situation. While tenant farmers could reduce their farm rents and laborers could seek pay raises, such improvements never caught up with hyperinflation, as capitalists simply charged even higher prices for their products. The lower class did not feel that their social status was improving.

On August 15th, 1945, Japan surrendered to the Allies. On the same day, Chiang gave his "Yi De Bao Yuan [reciprocate the hatred by virtue]" speech, which he drafted himself the night before. He emphasized in his speech that if the Chinese reciprocated Japanese violence with violence and turned their sense of superiority back on them, hatred would be repeated endlessly and the fighting would never end. His policy, along with the Japanese soldiers'

¹⁶⁰ No relation to Prime Minister Asō Tarō.

¹⁶¹ Inoue. Nicchū Sensō [Second Sino-Japanese War]. 109-22.

own economic development efforts, facilitated the safe return to Japan proper of the 1.2 million Japanese troops then still in China.¹⁶²

¹⁶² Shimomura, Kainan. Shūsen Hishi [Secret History of the End of WWII]. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1950. 301-4.

III. ASIANISM IN GEOPOLITICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT (1905-1945)

In the previous section, we profiled Asianists with viewpoints ranging from left to right wing, from the Meiji through the early Shōwa eras. Here, building on this biographical inquiry, we reflect on Asianism in more comprehensive fashion. Analyzing its successes and failures along with its background in pre-WWII Japan, we explore more generally how this concept evolved and what legacy remains.

During the Meiji period, Asianism served as a counter-weight to the blind worship for the West then prevalent in Japan, which was still a weak nation. Anything Japanese was looked down upon, ignored, or even discarded in Japan itself. During early Meiji, for example, when Japanese was not yet unified as a national language, Mori Arinori, the first Education Minister, suggested making English the national language, while the famous novelist Shiga Naoya proposed French. While Japanese disposed of their *Ukiyo-e* (Japanese woodblock prints), Americans became fascinated with them. With the help of Okakura Tenshin, and exploiting Japan's temporary disillusionment with its heritage, today Boston's Museum of Fine Arts builds what is today the largest collection of *Ukiyo-e* outside Japan.

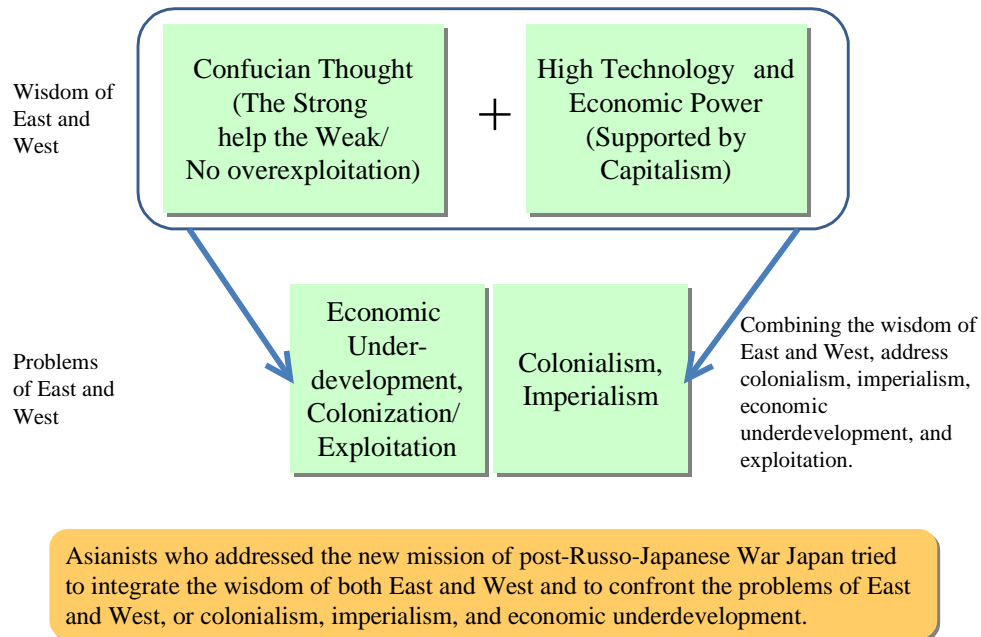
In such a period of depreciating Asia, Asianism implored people to return to reason, reminding not to forget Asia, which was mostly in a similar or worse situation than Japan. It also asserted that Asia had its own virtues and values, something to be appreciated. For example, Okakura Tenshin, an artist whom the Meiji government originally picked as a leader to assist Japan's art community in learning about Western art, found more value in Oriental art than in following the governmental policy of appreciating and

imitating Western art, together with Ernest Fenollosa, an American philosopher who was invited to Japan.

Once Japanese pride and self-confidence recovered, however, with the Imperial military's dramatic victory over Russia in 1904-5, and the political imperative of economic development declined as Tokyo came to be recognized as a Power, the rationale for Asianism within Japan was weakened. Japan could now stand on its own, the Japanese people felt. Japanese Asianists then faced two options: to conceptualize a new world order recognizing Japan as the only power to embrace both Eastern and Western civilization, and to help Asia develop itself economically while discouraging imperialism and colonialism in the world on the one hand; or, on the other hand, to allow Asianism to become obsolete and misleading, based as it was on the outdated premise that only the West exploited the East, with Japan being too altruistic to exploit others.

The former option, in other words, was an attempt to integrate Eastern wisdom with Western technology so that Japan could envision a better world in a more developed Asia, free of colonization and imperialism. The latter option was simply hurting Asia by blindly contending that Japan should lead Asia despite its resource scarcity, thus legitimizing the exploitation of Asia in order to "free" it. Such a course was accepted by neither the West nor the rest of the East. These options that early 20th century Japan confronted are illustrated in Figures 5 and 6, respectively.

Figure 5: Asianists Seeking a New East-West Relationship



A) Asianism that Sought a New East-West Relationship

The essence of the challenge to the East from the West in the view of Asianists, lay in how to contain the excessive harm of the crude Western capitalism that prevailed around the globe, and how to promote economic development in Asia. Asianists who addressed this problem sought a society with reduced economic inequality that combined in their view, the wisdom of East and West. The ideal society should, they maintained, incorporate Confucian virtue of the strong helping the weak and the Confucian wisdom of refraining from overexploitation. It should also be infused with dynamism, technological innovation and social development, driven by the principle of competition, commonly stressed in the West. The Asianists' set of concepts could be applied to both colonial relations between East and West, and the serious economic inequality within Japan itself. This philosophy was, in a

sense, a Japanese answer to the Asian critique that Japan was merely a copycat of the West or a common enemy of the rest of Asia.

Realistically speaking, given the political-economic strength of the West, it was impossible to demand that the West relinquish its colonies anytime soon. Japan thus would have no choice but to first adopt a modified capitalist model that would limit expressions of destructive greed towards other countries, and to then encourage other colonial powers to follow suit. This felicitous path would also help a nominally independent China regain true independence through economic development.

The Asianists who chose this line of thought could see facts more objectively, and could positively pursue their prescriptions, as has been outlined in the preceding pages. Their high sense of balance allowed these people to straightforwardly facing the fact that Japanese imperialism was also hurting the rest of Asia, which was not necessarily pleasant for them. The Revolutionary, Cosmopolitan, and Final War factions, including Kita, Yoshino, Miki, Rōyama, Miyazaki, and many other Japanese soldiers who defined themselves as “cultural soldiers,” constructively sought solutions to this problem of achieving development without being corrupted by perverse Western methods.

The Revolutionary group advocated sweeping political upheaval, as they saw capitalism’s harm bringing social unrest both to Japan and to the broader world. In Japan’s case, they contended, capitalism culminated in severe income inequalities between *zaibatsu* [conglomerate capitalists] and laborers. From a social and political viewpoint, Ōkawa, Kita, and Mitsukawa, as we have seen, advocated a *Shōwa Ishin* [Shōwa Restoration] to repudiate both capitalism and communism. Ōkawa was involved in three attempted coups during the late 1930s, and was imprisoned. Although Kita himself was not

directly involved in the February 26th Incident, the masterminds were influenced by Kita's writings, and Kita himself was sentenced to death as their ideological leader. Once revolution failed in Japan, the revolutionary group did not have any alternatives. Ōkawa, bereft of comrades after Mitsukawa's death in 1936, shifted toward the Asian Monroe Doctrine group.

A Cosmopolitan, Yoshino Sakuzō wrote that if Asianism meant that Japan would be a cultural leader in Asia, he would welcome it. However, if it implied that yellow people should bond together against white oppression, such a view was just an implacably anti-white thought and a clash of civilizations would be the obvious result. "Hereafter, a principle of Asianism that can solidify Asian races must have broad hospitality that can establish partnership even with the West," he reasoned. Thus, cultural development was imperative for Japan, Yoshino contended, as the American presence in Asia was accentuating a development that could trigger cultural conflicts between Japan and the United States.¹⁶³

Miki Kiyoshi, another Cosmopolitan, found a positive role for an "East Asia Community". Viewing capitalism as problematic due to its imperialistic element, he disliked communism due to its inherent class warfare, and fascism for its tendency towards overly strong national control and extensive bureaucracy. Instead, Miki advocated open regionalism, where the originality of each race and individual is respected, universal values and public interest are taken into consideration, and individual nationalism is not precluded.¹⁶⁴

A third Cosmopolitan, Rōyama Masamichi addressed the following three agendas in terms of Asia regionalism: how to align Japan with China; how to alleviate suspicions of Asian regionalism on the part of Europe and the

¹⁶³ Yoshino, "Wagakuni" [Our Country], 311-3.

