Dynamics of Japanese Imperialism*

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THE MODERNIZATION of Japan has long been regarded by publicists and not a few historians as in some degree unique. Perhaps the adjective is ill-chosen, in the light of transformations that have been witnessed in the Soviet territories since 1917, in Italy since 1922, or in Germany since the advent to power of the Nazis. What is noteworthy, however, is the fact that, among the ancient Asiatic states which during the nineteenth century felt the political, economic, and cultural impact of the West, Japan alone has risen to the status of a Great Power.

Eighty-seven years ago, at the time of Commodore Perry's first visit to Yedo Bay, Japanese society was feudal and the Japanese government was in effect a military dictatorship. What should interest students of modern statecraft, in addition, is the fact that, in the field of economics, the empire was more modern than the Third Reich. It was an autarchy so perfectly self-contained that it might well serve as the model for Marshal Goering in contemporary Germany. Aside from the insignificant and rigidly controlled trade which went on at Nagasaki with the Dutch and Chinese, there was no international commerce. Nor was there any emigration problem, since emigration from the country was forbidden by law. For more than two centuries, prior to the middle of the nineteenth century, the population remained stationary at approximately 30,000,000. Confined within a limited territory, these people fed, clothed, and housed themselves, depending not at all upon the resources of the external world. To be sure there were times, like the decade of the 1780's, when successive crop failures in northern Japan caused the death by starvation of hundreds of thousands of people.[1] Nevertheless, the dangers of starvation were considered by the shogun's ministers to be less menacing than the dangers of international intercourse.

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[1] See Yosoburo Takekoshi, *The Economic Aspects of the History of the Civilization of Japan* (New York, 1930), III, 125–32.

The Western world in the nineteenth century, however, was no believer in autarchy, as China, Japan, and Korea all discovered. By men like Palmerston and others, the right to trade was held to be almost one of the universal rights of nations, and the medieval—or modern—minded peoples of Asia who needed no trade were compelled, sometimes by force of arms, to reconsider their needs. In surveying the results, one is reminded of the opening of Pandora's box. The Japanese, after an initial period of bewilderment, adopted grimly and with determination the ways of the new world in which they found themselves. Today Japanese merchants, offering the products of mechanized industry, challenge competitors in the markets of Africa and South America, and in the United States timid manufacturers demand tariff protection against the "sweated labor" of Asiatic factories.

Parallel with industrial and commercial expansion, and indeed as a forerunner of it, has gone the acquisition of modern armaments. The Japanese navy enjoys a formidable position in the Pacific, and since the Battle of Tsushima in 1905 its supremacy in the Western Pacific has never been successfully challenged. On the adjacent continent, as well, Japanese arms are both respected and feared. What is important for our purpose, finally, is the territorial expansion which has accompanied these developments in other fields. For better than two centuries prior to 1853, the Japanese were content with territory measuring some 151,395 square miles. Since that time they have brought under their sovereignty an additional 116,003 square miles.[2] In addition, since 1931, they have established a protectorate over the immense territories of Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia, containing upwards of 30,000,000 Chinese, Manchus, and Mongols, and they are now fighting to control five additional provinces of north China, in which live 75,000,000 or more people. What further territorial ambitions the Japanese may have in central and south China have not yet been publicly announced. While not unique, perhaps, this expansion of an empire which only yesterday was a self-contained

[2] Figures taken from Inazo Nitobe, *Japan: Some Phases of Her Problems and Development* (New York, 1931), 16.

feudal state is at least impressive. Nor will a single explanation suffice to account for what has happened. Certainly the facile explanation which divides the world into contented Haves and disgruntled Have-nots, and attributes territorial expansion to a desire on the part of the Have-nots to become Haves at the expense of other Have-nots, is neither adequate nor historically justifiable, at least so far as Japan is concerned. Too many writers have industriously computed the ratio between population and land area in Japan, and because the ratio is unusually high have jumped to the easy conclusion that population pressure is both an explanation and a justification of the empire's recent territorial growth.[3]

Population pressure, if only as a psychological factor, undoubtedly accounts in part for the recent continental advance of the Japanese. Chester Rowell has said the Japanese appear to be suffering from claustrophobia, and a Japanese diplomat with equal wit and good humor said as early as 1908 that the Japanese were like gold fish in a bowl; no matter in what direction they moved they bumped their noses against something. Emphasis should be placed, however, upon the comparative recency of this factor as a specific social force.[4] A population problem may be defined in connection with food supply, employment, or the standard of liv-

[3] Cf. Albert E. Hindmarsh, *The Basis of Japanese Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, 1936). Malcolm D. Kennedy, *The Problem of Japan* (London, 1935).