¹⁶⁴ Shōwa Kenkyūkai Jimukyoku. Shin Nihon [New Japan], 14.

United States; and how to balance the New Order in East Asia with the collaboration of the Western Powers. Rōyama's answers to those challenges included developing economic ties between Japan and China, and creating an open regionalism not excluding other parts of the world.¹⁶⁵

From among the various ideas put forth by the Final War and the Cosmopolitan camps, as discussed above, two were the most concrete, and enduring: "Japan Inc." and "economic cooperation." Particularly from an economic perspective, the Final War group's Miyazaki Masayoshi developed a blueprint for Japanese capitalism, whose harmful tendencies were curbed somewhat by the power of government, giving the state a potentially positive role as an efficient resource-distributing agent and adding social safety-net systems to assist the weak. The government was also meant, in Miyazaki's view, to encourage savings and harmonious relations between capital and labor.¹⁶⁶

Miyazaki pointed out the necessity of increasing the number of skilled workers and employment agencies to enable a flexible labor market that could function effectively. He knew too well that to meet such demands the lives of farmers and laborers had to be stabilized. In that sense, health insurance associations, agricultural disaster insurance, and labor insurance

¹⁶⁵ Rōyama. Tōa to Sekai [East Asia and the world]. 189-92.

¹⁶⁶ To be more specific, the draft for the five-year plan of critical industries developed by Miyazaki and his group in 1937 first of all suggested the following: promoting the separation of ownership from management; strengthening control of financial institutions, trade, foreign exchange, and commodity prices; harmonious relations between capital and labor; and reform of administrative ministries. First, in the 1930s, capitalists lacked a long-term perspective and did not invest in facilities or technology, instead returning significant capital to shareholders by selling off parts of their businesses. Miyazaki aimed to replace such narrow-minded capitalists with competent managers who could understand (and would follow) national objectives and policies.

Second, Miyazaki also planned to enhance the financial capability of financial institutions via support from the Bank of Japan, Japan's central bank, and to incubate industries through the semi-governmental Industrial Bank of Japan (IBJ). Other goals, many with a dirigiste flavor, included encouraging saving while maintaining low interest rates, promoting exports while discouraging imports, stabilizing the foreign exchange market, and keeping inflation low to avoid cost of living increases. Lastly, Miyazaki proposed to create several more ministries, such as a Management and Coordination Agency as well as Trade, Aerospace, and Health Ministries, so as to be able to better supervise company activities.

were his top priorities to improve workers' lives. His policy reflected the reality of frequent strikes in Japan during the 1920s and early 1930s, which peaked in 1931 at 2,456.¹⁶⁷

Miyazaki's vision, described earlier, is the precursor of Japan Inc., or the archetype of contemporary Japanese-style capitalism. It is distinctive in the sense that it depicts a Japanese capitalism with a tinge of socialism, that allows a greater accommodation of labor than does its Anglo-American cousin, and that prevents business from overemphasizing short-term interests to the detriment of the longer term.

Through a harmonious capital-labor relationship, Miyazaki reconciled his solutions to proletarian predicaments with his hope for a more mutually beneficial relationship between exploiting Japan and exploited China. He sought to contain the capitalist's excessive exploitation, which was the core problem lying between Japan and the rest of East Asia. Such exploitation inhibited many non-Japanese Asians from cooperating with Japan to form an East Asia community. If Japanese capitalists exploited less extensively against Chinese laborers, China would be more able to develop itself through Japanese investments, he hoped.

While Miyazaki tackled the exploitation issue in cities, University of Tokyo professor Tōhata Seiichi and other members of the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, a think tank for Prime Minister Konoe, addressed exploitation of the countryside.¹⁶⁸ It was common at the time for landless peasants to be exploited grievously by large landowners, who were called "parasite landowners." These landowners charged extravagant land rent, threatening to end the lease contracts any

¹⁶⁷ Kobayashi, Hideo. "Nihon Kabushiki Gaisha" wo Tsukutta Otoko: Miyazaki Masayoshi no Shōgai [The Man who Created "Japan Inc.": Life of Miyazaki Masayoshi]. Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1996. 149-53.

¹⁶⁸ Sakai, Saburō. Shōwa Kenkyūkai: Aru Chishiki Shūdan no Kiseki [Shōwa Kenkyūkai: History of a Group of Intellectuals]. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1992. 43.

time they wanted. During the rural depression of the early 1930s, peasants were forced to sell 40,000 of their daughters into prostitution.¹⁶⁹ Then, government officials at the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, including Vice Minister Ishiguro Tadaatsu, devoted to saving the miserable lives of peasants, tried to pass bills bettering the peasants' working conditions, though in vain, until the end of the WWII.¹⁷⁰

While the Japan Inc. model implied the distribution of riches more fairly between capital and labor, China would still need social infrastructure, including roads, education, irrigation, and hospitals. The self-styled “cultural soldiers” sent to China during the Second Sino-Japanese War viewed China and its public and society without bias. They could relate to Chinese poverty, given the grassroots in the impoverished Japanese countryside. These young Japanese troops could not find good reasons to fight against China. Indeed they concluded that the two countries should cooperate and co-prosper, as Shigemitsu Mamoru noted.¹⁷¹ These soldiers promoted economic development projects relating to flood control, agriculture, medical systems, and school construction, for the improvement of Chinese living standards, thereby hoping to alleviate anti-Japanese sentiments in China, just as the American military realized the needs in Iraq to implement counter-insurgency doctrine, more accommodative to the locals. Such was the spirit of the early Japanese economic cooperation with China.

Meanwhile, in the early 1930s, some Japanese diplomats in China discussed similar concepts to those of the non-governmental Asianists, including a Sino-Japanese economic alliance. These diplomats envisaged technical cooperation

¹⁶⁹ Yamashita, Kazuhito. “*Bōkoku Nōsei*” *no Shūen* [End of the “Agricultural Policy That Destroys Japan”]. Tokyo: KK Best Sellers, 2009. 107; Nakamura, Takafusa. *Shōwa Keizai-shi* [History of Japanese Economy in Shōwa Period]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007. 52-4.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 104-7.

¹⁷¹ Shigemitsu. *Shōwa no Dōran* [Shōwa Upheaval]. 183-4.

on joint agricultural projects, cultivating cotton flowers, building roads, and introducing automobiles and aircraft industries.¹⁷² Still, such concepts were not officially implemented due to deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations.

Let it be clear that Japan did not invade China to better the lives of Chinese in the Second Sino-Japanese War. It was an imperialistic invasion, following the “international rules of the game” that Japan had learned in the early Meiji era. Having said that, after learning about China through direct experience, the Japanese people, from soldiers who went to China to their families, friends, and many others who heard about their China-related stories, concluded that there were no good reasons to fight against China, as Shigemitsu Mamoru noted.¹⁷³ Sadly, Japan realized this only after the invasion.

Today, in order to legitimize the past, certain Japanese assert that Japan “did good things to China” during the Second Sino-Japanese War. It should not be forgotten, however, that the “good things” they claim came out of the recognition by the Japanese troops that they did not have good reasons to fight against China, and their wishes to alleviate anti-Japanese sentiments. They did not intend to allow subsequent generations to distort the past, to hurt Chinese people’s feelings, or to perpetuate the history issue.

The Japan Inc. and economic cooperation concepts would be the concrete answers to Yoshino’s call for “cultural development,” discussed above, in the sense that they both demonstrated models of accommodating capitalism while helping the weak, or encouraging self-discipline of the strong against excessive exploitation of the weak.

¹⁷² Inoue, Toshikazu. *Ajia Shugi wo Toinaosu* [Reviewing Asianism]. Tokyo: Chikuma, 2006. 104-5.

¹⁷³ Shigemitsu. *Shōwa no Dōran* [Shōwa Upheaval]. 183-4.

This consciousness of self-discipline would probably be the most striking difference between Western and Eastern social philosophy. In the period of warlords fighting against one another, Confucius wrote of his ideal society, in which subordinates respect and show allegiance to their lord while their lord shows them love and sympathy. In such a society, he thought that the peasants and subordinates would not revolt against their king and all would benefit from a coalition of peaceful kingdom.¹⁷⁴ If the king oppressed the people, however, they possessed the right of revolution. Although throughout Chinese history many dynasties have been overthrown by appealing to this inherent human right, Confucian thought was held up as an ideal for two millennia, not only in China but also in Japan and other Asian countries influenced by China.