[4] It may be doubted whether population pressure, as an economic and social problem, is sufficient to justify or even explain territorial aggrandizement. See especially E. F. Penrose, *Population Theories and Their Application with Special Reference to Japan* (Stanford University, 1934), 311–30 for an authoritative discussion of this point. Only when the real or fancied pressure of numbers appears in conjunction with the political will and power to do something about the matter is an international problem created. As an illustration, it may be said that much historical evidence supports the contention that, by the standards often so loosely applied to Japan, the pressure of population upon the means of subsistence under the prevailing economic and social system, has been acute in China since the abdication of Ch'ien Lung in 1796. The evidence in support of this contention appears in repeated insurrections and attempts at revolution, both political and social, which have made of Chinese history since that date a record of almost chronic internal turmoil. There is not a little evidence, also, that the pressure of numbers upon the available means of subsistence in China is much more acute than in Japan. In Japan, the visitor rarely sees a beggar; in the cities of China one is overwhelmed with hordes of them. The writer has seen costumes on scarecrows set up in Japanese rice fields which Chinese coolies without number would be glad to wear. Political weakness in China, however, has prevented the nation's undoubted population problem from becoming a serious international issue. Cf. Benjamin B. Wallace, "Fallacies of Economic Nationalism," in *Peace or War,* edited by Harold S. Quigley, The Day and Hour Series, University of Minnesota, nos. 17–18, June, 1937.

ing generally.[5] With regard to the first of these items, a dispassionate recent study by a competent Japanese scholar suggests that not even during the World War, when the adequacy of Japan's food supply first had to be considered, was the nation's population increase considered a problem.[6] Unemployment likewise, whatever its cause, gave the Japanese little genuine concern until the depression which followed the World War. During the war, indeed, there was an actual shortage of industrial workers, as there had been in the years immediately following the Sino-Japanese War; according to Ishii, this situation accounted in part for the relative indifference of both government and people toward questions of overseas colonization and emigration prior to the World War.[7] And if, finally, per capita consumption and production are taken as measures of a standard of living, one gets no clear evidence that Japan as a whole is overpopulated. On the contrary Penrose, writing in 1934, said "With the population at 65 millions, there seems little doubt that there is more and better food for each person in the country than there was when the population was only 30 millions."[8]

If overpopulation in Japan dates only from the postwar period, arguments based upon the presumption of overpopulation can hardly be used to explain Japanese territorial expansion prior to that time. Indeed, as Ishii clearly indicates,[9] the significant increase in Japan's population came after 1896 and must therefore be considered a possible indirect consequence rather than a cause of the Sino-Japanese War which resulted in the acquisition of Formosa and the real beginning of Japanese expansion into Korea.

In studying this earlier period of Japanese imperialism, one is almost driven to the conclusion that social and economic needs served as a convenient pretext for rather than a cause of expansion. The Russo-Japanese War period will serve for purposes of illus-

[5] Penrose, *op. cit.*, 49–55.

[6] Ryoichi Ishii, *Population Pressure and Economic Life in Japan* (London, 1937), 250.

[7] *Ibid.*, 212–13, 250.

[8] Penrose, *op. cit.*, 123. Penrose considers the general issue of overpopulation of little practical importance, given the current possibilities of international trade. Instead, he stresses occupational overpopulation in Japanese agriculture. *Ibid.*, 145–50.

[9] Ishii, *op. cit.*, 60–61.

tration. Ostensibly that war was fought to safeguard the independence of Korea. Speaking in the Imperial Diet toward the end of 1904, however, Mr. Saburo Shimada, well known for his association with the moderate elements in the country, discussed at length the growing political ties between Japan and the neighboring peninsula. Steps should be taken, he said, to increase the permanent Japanese population in Korea. Intermarriage between the newcomers and the natives should be encouraged and likewise the use of the Japanese language. These were the ways to secure Korea forever for Japan. The products of Japanese factories could be exchanged for Korean rice and other cereals; thus Japan's growing population would be assured of an ample food supply, and the pressure of population would be relieved.[10]

Subsequently the argument based upon population pressure was given wider application. Early in 1905, about the time of the smashing Japanese victory over the Russians at Mukden, one representative of the jingo elements in Japan declared that territorial expansion was necessary to a country whose population was mounting rapidly, and that the trade upon which the empire must rely more and more was difficult without wide dominions, particularly in view of the current high level of tariff rates.[11] Several months later, in an article published in the *Revue Diplomatique,* Dr. T. Senga, of the Tokyo Imperial University, insisted that Japan must have the territory east of Lake Baikal not only for strategic reasons, but also to absorb her surplus population.[12] After rumors began to circulate that President Theodore Roosevelt was prepared to mediate between the Japanese and the Russians, a noisy group of academic patriots at the same institution, with the support of stalwarts all over the country, insisted that Russia be compelled to cede the littoral districts of Siberia, together with Kamchatka and Saghalien, turn over her interests in Manchuria, and in addition pay an indemnity of three billion yen—much more than enough to cover the cost of the war.[13] Ambitious politicians,

[10] *Japan Chronicle,* weekly edition, January 5, 1905, p. 14.

[11] *Ibid.,* March 9, 1905, p. 274–75.

[12] *Ibid.,* July 13, 1905, p. 49–50.

[13] *Ibid.,* June 22, 1905, p. 761.

avaricious business men, and circulation-minded newspaper editors echoed these and other extravagant demands during June and July. In August the government found it necessary to suppress this agitation, knowing well that the wild dreams of the flag-waving professors and politicians could not possibly be realized at Portsmouth.

A second type of rationalization for Japanese expansion is accepted by those who emphasize economics to the exclusion of other factors. According to the economic determinists, who are largely responsible for the classification of nations into Have and Have-not groups, practically all international conflict is motivated by the need for raw materials and markets. In connection with the Japanese conquest of Manchuria, dating from 1931, much of the propaganda centered around the fancied need for access to the rich resources of that area, which were alleged to be necessary to supplement the meager resources of Japan proper, even with the addition of Korea, Formosa, and Saghalien. Publicists friendly to the Japanese made much of the argument that the spread of Chinese nationalism menaced "vital" interests, centering particularly around the manifold activities of the South Manchuria Railway, which the Japanese in 1904 had fought for, and which after 1905 they had developed patiently and at great cost to themselves.

More recently the economic argument has been used also to justify the further Japanese advance into north China. Those who sought to rationalize this further Japanese expansion now qualified statements which they had made only a few years before. By 1935 there was some willingness to acknowledge that the resources of Manchuria were less rich than had been anticipated. In north China, however, were presumed to be rich deposits of coal and iron; oil might also be mined from the fields of Shensi; finally, north China and Eastern Inner Mongolia might be made to produce sufficient supplies of cotton and wool to meet Japan's industrial needs. It was alleged that the insincere Chinese were to blame for stubbornly and unreasonably refusing to coöperate in the development of these natural resources which Japan needed.

In much of this propaganda it is apparent that the economic

needs of Japan as a nation are used to cloak the strategic ambitions of Japanese militarists, the political ambitions of super-nationalists who identify territorial extent with national greatness, and the economic ambitions of capitalists desiring profits from the exploitation of undeveloped territories. The economic motivation behind the Japanese ambitions in Manchuria and China stems much more from the ambitions of classes than from the interests of a nation. The same tentative generalization is applicable to the China policy of Viscount Takaaki Kato which is commonly associated with the Twenty-one Demands of 1915. Kato, aside from being Minister of Foreign Affairs, was linked by marriage with the far-flung Mitsubishi enterprises. To him and to others of like mind, Japan suffered a disadvantage from the fact that her industrialization had come later than that of the United States or Germany, and much later than that of Great Britain. American, German, and British industry was not merely older and more mature than Japanese industry, but its products were marketed in the Far East by trading concerns having both greater experience and more adequate financial resources than was the case with similar concerns in Japan. Thus the Japanese industrialist and merchant looked to their government to provide them with an artificial advantage which, in a free field, they did not enjoy. Behind this Japanese feeling may have been the traditional timidity of the Japanese business man which was an inheritance from feudal days. In any case, the World War made it temporarily impossible for the industrial nations of the West to service their Chinese markets, and the Japanese business man, with the aggressive support of his government, sought by political means to make this temporary situation permanent.[14]