Past Japanese rulers could be considered very good students of Confucius, in that they did not push peasants to revolution. During the Edo period, Japanese elites eventually assimilated some of the thoughts of Confucius into the discipline of the samurai (*Bushidō*). As Nitobe Inazō explained in his book Bushidō: The Soul of Japan, that body of thought owed much of its origin to Confucianism. “Coming to profess great honor and privileges, and correspondingly great responsibilities, they [*samurai*] soon felt the need of a common standard of behavior.”¹⁷⁵ *Bushidō* controlled *samurai*’s greed with a chivalrous code of honor that gave paramount importance to loyalty.¹⁷⁶

During the Edo period, *Shōgun* and *Daimyō* (feudal lords) were enjoined under the Confucian tenets not to overly exploit the peasants. Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Edo government, admonished: “*ikasazu korosazu*

¹⁷⁴ For details of Confucius thoughts and analysis on him, for example, see Confucius. Rongo [The Analects] (translated by Kaji Nobuyuki). Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2009.

¹⁷⁵ Nitobe, Inazō. Bushidō: The Soul of Japan: an Exposition of Japanese Thought. Rutland, Vt.: C. E. Tuttle Co., 1969. 7.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 82.

[don't let the peasants live, don't let them die]." Shogunate policy reflected this cynical way of thinking. If a warlord exploited his peasants excessively, the peasants could appeal directly to the *Shōgun* and he could punish the warlord in question with death and the end of his family line. The supplicant peasant and his or her family members, however, paid a high price for disregarding the social hierarchy and going directly to the *Shōgun*: they would be wiped out regardless of the verdict. Although there was no official system for providing the disabled with money or other forms of assistance, the blind had a monopoly on the massage business and consumer lending so as to make a living. These kinds of Eastern wisdom, implemented through the government, were discarded after the Meiji Restoration.

Yoshino, Miyazaki, and others wanted to integrate such Eastern wisdom with Western technology in order to solve the problem of economic underdevelopment in Asia and undermine colonialism and imperialism in the region, as noted above.

B) Asianism That Led to Self-Destruction

The second path of Asianism, however, implied the intellectual death of Asianism. Based on the obsolete belief that only the West exploited the East, the line of thinking that was eventually denied by both Asians and the Westerners held that Japan would be too altruistic to exploit other countries. Those who chose this line of thought, or who could not see beyond the two options that Sun Yatsen had presented for Japan -- namely that it could be either "the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of Might [sic] or the tower of strength of the Orient," -- were completely lost in the identity dilemma, and belonged fully to neither the East nor the West. If Asianists appreciated Confucian thought, they could not face the fact that Japanese imperialism was also hurting the rest of Asia, because they thought imperialism was inseparable from the advanced technology and economic

power that Japan needed. The cognitive dissonance was palpable. Compassionate imperialists and Asian Monroe Doctrine followers such as Tōyama, Nakatani, and Matsui chose this second path.

Asianists who could find a new role for Asianism were forced to struggle with a serious contradiction: the compassionate/imperialistic approach. Maruyama Masao, a prominent Japanese political philosopher in early post-WWII period, described it as follows:

The Japanese Empire always had to suffer from the fear of collapsing. Japan could not fully structure itself rationally, with imports of European “systems” in all aspects including politics, law, economy, and education, and their incessant “improvements” [without total coordination and disregarding the context of the imported “systems”] in the name of modernization since the Meiji period. And yet, Japan could not simply rely on “natural humanity.” This situation resulted, on one hand, in a constant fear from the ruling ideologues that these systems would destroy Japanese “good old behaviors and customs,” and on the other hand, in criticism from the private sector that “bureaucratic rule” was too “formalistic” and did not really fit into the “rural situation.” These complaints became the hot bed for the Genyō-sha (Black Ocean Society) and other ultra-nationalistic organizations.¹⁷⁷

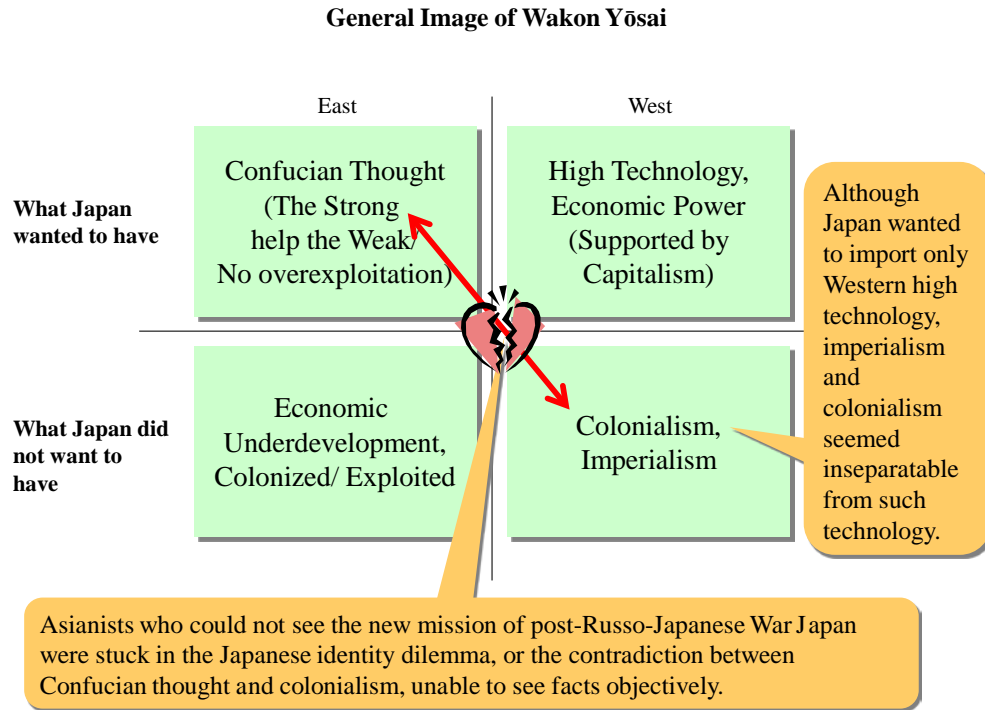
In other words, this tension between the compassion implicit in communal feeling and the requisites of imperialism was generated by Japan’s modernization model, *wakon yōsai* [Absorbing Western technology while keeping Japanese spirit and morality]. The purpose of modernization for Japan was establishing economic and military power to maintain its independence. In order to gain economic capacities comparable with those of

¹⁷⁷ Maruyama, Masao. *Nihon no Shisō* [Japanese Thought]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961. 49.

Europe and the United States, Japan learned from the best: to secure foreign markets—colonies or spheres of influence—that would buy their products at incredibly favorable prices regardless of preference and necessity. In trying to modernize during the late 19th century, theoretical knowledge of advanced Western technology was insufficient. Japan needed to actually use such technology to manufacture products, in order to earn hard currency and eventually to enrich the country, thus giving capitalists a major role in the implementation phase.

The need for capitalist involvement in modernizing Japan implied that together with Western technology, Japan also had to import Western capitalism—including colonialism. This exploitative system, in its 19th century version, was too crude to be reconciled with *wakon*, the Japanese morality of not tolerating exploitation of the weak without limitation. Japan also imported socialism and communism as counter-ideologies, but they were not acceptable to most Japanese because they were largely antagonistic to the imperial system. Further, the hostile international environment epitomized in the Russian Going-South policy and the demands of rapidly expanding Japanese heavy industry drove Japan to create buffer areas—colonies and spheres of influence—and brought imperialism to Japan, despite its incompatibility with *wakon*, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Asianists Lost in the Identity Dilemma



In short, it was impossible to confine *yōsai* conceptually as simply a tool to catch up with the West. In order to be able to use those Western tools, Japan had to change its political-economic mindset as well. At this moment of transition, *wakon* was overwhelmed as an ideology by Western thought and cultures. This made some Japanese intellectuals turn to nationalism, and they came to believe that “pure” Japanese culture (including *wakon*) must be defended against attacks from Western culture. They sought every chance to criticize Western influence, as being predatory and subversive of enduring domestic values.¹⁷⁸

Meanwhile, the successful adoption of *yōsai* brought great economic and geopolitical success to Japan, as we have seen. Thus, the denial of *yōsai* amounted to a denial of Japan’s success itself. The compassionate Asianists,

¹⁷⁸ Katō, Shūichi. *Zasshu Bunka: Nihon no Chiisana Kibō* [Hybrid Culture: A Small Hope of Japan]. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1974. 35.

highly conscious of *wakon*, had to face the bitter question of whether or not Japan should abandon its imperialist success in order to defend *wakon*. This, they considered, along with the Emperor System, to be essential to the Japanese identity, while all other aspects of life in Japan were being Westernized.

The difficulty of choosing between conflicting values damaged Asianists' self-perceived sense of balance and objectivity. While they could not deny *yōsai*, they virtually turned a blind eye towards China's suffering from Japanese imperialism. For example, when Sun Yatsen came to Japan in 1924 for help in solving the Manchuria issue, Tōyama rejected his ex-protégé's plea. If Tōyama could have faced the inconvenient fact that China suffered from Japan's imperialism, Sun would have been able to provide the best conditions to Japan, considering his knowledge of how much he and his Republic of China owed to Japan for its assistance during the Chinese Revolution. Tōyama's meeting with Sun was held before the Mukden Incident and the Second Sino-Japanese War, prior to the spread of anti-Japanese sentiment in China. Thus, there was still a good chance at that point that the two countries could have found a political solution to the delicate issue of Manchuria's future before coming to blows. Missing the chance for reconciliation, Sun unfortunately died soon after the trip.