The desire of industrial, commercial, and financial interests in Japan to gain control over raw materials influenced also the Japanese military occupation of eastern Siberia in 1918, at first in uncertain coöperation with the Allies, and after the spring of 1920 by Japan alone. Japanese capitalists seeking sudden profits looked

[14] One of the few writers to touch upon this point is Thomas Edward La Fargue. See his *China and the World War* (Stanford University, 1937), Ch. II.

with longing eyes upon the underpopulated and underdeveloped areas east of Lake Baikal, areas which were important not merely because of their agricultural promise, but because they were presumed to contain timber, coal, and metals, and at the same time provided access to the fisheries along the coast. The Japanese penetration of Shantung in the years from 1914 to 1921 revealed something of the same aims. After the army had seized and extended its control over Germany's former sphere of influence, the choice locations in the Kiaochou leased territory were promptly acquired by the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha, the Mitsubishi interests, and the Yokohama Specie Bank—to mention only some of the larger concerns involved. At the same time, Japanese merchants, including both dope peddlers and textile salesmen, penetrated the interior seeking to monopolize the local market for interests which they represented. Coal mines likewise came into Japanese hands.

From the material thus far presented, perhaps it is evident that the Japanese army has frequently used its power more in the interest of certain privileged elements in Japanese society than in the interest of the nation as a whole. The support given by Japanese capitalists to the army has depended in considerable degree upon the opportunities provided by the army for the capitalists. The first Sino-Japanese War taught the Japanese, or some of them, that modern wars can be made profitable. From China they got an indemnity more than sufficient to cover the costs of the war, in addition to the cession of Formosa and the Pescadores and a free hand so far as China was concerned in Korea. Nor have other wars in which the Japanese have engaged been unprofitable. From Russia in 1905, the Japanese got no indemnity, unless the excessive payments for the care of Russian prisoners in Japan can be called such. On the other hand, they acquired the southern half of Saghalien, valuable for the access which it provided to the rich fisheries of the north, all of the political and economic rights of Russia in Manchuria south of Kwangchengtse, and so free a hand in Korea that annexation was delayed only five years. By their technical participation in the World War, the Japanese got the German interests in Shantung and strategically valuable islands in the Pacific

north of the equator. The World War afforded the Japanese, as well, that free hand in China of which they made the utmost use during and after 1915. Finally, the war brought to the Japanese wealth from their suddenly expanded trade, industry, and merchant marine which exceeded even their most extravagant expectations. Three wars, therefore, have been immensely profitable to certain Japanese, and the nation itself has apparently benefited from the speeding up of industrialization, commercial expansion, and the accumulation of banking resources.

On one significant occasion, however, the working arrangement between the army and the capitalists broke down. The Siberian intervention showed not a profit but a staggering loss. In an effort to safeguard loans of some 240,000,000 yen which had been made to the Tsarist and the Kerensky governments, the Japanese spent some 900,000,000 yen. The lives of Japanese soldiers who did not return from Siberia can be left out of the financial reckoning. In return for this heavy expenditure of blood and treasure, the Japanese got, in the treaty of 1925 with the Soviet Union, only the right to exploit some of the coal and oil resources of northern Saghalien, and a confirmation of their fishery rights in Russian waters. The result of this military adventure being loss rather than profit, the prestige of the army suffered accordingly. It is more than probable that this failure of the army to get what it had set out to get accounts for the growth of political liberalism in Japan during the years from 1922 to 1931—the only period in Japanese history when political liberalism has had even a fighting chance to show what it could do.