Here, we do not want to blame *wakon yōsai* itself for the identity dilemma, that pre-WWII Asianists confronted, namely the pain caused by the lack of consensus on what is essentially Japanese, amidst a voluminous infusion of contrasting cultures into Japan. In an international environment where imperialism and colonialism prevailed, Japan had a legitimate fear of being colonized, and thus a strong incentive to be militarily robust. Further, Japan could not find allies in Asia proper, with Thailand remaining independent only after ceding a part of its territory to France, with China in chaos and

half-colonized, and with pre-Annexation Korea siding with the declining Qing dynasty, and predatory Czarist Russia.

The late 19th century was not the first time that Japan voluntarily imported foreign technology and systems. From the 6th century to the 9th century, Japan sporadically and voluntarily imported technology and advanced social systems from China. However, the Chinese at the time did not in any way mandate that earlier Japanese effort. When Sugawara Michizane convinced the Japanese emperor to stop sending messengers with tributes to China in 894, as the Chinese Tang dynasty was in decline and had little to offer, the Chinese had no objection.

After cutting diplomatic ties with the Tang dynasty, Japan gradually absorbed Chinese culture to the point where Chinese traits became totally integrated into Japanese culture. In that classical age, the slogan was *wakon kansai* [while keeping Japanese mind or morality, absorb Chinese technology].¹⁷⁹ Under the terms of *wakon kansai*, for example, Japanese began giving *kanji* (Chinese characters) both a Chinese and a Japanese pronunciation. The selection of the proper pronunciation depended on the context of the sentence. This practice enabled *kanji* to co-exist with the Japanese phonetic alphabets, which were simplified and adapted from Chinese characters. We can find the dual pronunciation system as far back as The Tale of Genji, the early 11th century fictional account of Japanese Imperial Court life, considered to be the world's first novel.

Wakon kansai was a clear success in enhancing levels of national culture in Japan. Yet, there were large differences between the intellectual challenges that assimilating *wakon kansai* and *wakon yōsai* presented to Japan. In the

¹⁷⁹ Hirakawa, Sukehiro. Wakon Yōsai no Keifu [History of *Wakon Yōsai*]. Tokyo: Kawaide Shobō shinsha, 1976. 34.

case of *wakon kansai*, Japan could both choose whether or not to learn from China and simultaneously control the speed of intake. Indeed, its process of assimilation took nearly five centuries. In the case of *wakon yōsai*, Japan did not have the luxury of time: it was only 37 years from Japan's full re-opening in 1868, close to the high noon of Western imperialism, until its victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, by which time it had assimilated Western learning to a remarkable degree.

With little time to fully reconcile *wakon* and *yōsai* or at least strike some sort of balance between the two, Imperialist Compassionates and the Asian Monroe Doctrine group became trapped in cognitive dissonance. This lack of sense of balance prevented the Asianists from straightforwardly facing the inconvenient fact that Japanese imperialism was also hurting the rest of Asia, just like the Western imperialists, whom they acutely condemned. As a result, the Asianists could not understand or were silent about the contradiction in claiming that while Japan was the leader of Asia and should help Asia, the Asianists could not criticize Japanese imperialism and the Japanese government's imperialistic actions, which were clearly hurting the rest of Asia. Thus, their misinterpretations of the situation outside Japan started from the wrong assumption, and kept expanding into daunting strategic mistakes. Below are some examples of their myopia and strategic failures.

Shuttling between Tokyo and Shanghai to disseminate Asianism to China on the eve of the Pacific War, Nakatani Takeyo saw the famous "Dogs and Chinese should not come in" sign at Huang Po Park on the Bund (the International Settlement) in Shanghai.¹⁸⁰ However, he did not mention in his 1989 memoir the negative Chinese sentiments towards Japan that he must have sensed during his stay in China. Further, he wrote in his memoir that

¹⁸⁰ Nakatani. *Shōwa Dōranki* [Shōwa Upheaval Period]. 725.

he still believed the historical rationale of the Pacific War was to emancipate the Asian races.¹⁸¹ Nakatani could never accept the fact that Japan was harming China, in stark contrast with Tōjō Hideki, who realized by the end of WWII that what Japan had done was not welcomed by others in East Asia. Tōjō's last words indicated that he felt the cause of Japan's failure in the Pacific War lay in its failure to win the support of other Asian races.¹⁸²

To face reality, these Asianists who could not face the inconvenient fact that they should have asked themselves many questions. For example, what would the Powers' reaction be if Japan denounced the colonialism that Japan itself had no intention of abandoning? Would this not simply invite scorn? If Asia were to succeed in expelling European imperialism, would Europeans not return with still greater force? What kind of relations *should* Asia have with the European Powers? Should Asia be an eternal enemy of the West, or should it eventually establish friendly relations? If Japan were to choose an exclusive Asian community, did it have enough capital to develop the entire area, despite the fact that it had struggled to develop only Manchukuo? Perhaps the most fundamental question, which the myopic Asianists did not consider, was whether Japan was capable of expelling European imperialism from the region in the first place.

Ōkawa and others in the Asian Monroe Doctrine group were eager to study the colonial policy of the Powers in other parts of the world, including Central Asia, the Middle East and parts of Africa, as shown in Ōkawa's 389 page book, Some Issues in Re-emerging Asia.¹⁸³ However, they did not see the Western Powers comprehensively. They neglected to see the significance of Christian religious church activities in Asia, the trend towards world peace

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* 727.

¹⁸² Matsumoto. Ōkawa Shūmei. 443.

¹⁸³ Ōkawa, Shūmei. Fukkō Ajia no Shomondai [Some Issues in Re-emerging Asia]. Tokyo: Meiji Shobō, 1939.

after WWI, or the earlier waning of colonialism outside Asia, in the independence of Latin America and elsewhere. They saw only what they wanted to see.

These Asianists believed that the issues in the East had nothing to do with those in the West. In fact, many of those who advocated an imperialist approach towards Asia viewed relations with the United States as vital. America was Asia and Japan's largest trading partner and Japan's primary oil provider. As previously mentioned, in the late 1930s, Ōkawa tried to maintain a track-two network through commercial transactions.¹⁸⁴ However, in reality, events in Asia affected European and American foreign policies and vice versa, because most of Asia was a part of the European and American empires. To take but one example, the Japanese Army's deep penetration into China threatened the British Empire's sphere of influence in southern China.

Additionally, if Asianists had simply read foreign newspapers in 1934, it would have made a difference in helping them to understand how their statements were perceived by other players. For example, MOFA spokesman Amō Eiji made an unofficial statement on the "East Asia Monroe Doctrine" to the effect that Japan would bear responsibility for the security of East Asia, together with East Asian countries, even if the Japanese stance and interests might not always be consistent with those of the Powers.¹⁸⁵ This commitment was basically in alignment with the Asian Monroe Doctrine group's claim.

Amō's statement was immediately reported around the globe, facing instant, broad-based, and vehement criticism. Chinese media criticized it as a "Closed-Door" declaration by China, the French as "Japanese determination

¹⁸⁴ Ōtsuka. *Ōkawa Shūmei*. 163-9.

¹⁸⁵ Inoue. *Ajia Shugi* [Asianism]. 108-10.

to finalize its policies to enhance its political-economic interests in China”, the Germans as “Japanese claim to make China its protégé”, and the Soviets as “Japanese imperialism.”¹⁸⁶ In 1940, Cordell Hull, the American Secretary of State, reminded Horiuchi Kensuke, the Japanese ambassador to the United States, that “there is no more resemblance between our Monroe Doctrine, as we interpret and apply it uniformly since 1823, and the so-called Monroe Doctrine of Japan than there is between black and white.”¹⁸⁷

If Nakatani had given a thought to why the Chinese public stood against Japan, if he had wondered whether the Japanese military was capable of expelling European and American imperialism, from Asia, or if Ōkawa had read the articles on the world’s reaction to Amō statement, these Asianists could have questioned their favorite Asianist preconceptions, seen inconvenient facts more objectively, and reached alternate conclusions. Failing to stick to a scientific approach of repetitively building a hypothesis and verifying it by searching for counter-evidence, they chose to see what they wanted to see.

To be sure, it is hard to face inconvenient facts, especially when they question previous successes. Only through sticking to logical thinking with a scientific approach, Asianists believing it would eventually lead to a policy breakthrough or resolution, could maintain their mind balanced.

Thus, lack of balance, misperceptions, and strategic errors caused by the forced-march speed of *wakon yōsai* during the Meiji and early Showa eras

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ Hull continues, “Our Monroe Doctrine only contemplates steps for our physical safety while the Monroe Doctrine, as practiced in Japan, is seemingly applicable to all other purposes and all objectives, including economic, social, political, et cetera; that thus far the question of a Monroe Doctrine for physical protection has not been needed or invoked by Japan.” U.S. Department of States. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1931-41 Japan, Vol. 2. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943. 284.

resulted in the rise to prominence of certain aggressive strands of Asianist thought that were utterly rejected by 1945, as we have seen.

IV. CONCLUSION

We have seen that after the Russo-Japanese War Japan faced the challenging task of developing a new concept of world order -- one that could help Asia to develop itself economically while discouraging imperialism and colonialism. Tokyo succeeded in creating prototypes of Japan Inc. and economic cooperation unique to Japan, to help it deal with the historic challenges it faced. We have also learned that the problem of Asianism lie in the “Jekyll and Hyde syndrome” created by *wakon yōsai* [keeping Japanese mind or morality while absorbing Western technology]. Believing the source of the Japanese Empire’s power to lie in Japanese imperialism, Asianists could not face the fact that Japan was harming the rest of Asia just as was the Western imperialism that they repeatedly denounced. They were thus unable to objectively face inconvenient facts, and rushed headlong toward national self-destruction.

From these bitter historical experiences, we extract the following hard lessons: 1) East Asian regionalism needs have equitable relations with the rest of the world in order to survive and prosper; 2) the fusion of East and West in Japanese style is definitely a part of Japan’s identity; and 3) Japan needs to have a more objective and well-balanced worldview.

1) East Asian Regionalism needs to have Equitable Relations with Others

In the course of defining a new relationship between East and West, Asianists have developed four approaches, as described earlier in Figure 2. Yoshino Sakuzō and others proposed pro-West/ anti-exploitation of Asia (Cosmopolitan); Matsui Iwane and others supported pro-West/ accommodating of exploitation of Asia (Asian Monroe Doctrine); Ishiwara Kanji and others anti-West/ anti-exploitation of Asia (Final War); and Nakatani Takeyo and others were anti-West/ accommodating the exploitation

of Asia (Imperialistic Compassionate). History has repudiated all the foregoing approaches except the Cosmopolitan: it was impossible to totally ignore the West economically, and few Asians other than the Japanese supported a simple replacement of European colonial masters by Japanese. And we should not forget this reality, as history repeats very frequently.

Japan's experiment with economic regionalism in Asia during the late 1930s and early 1940s began with the economic need to create its own Yen bloc. This was necessitated economic "enclosure" by the United Kingdom and other European countries; which discouraged Japanese exports to them, while promoting their own exports to Japan. The only other opposition to exclusionary economic blocks came from the United States. Still, the Japanese Empire and its sphere of influence were not internally self-sufficient, requiring hard currency to import oil and other natural resources, as shown in Figure 4. Even in terms of trade volumes, presented in Figure 3, the Yen bloc trade share (Cycle 3) could never be dominant in Japan's total trade. Trade with the United States and the British Empire respectively accounted for about a third of Japan's total trade in 1935; Japan could not live without trading with other parts of the world. A political agenda not supported by economics was clearly doomed.

Throughout the early 20th century, the transaction volume was higher in inter-bloc trade than inside the East Asia bloc, and China's largest trading partner was the United States. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) thought that China should be developed with American capital in combination with Japanese technology and human resources, which were more competitive than those of other countries in terms of cost and provider's knowledge of China. MOFA concluded that there was no reason to close the region to outside economic involvement, even given Japanese political

preeminence.¹⁸⁸ A document that MOFA developed in 1936 stated, “There is no need to exclude foreign capital from China. In order to develop the Chinese continent, it is necessary to introduce world production capabilities and technology. It is fine to open East Asia to the whole world with Japan competing equally with other countries.”¹⁸⁹ This cosmopolitan advice, however, was sadly disregarded. Once the Great East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere became autarkic during the Pacific War, it lasted only four years.

Today, although intra-Asia trade has been increasing, Asia clearly needs the rest of the world as suppliers of commodities and specialized components as well as markets for its finished goods. Although intra-region merchandise trade was 50% of Asia’s global trade in 2008, it still relies on the rest of the world for about half. This ratio is not high compared with Europe (73%) and North America (50%).¹⁹⁰ The United States, Europe and other regions also need Asia as an investment destination and trading partner of their own. Today, it is impossible to imagine an autarkic Asian community, given increasing economic integration and interdependence, and it would be worthwhile to look into lessons from the past.

From the political perspective, we see many parallels between past and present. In the 19th and early 20th century, the Powers forced China to sign unequal treaties and to concede parts of its territory, including Hong Kong and the Liaodong peninsula, without respect for Chinese autonomy. When China made some resistance during the Boxer Rebellion of 1899-1901, the Powers and Japan took united stance against it, and defeated it.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Inoue, *Ajia Shugi* [Asianism]. 193-5.

¹⁹⁰ World Trade Organization. *International Trade Statistics 2009*. Geneva: WTO Publications. 2009. <http://www.wto.org/>

In the course of the decline of British hegemony and its replacement by the United States, however, creation of the League of Nations gave less powerful countries some political say. Concluded among the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, France, Belgium, Portugal, Japan, and the ROC, the Nine Power Treaty of 1922 affirmed the sovereignty and territorial integration of China, allowed some Chinese participation. Still the rights which today every nation holds exclusively, had to be discussed in international conference rooms in those imperialistic days.

Under the early Cold War system, most of the Powers did not recognize the PRC, and imposed export controls on strategic materials and military technology (Chincom and later COCOM). Despite the creation of the United Nations in 1945, the Permanent Five members held veto powers, limiting the political say of the other nations. As the American share of global GDP declined during the 1970s, the United States, Western Europe, and Japan created the G5, to be gradually expanded to G8, to deliberate crucial global issues. Most of the countries formerly called the Powers became members of G8. In the meanwhile, the PRC came to be recognized, replacing the ROC as a P5 in the UN Security Council. Still, following the Tienanmen Massacre of 1989, the G8 took a firm stance against China, imposing economic sanctions and suspending arms sales with serious negative implications for China itself.

Today, more active Asian participation in world affairs is clearly needed. For example, in the financial crisis that began in September 2008, the G20, in which all three major Northeast Asian countries are included, began to replace the G8 as the primary group of world leaders dealing with the problem. In addressing global warming and other environmental issues, the participation of rising powers such as China is crucial. We are witnessing a historic expansion in the range of key players in the global political-economic

arena, with major potential implications for Northeast Asia, and the need for policy coordination there.

During the 1930s, Japan could not adjust to the limitations of conference diplomacy among the Powers, partly due to the rising Chinese nationalism resistant to decisions on China by the Powers, and the world trend of accepting China in the global political-economic arena. Tokyo chose to leave the League of Nations in 1933, eventually losing the Pacific War. There are many parallels between past and present, although the largest difference is that today Japan still allies with the United States, while abandoning an alliance with the United Kingdom that lasted two decades. It should be worth listening, in order not to repeat history, to the voices of Cosmopolitan Asianists, such as Yoshino Sakuzō, who had great foresight in their day.

Yoshino Sakuzō supported Asianism if it meant that Japan would be a cultural leader in Asia. However, he opposed racist thinking because he foresaw a clash of civilizations that could result therefrom. As he argued, a principle of Asianism that can solidify Asian races must have broad hospitality that can establish partnership even with the West.¹⁹¹ He saw it as imperative for Japan to develop a new culture that would impress the rest of Asia, so that Japan could lead without the use of brute force.

Regarding Asian regionalism, Rōyama Masamichi proposed developing economic ties between Japan and China, and creating an open regionalism that would not exclude other parts of the world.¹⁹² He maintained that neither Japan nor China realized the deficiency of Western nationalism as a true principle for peace and development. Japanese nationalism drove Japan to dispatch its military to the continent and thereby stimulated Chinese

¹⁹¹ Yoshino, “Wagakuni” [Our Country], 311-3.

¹⁹² Rōyama, Tōa to Sekai [East Asia and the world], 189-92.

nationalism, which united the previously fractious Chinese against Japan. To further the cause of regionalism, East Asia, in his view, needed to overcome nationalism, which could cause nations to put national interests above the regional welfare, and easily cause frictions and conflicts among neighbors.¹⁹³ Rōyama's warning should be kept in mind even today.

Proving on lessons of the past presented here, Japan should make sure that Asian regionalism is open, creating win-win, sustainable relations between East and West. Further, Japan should make efforts to allay the fears of non-Asian states regarding Asian regionalism, especially as Asia is home to rising powers such as China and India. After the end of the Russo-Japanese War, the previously Japan-friendly U.S. came to be alarmed by the yellow peril, even though Japan was no match for the United States. Today, the simple combination of Japan, China and India in an "Asian Community" would be more than sufficient to alarm others. While this may not be immediately apparent to the countries themselves, they need to recognize the unease that their collusion could potentially provoke.

2) Fusion of East and West in Japanese Style is a Part of Japan's Identity

How far did Japan go towards addressing Yoshino's contention that cultural development was necessary to persuade the rest of Asia that Japan could be an Asian leader without relying on its military capability? After the Russo-Japanese War, Japan needed a new conception of a win-win East-West relationship. Japan became the sole major Asian power, with help only from the United States and Europe. Meanwhile, the Western powers were exploiting Asia. For Japan, the West's positive and negative aspects were more than apparent. Asia outside of Japan was viewed as the opposite extreme: lacking initiative and the desire for self-improvement, while being too stubborn to learn from Western technology. Yet the neighboring peoples

¹⁹³ Ibid. 16.

physically resembled Japanese, so it was easy to sympathize when they succumbed to Western colonialism; Japan might very easily have been in the same situation, had it not responded so dynamically in confronting the Western imperialist challenge.