The struggle for power within Japan, to which incidental reference has just been made, has undoubtedly had a very real influence upon the empire's foreign policy, with particular reference to the continent. Numerous writers have called attention to the fact that the structure of modernity in Japan rests upon foundations which are essentially feudal. The tradition of feudalism is still strong in Japanese rural society, and vestigial traces of it may be found in the industrial world and in politics. For six centuries prior to the Imperial Restoration of 1867, the empire was gov-

erned by military men and the practice of government was substantially that of a military dictatorship. Those who exercised the emperor's powers after the abolition of the shogunate were still drawn in most instances from the warrior or *bushi* class; only one of the Genro has been of the court noble or *kuge* class. In the 1890's, however, the monopoly of power enjoyed by the Satsuma-Choshu clansmen was challenged by a new class of politicians organized into parties, whose ambitions became articulate in the newly established Diet. Very early, politicians formed alliances with various groups in the world of business, and business interests came to be represented by parties. Thus the ground was set for a clash between the hereditary oligarchy, which had inherited the traditions and prestige of the samurai class, and a newly influential class of merchants and business men. The growth of this middle class had been fostered by government-initiated industry, by government encouragement to commerce and banking, and by the wars in which the empire had engaged. By providing economic opportunities abroad, the paternalistic government showed a disposition to do much for the business man. But it showed no disposition to share political power with him. The business man profited from the expansion of the empire, but after the inflated profits and the emotional exhileration of wartime had passed, he began to complain of the economic burdens of empire. In 1908, as an instance, representatives of Japanese Chambers of Commerce showered the Diet with protests against the current burden of taxation. When these pleas went unheeded, the representatives of the Chambers of Commerce announced their intention of retaliating, in the next election, against Diet members who had supported the government's financial program, and of placing in the field candidates who were pledged to vote for taxation reduction. This initial clash between the middle class and the oligarchy ended with the latter still in the saddle, but it was at least suggestive of the drift of events. The immense wealth which came to Japan during the World War greatly enlarged both the numerical strength and the financial resources of this middle class. Upon this foundation rested the party government of Hara

between 1918 and 1921, and the party governments under Kato, Wakatsuki, Tanaka, and Hamaguchi between 1924 and 1931.

This challenge to the inherited power of the traditional oligarchy did not go unanswered. Particularly was this true when, in 1930, Premier Hamaguchi, with the support of practically every influential newspaper in Japan, sought to impose the authority of his party cabinet upon the navy. His success in forcing the London Naval Treaty through the Privy Council, in the face of bitter opposition from the Naval Staff Board, was merely the prelude to his assassination. Since that time the struggle for power and position in Japan has been marked by repeated assassinations of politicians, financiers, and even army and navy officials.

More significant than this domestic struggle, so far as our purposes are concerned, has been its international repercussion. When the authority and prestige of the fighting forces were challenged at home, the tissue has not infrequently been fought out on the continent. That something of this sort happened in 1931 can scarcely be doubted by any reasonable-minded student of recent Japanese history.[15] The army's prestige and power were based not upon accomplishments within Japan, but upon accomplishments abroad. Consequently when its unique position at home was challenged, a reinforcement of that position was always possible by a victorious and profitable diversion on the continent. The signal failure of the military groups, with Premier General Hayashi as their representative, to win the election of 1937 may account in part for the resumption of the Japanese advance into north China in July of that year. In a sense, therefore, territorial expansion has been merely an incidental by-product of the struggle for power within Japan.

One dilemma facing the Japanese government each time territory has been added to the empire, for whatever reason, has been that of how to defend the newly-acquired colony or protectorate. The economic burdens of empire are heavy, as the Japanese taxpayer discovered after 1905, and national glory must be bought

[15] See Tatsuji Takeuchi, *War and Diplomacy in the Japanese Empire* (Garden City, 1935), 337–57. Also A. Morgan Young, *Imperial Japan, 1926–1938* (New York, 1938), Chs. VIII–IX.

at a price. Each expansion has been followed by an increase in the defense budget, and until 1931 it was followed as well by the enlargement of that middle class which demanded reduced taxation and a reduction in the size of public expenditures. Nor did the vicious cycle end there. To the military strategists, buffer states must be added to costly armaments to ensure the safety of the empire and its outlying possessions. Korea was of strategic importance to the empire; therefore Korea had to be annexed. Manchuria was equally important as a blanket for Korea and as a buffer against Russia. Therefore the Japanese control over Manchuria had to be strengthened. Eastern Inner Mongolia next acquired importance, in 1912 as a feature of the Russo-Japanese secret division of spoils, and in 1933 because it lay on the flank of Manchukuo. More recently it has become apparent to Japanese garrison commanders in Manchuria and north China that Japan's conquests in Manchuria, Jehol, and Chahar would be safe only if a wedge were driven between Outer Mongolia, under Soviet influence, and China proper which was presumed to be in search of an ally preparatory to a campaign of resistance against the Japanese. Japanese hegemony in Eastern Inner Mongolia and north China, so the army strategists profess to believe, will keep these potential allies apart.

Behind these Japanese hopes of social, economic, and political salvation, to be gained by territorial acquisition, lies a long history of dreams which seem to bear little relationship to population pressure, the need of markets and raw materials, political necessities, or strategic needs. There was a period in the development of mankind when territorial expansion did not have to be rationalized or justified. They took who had the power, and they held who could. The moral opinion of mankind was either nonexistent or of little consequence, and there was no public opinion toward which a calculating eye had to be cocked. It is only very recently that the Japanese themselves, having taken on the sophistication of the modern world, have seen fit to offer explanations of or excuses for territory grabbing.[16] The history of Japanese expansion

[16] At least one qualified observer has called attention to the *ex post facto* reasoning of the Japanese with regard to the Sino-Japanese War which broke out in July, 1937. Writing in *Oriental Affairs* for September, 1937 (p. 163), H. Vere Redman suggests the attitude of

suggests, incidentally, that the Japanese had no need to follow the bad examples of the empire builders of nineteenth century Europe. Indeed, the plea that the imitative and realistic Nipponese have, since 1871, merely copied the technique of the imperialistic white world, while plausible, is at times just faintly amusing.

There is, for instance, the sixteenth century scheme of the great Japanese captain, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, to conquer a continental empire of amazing dimensions. Having mastered and unified Japan as it had not been unified for two centuries, Hideyoshi looked abroad for new worlds to conquer. In 1590, he notified the King of Korea of his intention to procede to the conquest of China, and demanded that that monarch coöperate with him in the ambitious enterprise. In his letter to the Korean King, Hideyoshi recalled that before his birth his mother had dreamed that the Sun—which in Japanese mythology has a very special significance—had entered her bosom. Interpreting this dream, a physiognomist had predicted that the child was destined to extend his authority "to all parts of the world wherever the sun shines," and that after he came to manhood his "benevolent rule would be admired by nations in every direction" and "people within the four seas" would all come under his influence and power. Already he had established complete control over the sixty-six provinces of Japan whose people waxed prosperous under his benevolent rule, and he now announced his intention—quite without reference to population statistics or the need for markets—of proceeding to the conquest of China, where the people were to be compelled "to adopt our customs and manners."[17] The great conquerer ended his letter with the demand that the King of Korea become his military ally and coöperate with him in the destruction of the Ming dy-

the great mass of Japanese toward the war in the following words: "We say to ourselves: 'We must get this China business settled once and for all. The Chinese must be taught a lesson.' And we go forward to do it. And then, afterwards, we say: 'We must have access to China because of our scant resources;' or if you don't like that, 'The Chinese have attacked our army and we must avenge them.' Or if you don't like that, 'Our interests by treaty established are threatened, and we must protect them.' Or if you don't like that, 'Anti-Japanese education is rampant in China and is the spearhead of anti-foreign education, and in everybody's interests we must put an end to it.' And if you don't like that, 'Well, in any case, damn you, we are going to do it, because instinctively we know that we must.'"