Realistically speaking, as it was impossible to demand that the West abandon their its colonies anytime soon, Japan had no choice but to demonstrate an amended economic model that would limit capitalism's destructive tendencies, and then to encourage other colonial powers to follow suit. Japan would simultaneously help the technically independent but semi-colonized China to be strong enough to achieve true independence through economic development.

When this Eastern wisdom that the strong help the weak and refrain from overexploitation met Western capitalism in Japan, the combination eventually evolved into two new cultural constructs: Japan Inc. and economic cooperation. Miyazaki Masayoshi envisioned a new capitalism that would use government to contain excessive exploitation against laborers. Many Japanese soldiers, calling themselves as “cultural soldiers,” went to China, facing anti-Japanese sentiment spread in China. Just as the American military adopted a softer counter-insurgency doctrine, more accommodative to the locals in Iraq during 2007, Japanese soldiers were inspired by the Christian missionaries operating orphanages, hospitals, and schools, and performed the same sort of benevolence as part of governmental organizations, together with their other, more controversial roles. This altruistic phenomenon is what we call economic cooperation today.

There were, in short, clear efforts, even in wartime, to adapt Eastern wisdom to Western capitalism and imperialism in order to reconcile *wakon* and *yōsai*. These efforts also helped Japan to overcome its identity dilemma, and instead

to forge a new identity for itself, since it felt it belonged neither to East nor West.

Globalization does not readily allow “pure” culture to survive unaltered. Whenever East and West have met throughout world history, all kinds of interactions, ranging from imitation and fusion to friction and conflict have occurred. Cultural synthesis has enriched both sides. For instance, many European Impressionist artists were influenced by *ukiyo-e* and other Japanese art, triggering the *Japonisme* movement in the late 19th century. Meanwhile European art, eventually including *Japonisme*, flooded into Japan. Today, sushi has come to be appreciated in the United States, while American styles like the California roll have developed and been re-exported back to Japan.

Are *Japonisme* and the California roll Japanese, European/American, or some hybrid combination? At least they are true to the European/American way of accommodating foreign culture, and could be labeled European/American. Likewise, Japan Inc. and economic cooperation could be called Japanese, as people would regard as Japanese the Japanese alphabets originally formed from Chinese characters.

Katō Shūichi, a prominent Japanese critic, indeed defined Japanese culture as a “hybrid culture,” claiming that since efforts to make Japan either purely Western or purely traditional Japanese both failed by the end of the WWII. Japan should perceive this situation more positively and seek whatever fruit the “hybrid culture” would bear. There is no reason Japan should grieve about having a “hybrid culture.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Katō. *Zasshu Bunka* [Hybrid Culture]. 28-50.

In other words, the venerable question of Japan's identity, namely whether Japan is a part of Asia or an honorary member of the West, and which so consumed the Asianists described in these pages, and Sun Yatsen's question of whether Japan should be "the hawk of the Western civilization of the rule of Might [sic] or the tower of strength of the Orient" are not the right questions. Japan has been developing itself by absorbing foreign culture and enjoying the fusion and synergy of the Japanese and foreign cultures. It is hard to precisely divide Japanese culture into the original part and the area influenced by foreign culture. Indeed, there is little meaning to the dividing.

Rather, we need to question whether these fusion cultures, or a Japan infused with fusion culture, are appreciated in the East and the West for their contribution to the further development and enrichment of human society more genially. Most developed nations provide developing countries with substantial economic cooperation. Today in many countries, the rights of laborers, social security, and the welfare state are more developed than before, far from the crude capitalism that the Asianist thinkers witnessed a century ago. Japan should be pleased with these recent developments, as it was one of the earliest countries to question the distributive implications of Western capitalism.

3) Objective and Balanced Understanding of the World

Lastly, it is crucial to have an objective and balanced understanding of the international environment. As we have previously discussed, the Compassionate Imperialists and Asian Monroe Doctrine advocates that we examined arrived at many misguided understandings of the world. Asian Monroe Doctrine believers such as Matsui and Ōkawa, for example, did not doubt that the policies they advocated were acceptable to the United States or other Western powers. This belief was completely wrong, as most of Asia was colonized by Europe and the United States.

Japanese Compassionate Imperialist Asianists, as we have seen, developed friendships and deep connections with influential Chinese people, including Sun Yatsen, Chiang Kaishek, Wang Jingwei, and many other Chinese senior/working-level government officials who had studied in Japan. Among the members of the first Chinese parliament convened in 1913, for example, 67 out of 596 members of the Chinese House of Representatives (11%) and 165 out of 274 members of the Chinese Senate (an astounding 60%) had experience studying in or visiting Japan for research.¹⁹⁵ The chairmen of both houses of Parliament were alumni of Japanese schools. Out of the 30 members from each legislative branch selected for a committee to draft the Constitution, 20 of the House of Representatives members and 26 of the Senate members had experience studying in Japan.¹⁹⁶ These are only a few examples of the important role played by Chinese who had studied in Japan in modernizing China.

Some Asianists, however, still willfully disregarded inconvenient facts and tailored their worldview to match their pre-existing biases. For example, Tōyama Mitsuru, the powerful and compassionate protector of Asian exiles like Sun Yatsen, as noted earlier, could not bring himself to criticize Japanese capitalists and politicians for hurting Asia through economic exploitation despite strong pleas from his protégés. Nakatani Takeyo noted in his memoir the famous “Dogs and Chinese should not come in” sign at the Huang Po Park on the Shanghai Bund during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Yet Nakatani did not bother to describe the anti-Japanese sentiments that were pervasive in China at the time.

¹⁹⁵ Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject for Thoughts]. 332-42; and Tung. The Political Institutions. 32.

¹⁹⁶ Yamamuro. Shisō Kadai [Subject for Thoughts]. 332-42.

These Japanese Asianists could not fully come to grips with anti-Japanese groups in China. Nor could they understand rising Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiments among the Chinese public, nor the reasons why such sentiments were proliferating. If the Asianists had grasped the situation in China more precisely, they could have mobilized their networks and connections with the Kwantung and Imperial Armies to forge a compromise between Japan and China before the two countries clashed. Ultimately, even Chiang was forced to ally with the hated Communists in order to fight Japan, though he had initially wanted to defeat the communists first, under the pressure of growing Chinese nationalism.

These China experts did not even seriously discuss the rising Chinese nationalism or anti-Japanese sentiments that emerged during the Shōwa period. Indeed they stood firm with their favorite rhetorical formula: Western imperialism exploiting the weak Chinese and other Asians. In reality, however, when the Japanese soldiers penetrated deep inside China during the Second Sino-Japanese War, they found many orphanage schools and hospitals run by Christian missionaries in rural areas, about which these Japanese Asianists, so opposed to Western involvement in Asia, had never spoken.

Has post-WWII Japan made any substantial progress towards a more objective understanding of the world? I cannot help being pessimistic. To be sure, many more Japanese are going overseas to better understand the world. And with communication costs declining and communication tools like the Internet and email progressing, Japanese can get massive amounts of information about the world today. With international affairs growing increasingly sophisticated, however, Japanese government institutional structures remain stovepiped, with insufficient coordination at lower and middle levels. Further, academic circles and think tanks have developed an

overly issue-specific structure, confining their research narrowly to bilateral security/political relations, bilateral economic relations, regional affairs, or functional/issue-based approaches.

It is still hard to find organizations or groups of people in Japan that think through global trends, ranging from evolution of the post-Cold War or post-911 worlds, to what the political and economic consequences of deepening globalization would be, as the political and economic dominance of the G8 decline. The emergence of a new global dynamic was clearly revealed by the birth of the G20 in November 2008, as noted earlier.

Bilateral, regional, and issue studies are by no means unimportant. Indeed, they remain crucial. Yet, Japan also needs to study prospects for future global structures, including the sort of U.S.-Japan-China triangular relationship that Japan would like to see in the future, as well as means of creating such structures. How many Japanese experts can discuss both the United States and China in a reasonably knowledgeable fashion?

Of course, it is hard to have a good understanding of both East and West. Still, it is encouraging to know that some Japanese of earlier generations succeeded in doing so. Although Shidehara Kijūrō, for example, had little experience of assignment in Asia and focused on the West, he had a balanced understanding of both, and made efforts to end the Chinese unequal treaties. Yoshino Sakuzō studied in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany for three years to become a political scientist, ultimately at the University of Tokyo, after living in China for three years as a tutor of a son of Yuan Shikai. More such people with rich, cosmopolitan backgrounds are needed today.

Further, Japan needs to be careful about being arrogant in understanding foreign countries. Matsumoto Ken'ichi, a scholar on Asianism, for example, points to Ōkawa's conception that his knowledge of Western exploitation of Asians immediately implied that Asia needed to be "reconstructed" [under Japanese leadership and support]. Ōkawa did not share his teacher Okakura Tenshin's self-reflection or self-criticism regarding whether Japan itself was instead becoming another "white peril" just like the other major Powers.¹⁹⁷

If one proposes a hypothesis, one needs to be humble enough to look for facts that disapprove that contention, and be willing to revisit one's theories when there is some dissonance with reality. In contrast to natural science, it is hard to sustain a solid thesis in social science due to the large number of potential variables and their unpredictable interactions.

Both natural and social fields of inquiry, however, are sciences, requiring the same logical and humble approach of first iteratively building a hypothesis and then striving to verify it by searching for counter-evidence, before reaching a conclusion. Once one abandons the practice of empirically grounded thought and observation, one sees only what one wants to see and is unable to survive in a globalizing world that imposes its own increasingly harsh realities, as it did on Asianists such as Tōyama, Ōkawa, Matsui, and Nakatani whom we have examined here. Living with parochial illusions is dangerous for any nation, especially in an era when significant change in the world system may well be imminent.

¹⁹⁷ Matsumoto, Ōkawa Shūmei. 12.

APPENDIX: BIOGRAPHIES OF HISTORICAL FIGURES

Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901): A major thinker of the Meiji period and founder of Keio University, one of the most prestigious universities in Japan.

Hoku Teruji (pen name: **Kita Ikki**) (1883-1937): A supporter of the Chinese Revolution. He went to China to support the revolution and published his accounts of experiences there in Shina Kakumei Gaishi [Unofficial History of the Chinese Revolution]. Hoku was welcomed back to Japan by Ōkawa Shūmei and others in 1921 and finished another book, Nihon Kaizō Hōan Taikō [Guideline of a Bill to Reform Japan], outlining a provisional constitution for Japan in the event of a revolution. This book had a strong influence on young Imperial Army officers who masterminded the February 26th Incident, an attempted coup to assassinate major cabinet members in order to reduce political corruption and the wide income gap between rich and poor. Although Hoku was not directly involved in the incident, he was executed in 1937 as a spiritual leader of the mutiny.

Inukai Tsuyoshi (pen name: **Bokudō**) (1855-1932): A party politician who devoted his life to depriving the *Genrō* of their powers. He introduced democracy in Japan and was called “a god of constitutional politics,” along with Ozaki Yukio. In 1931 he was appointed prime minister. The next year he was assassinated by a group of navy officers who attempted the coup later known as the May 15 Incident.

Ishibashi Shōzō (Buddhist name: **Tanzan**) (1884-1973): An economic journalist, who became CEO of Tōyō Keizai Shimpōsha [literally translated as Oriental Economics News Company]. After serving as Finance Minister twice, he also became Prime Minister in 1956-7.

Ishiwara Kanji (1889-1949): An Imperial Army officer who masterminded the Mukden Incident and helped to establish Manchukuo. After frictions with Tōjō Hideki, ultimately Prime Minister, he was compelled to leave the Imperial Army. Later, he advocated the East Asia Coalition concept.

Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909): One of the *Genrō*, who served as the first, fifth, and tenth Prime Minister of Japan. Hirobumi was known to have had more understanding of democracy than his colleague, Yamagata Aritomo. He led a project for drafting the constitution, established the Rikken Seiyūkai political party, signed the Shimonoseki Treaty (peace treaty with China's Qing dynasty) in 1895, and headed the diplomacy department in Korea when Japan deprived Korea of its right to independent foreign relations in 1906. Hirobumi was assassinated by a Korean, An Junggeun, in 1909.

Konoe Fumimaro/ Ayamaro (1891-1945): Born as the head of the most prestigious noble family in Japan after the imperial family itself, he served as President of the House of Peers, and Prime Minister twice during June 1937-January 1939 and July 1940-October 1941. During his term as Prime Minister, Konoe failed to stop arbitrary actions by the Army, although he was personally hoping for peace with China. Further, during Konoe's administration efforts were made to mobilize resources and people to support the war economy. In 1945, assuming he would be labeled a Class A war criminal, Konoe committed suicide prior to the opening of the Tokyo Tribunal.

Kōtoku Denjirō (pen name: **Shūsui**) (1871-1911): A socialist and a journalist. He published Nijusseiki no Kaibutu Teikoku Shugi [Monster of the 20th Century: Imperialism] in 1901, Western criticizing imperialism. He also opposed the Russo-Japanese War, establishing a newspaper company to express his opinion: *Heimin Shimbun*. In 1910, he was arrested for plotting

the assassination of the Emperor (High Treason Incident) and was executed the following year.

Matsui Iwane (1878-1948): A general in the Imperial Army. Matsui served in the Russo-Japanese War and as commander in the occupation of Nanjing during the Second Sino-Japanese War. He was also a founding member of the Greater Asia Association and later headed the organization. Although he privately made efforts at peacemaking between Japan and China, they did not bear fruit. In 1945, he was designated a Class A war criminal and was hanged for his responsibility in the Nanjing Massacre.

Matsuoka Yōsuke (1880-1946): Foreign Minister from July 1940 to July 1941. Matsuoka spent his teens on the west coast of the U.S., and received his B.A. from the University of Oregon. During his twenties, Matsuoka returned to Tokyo to start his career at MOFA, where he was mainly assigned to China. After leaving MOFA in 1921, he joined the South Manchurian Railway (SMR), also headed by Yamamoto Jōtarō at the time, as a vice president. In 1930, Matsuoka left the SMR, to become a Diet member. During 1932-3, he was dispatched as the leading ambassador plenipotentiary to Geneva, where he made clear the Japanese standpoint regarding Manchukuo through his excellent English skills, and led Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations. Although the Japanese public was said to be happy with Matsuoka's forthrightly articulating Japanese sentiments, he himself was sorry for not getting the international community to agree with Japan's positions, and resigned from the Diet. Matsuoka returned to the SMR once again as head of the company during 1935-39. In 1940, he became Foreign Minister under the second Konoe cabinet, and signed the Tripartite Pact and the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of 1941. His brinkmanship diplomacy against the U.S. alienated other Japanese leaders, including the Emperor and Konoe, and Matsuoka was fired in July 1941. Thereafter, he was in no position to be

involved in top-level Japanese decision-making processes. Indeed, he was said to have grieved at the news of Pearl Harbor, which he felt responsibility, as signatory to the Tripartite Pact, with Germany and Italy. In 1945, Matsuoka was designated as a Class A war criminal but, suffering from tuberculosis, he hardly had a chance to speak in court. He died the following year.

Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945): Professor of philosophy at the University of Kyoto. Miki was arrested for receiving funds from the Japan Communist Party, and was forced to deny his interest in socialism. In his late 30s and 40s, Miki was involved in the Shōwa Kenkyūkai, which studied the future of Japan and its role in the world. He was imprisoned again in 1945 for hiding a suspect in violation of the Peace Violating Law, and died in prison.

Mitsukawa Kametarō (1888-1936): A journalist who established Yūzonsha, a prominent nationalist society, along with Ōkawa Shūmei and Kita Ikki. Mitsukawa later became a professor at Takushoku University.

Miyake Yūjirō (pen name: **Setsurei**) (1860-1945): A philosopher, who founded a magazine *Nipponjin* [*The Japanese*], which later was renamed *Nippon oyobi Nipponjin* [*Japan and the Japanese*]. Miyake later became a member of the Diet.

Miyazaki Masayoshi (1893-1954). A researcher on Russia and the Soviet Union. While working at the SMR, in 1932 Miyazaki drafted the economic plan for Manchukuo. The following year, he was assigned to Tokyo to draft a totalitarian economic plan for the Japanese empire and its sphere of influence as a whole. He joined Ishiwara Kanji in his East Asia Federation campaign.

Miyazaki Torazō (pen name: **Tōten**) (1877-1922): A fervent supporter of the Chinese Revolution. Miyazaki devoted most of his life to the cause, founding the China Revolutionary Alliance in 1905. Miyazaki traveled to Singapore and Hong Kong in support of Sun Yatsen's multiple failed attempts at revolution before achieving success in 1911-12.

Mori "Kaku" Tsutomu (1882-1932): A protégé of Yamamoto Jōtarō while at Mitsui, he became manager of Mitsui's Tianjin Office. After quitting Mitsui, he became a member of the Diet, joined the Seiyūkai, and promoted an active diplomacy against China under the Tanaka Giichi cabinet.

Nakatani Takeyo (1898-1990): A professor at Hōsei University and organizer of the Greater Asia Association, later to serve as a member of the House of Representatives. Returning to political circles after the Occupation purge, he founded the Japan Arab Association in 1958 and served as its head until his death.

Okakura Kakuzō (pen name: **Tenshin**) (1863-1913): A fine arts educator during the Meiji period and the first principal of Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. After resigning from that post due to differences of opinion with government policies, he was invited to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts as director of the Japan/ China collection, and shuttled between Japan and the United States. He is also famous as the author of The Book of Tea.

Ōkawa Shūmei (1886-1957): An Islamic scholar and author of Some Issues in Re-emerging Asia, considered a classic Asianist treatise. Ōkawa contributed to ideologically legitimizing the Pacific War, and was designated as the only Class A war criminal from a non-governmental background. He also worked at the SMR Research Division, where he conducted research on chartered

colonization companies such as the British East Indian Company, which he evaluated favorably. This research became the basis for his PhD dissertation at the University of Tokyo.

Ozaki Hotsumi (1901-1944): A journalist who started his career at Asahi Shimbun, Ozaki became a China expert after his three-year stay in China. While there, he became a communist and got to know Soviet spy Richard Sorge. After returning to Japan, Ozaki came to know Konoe Fumimaro, and left Asahi Shimbun to become one of Konoe's advisors in the first Konoe administration (1937-9). Thereafter, Ozaki worked at the South Manchuria Railway, maintaining a close relationship with Konoe until arrested in October 1941. Ozaki actively answered questions from the police and generated a large-volume police report. He was the primary intelligence provider to Sorge and was executed with him as a collaborator in 1944.

Shidehara Kijūrō (1872-1951): A diplomat, later to become Foreign Minister four times during the 1920s and Prime Minister during 1945-46. During his time as foreign minister, this cosmopolitan figure was known for promoting "Shidehara Diplomacy," emphasizing international cooperation with the Great Powers.

Shigemitsu Mamoru (1887-1957). Foreign Minister during 1943-45 (Tōjō and Koiso Cabinets) and 1954-56. As a diplomat with assignments in both China and Europe, he was highly evaluated for his reports on the situation of his assigned countries to the MOFA. During his tenure as Foreign Minister, Shigemitsu convened the Greater East Asia Conference in 1943, and arranged the independence of occupied Asian countries. Shigemitsu signed the surrender documents in 1945 aboard the battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay. Later designated as a Class A war criminal, he was sentenced to

imprisonment for seven years. He thereafter returned to political circles, however, to become Foreign Minister in 1954-56.

South Manchurian Railway, Research Division (1907-45): The SMR, initially like the British East Indian Company, engaged in various businesses aside from the railway service, such as development of coal mines, ports and agriculture, and steel production. It also built schools, the Yamato Hotel [then the largest hotel in Dalian, still in use], and libraries. The SMR served effectively as a government. Its Research Division established in 1907, it is said to have been the first think tank in Japan.

The initial mission for the Research Division was to conduct research on the culture and economic situation in Manchuria, a task which was soon extended to Siberia and northern China. Gotō Shimpei, the first President of the SMR, was previously Vice Governor-General of Taiwan, and emphasized the importance of ruling foreign lands according to their culture and adjusting to their situation, rather than simply importing Japanese practices. The Russian Revolution brought Miyazaki Masayoshi and his Research Division into the limelight. Providing high salaries, it succeeded in hiring excellent graduates of the University of Tokyo, such as Ōkawa Shūmei. He conducted research on chartered colonization companies such as the British East Indian Company, which was evaluated favorably. This research became the basis for his PhD dissertation at the University of Tokyo.

After the Mukden Incident, the Kwantung Army requested the SMR Research Division to cooperate in the future management of Manchukuo. Sogō Shinji, the head of the division and a board member of the SMR, later to become the head of Japan National Railways, decided that his division would develop an economic construction plan for Manchukuo even though doing so might conflict with the interests of the SMR. Miyazaki played an important

role in developing that highly authoritarian economic plan. The SMR itself shrunk to its core business of railways, as the Kwantung Army supported by Kishi Nobusuke (later Prime Minister in the post-war period), attempted to minimize the power of the SMR in favor of Ayukawa's Manchuria Heavy Industries Company.

After the Second Sino-Japanese War began, the Research Division's scope of work increased as the Japanese Army extended its control to the south. In order to satisfy the Division's large demand for talent, it did not hesitate to hire "converted" intellectuals (including former leftists). Ozaki Hotsumi, a closet communist, was one such individual. In the SMR Research Division Incident of 1941-42, many "converted" leftists were arrested, gutting the division. This incident was a result of the Imperial Army's increasing obsession with WWII ideological purity, at the expense of objective conclusions from serious research.¹⁹⁸

Sugita Teiichi (pen name: **Junzan**) (1851-1928): A political activist who demanded that the Meiji government pave the way for democracy. In 1883, he published Kōa saku [Methods for Reconstructing Asia].

Tarui Tōkichi (1850-1922): A founder of Japan's first socialist party, an act for which he was later imprisoned. Tarui subsequently became a member of the Lower House. He was an author of Daito Gappō Ron [Recommendation to Incorporate Japan and Korea] published in 1893. In order to make his point clear to potential Korean elites who read Chinese literature, Tarui learned the Chinese language in order to better compose his texts in Chinese.

¹⁹⁸ For details of the history of the Research Division of the SMR, see Kobayashi, Hideo. Mantetsu Chōsabu: "Ganso Shinkutanku" no Tanjō to Hōkai [Research Division of the SMR: The Birth and Death of the First Thinktank]. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005.

Tokuda Kyūichi (1894-1953): An unofficial founding member of the Japan Communist Party in 1922, arrested for his leftist leanings in 1928. After leaving prison in 1945, Tokuda re-established the Japan Communist Party and became a member of the Diet in 1946. After the Red Purge of 1949, he defected to the PRC for the remainder of his life.

Tokutomi Iichirō (pen name: **Sohō**) (1863-1957): A publisher of *Kokumin Shimbum* (People's News), which had an egalitarian orientation. After the Triple Intervention of 1895, however, he became an imperialist nationalist, for which he was fiercely criticized. Later, Tokutomi established close ties with the Meiji government and became a member of the House of Peers.

Tōyama Mitsuru (1855-1944): Director of Genyōsha, or Black Ocean Society, a patriotic non-profit organization. Tōyama first campaigned for the establishment of the Diet before turning to nationalist causes. He also supported many Asian students and exiles.

Wang Jingwei (1883-1944): Although Wang is now labeled a traitor by both the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party, he was a key intellectual successor to Sun Yatsen. Matsumoto Ken'ichi, author of a book on Ōkawa Shūmei, notes that Wang was the ghostwriter of Sun's will to the Chinese public. Verifiers of the will before the dying Sun included Song Ziwen, brother of Sun's wife, as well as Sun's secretary. Matsumoto concludes from this fact that Wang was the real spiritual successor to Sun.¹⁹⁹ Apart from Wang, Chiang Kaishek was also viewed by many as Sun's successor, since he was a military commander in the KMT and principal of Whampoa Military Academy, which educated the officer corps of the KMT.²⁰⁰ As a military

¹⁹⁹ Matsumoto, *Ōkawa Shūmei*, 380.

²⁰⁰ Sankei Shimbun, *Shōkaiseki Hiroku: Nicchū Kankei Hachi-jū Nen no Shōgen Vol. 1* [Secret Record of Chang Kaishek: Testimony of 80 years in the Sino-Japanese Relations Vol. 1]. Tokyo: Sankei Shuppan, 1985. 357.

commander, however, Chiang came to gain more political influence within than Wang.²⁰¹

Wang was also one of the pro-Japan Asians who were deeply impressed by the Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War. He had studied at Hōsei University in Tokyo. Wang strongly felt that China should not waste time and resources in war against Japan, since there was little chance for China to defeat Japan. Wang believed that the two countries could eventually reach an understanding.²⁰² He was a loyal successor of Sun in terms of pro-Japan and Pan-Asianist inclinations, and led a pro-Japan faction inside the KMT even after the Japanese occupation of Nanjing. In 1938, he was persuaded to head the Nanjing government, a puppet administration controlled by Japan. In 1944 Wang was hospitalized in Nagoya where he died, well before the end of the war.

Yamagata Aritomo (1838-1922): After being involved in a campaign to bring down the Edo Shōgunate, Yamagata became one of the early Meiji leaders. He served as prime minister twice, during 1889-1891 and 1898-1900, playing a major role in establishing the modern armed forces of Japan.

Yamamoto Jōtarō (1867-1936): Served as Vice Director of the Mitsui Shanghai Office, and was later to be promoted to Managing Director of Mitsui Corporation. Yamamoto was forced to resign from Mitsui in 1914 for his involvement in a series of ignoble events, known as the Siemens Scandal, in which foreign arms dealers, including Siemens were revealed to have bribed Japanese naval officers to complete sales. British Vickers Co., whose dealer in Japan was Mitsui, also bribed naval officers in 1914. After his resignation, Yamamoto then became a member of the Diet, serving as a key

²⁰¹ Kamimura. *Nihon Gaikōshi* Vol. 17 [History of Japanese Diplomacy Vol. 17]. 156.

²⁰² Sugimori, Hisahide. *Hito Ware wo Kankan to Yobu: Ō Chōmei Den* [People Call Me a Betrayer: Biography of Wang Jingwei]. Tokyo: Bungeishunjū, 1998. 189.

figure in the Seiyūkai, a leading political party of pre-war Japan. He later returned to China as head of the South Manchuria Railway, contributing to the region's development.

Yoshino Sakuzō (1878-1933): A political scientist regarded as one of the primary intellectual promoters of Taishō Democracy. Yoshino also displayed sympathy for Korean independence campaigns and the Chinese Revolution.

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