[17] Yoshi S. Kuno, *Japanese Expansion on the Asiatic Continent* (Berkeley, 1937), I, 302–3.

nasty. Subsequently it became apparent that Hideyoshi planned to induce the Emperor of Japan to remove his capital from Kyoto to Peking, where he would be enthroned as the "Ruler of the Great Empire."[18] Thus Korea was to be, not a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan, but a highroad over which Japanese troops marched to glory and victory on the continent. Letters which Hideyoshi wrote also to the King of Liuchiu, the rulers of the Philippines and Formosa, and the ruler of India[19] make it very clear that the writer's dreams of conquest extended also to those territories. One goes back to Genghis Kahn and the Monguls for anything comparable. Had Hideyoshi not died in 1598, six years after the beginning of the Korean invasion, it is not impossible that at least part of his great dream might have been realized.

In a sense, Hideyoshi, with his seemingly fantastic convictions of national and personal destiny, was merely the heir of a very ancient tradition in Japan. One of the oldest of Japanese historical chronicles is the *Nihongi* or *Nihonshoki,* reduced to writing in the year 720 of our era. This chronicle, together with its companion work, the *Kojiki,* completed in 712, serves not merely as a bible of the Shinto religion, but as a textbook as well for the Shinto school of historians. In these early records appear accounts of how the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-o-mi-kami, commissioned her grandson, Ninigi, to descend to earth, carrying the sacred imperial symbols of jewel, mirror, and sword, to bring peace and tranquillity to the divine land then torn with strife and dissention. As a distinctly modern touch, it may be noted in passing that Ninigi, when not actively engaged in pacifying the land, appears to have spent no inconsiderable part of his leisure corrupting the morals of practically every comely maiden who crossed his path.

A direct descendant of the Heavenly Grandchild, according to the chronicles, was the first Emperor, Jimmu Tenno. When he had reached the age of 45, Jimmu addressed his elder brothers and his children, saying, "Of old, our Heavenly Deities Taka-mi-musubi no Mikoto, and Oho-hiru-me no Mikoto, pointing to this land

[18] *Ibid.,* 315–16.

[19] *Ibid.,* 305–14.

of fair rice-ears of the fertile reed-plain, gave it to our Heavenly Ancestor, Hiko-ho ninigi no Mikoto." At the time of Ninigi's descent to earth with his divine commission,[20]

> ... the world was given over to widespread desolation. It was an age of darkness and disorder. In this gloom, therefore, he fostered justice, and so governed this western border.... But the remote regions do not yet enjoy the blessings of Imperial rule. Every town has always been allowed to have its lord, and every village its chief, who, each one for himself, makes division of territory and practises mutual aggression and conflict.
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> Now I have heard from the Ancient of the Sea, that in the East there is a fair land encircled on all sides by blue mountains.... I think that this land will undoubtedly be suitable for the extension of the Heavenly task, so that its glory should fill the universe. It is, doubtless, the centre of the world....Why should we not proceed thither, and make it the capital?

In the account of the subsequent conquest of this fair land to the East, those who resisted the "extension of the Heavenly task" are called "bandits," thus reminding one of official reports which have recently come out of Manchuria.

It is at least interesting to compare this statement, belonging to an Age of Innocence, with another statement, more modern but scarcely less naïve, attributed to one of the shogun's ministers in 1858. Representatives of the *Bakufu* had agreed with the American consul, Townsend Harris, concerning the text of a commercial treaty. Before the new agreement was finally signed, however, the shogun's prime minister, Lord Hotta, deemed it expedient to have the assent of the Imperial Throne. The first delegation which was sent to Kyoto for the purpose of securing this assent met with a determined rebuff. In March, 1858, Lord Hotta himself went to Kyoto. In his address to the Throne requesting Imperial sanction for the policy represented by the Harris treaty, he pointed out that changed international conditions had brought the nations of the world closer together and increased their interdependence. If Japan, threatened as she was on all sides, alone stood out against this drift of events, she would inevitably be involved in a war. As a means of averting the disaster which must be the logical

[20] W. G. Aston, "Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697," *Transactions and Proceedings of The Japan Society* (London, 1896), Supplement I, Vol. I, 110–11.

consequence of such a war, Lord Hotta urged persuasively that Japan enter the community of nations and seek to establish the Emperor of Japan as the overlord of the world. "Among the rulers of the world at present," he argued, "there is none so noble and illustrious as to command universal vassalage, or who can make his virtuous influence felt throughout the length and breadth of the whole world. To have such a Ruler over the whole world is doubtless in conformity with the Will of Heaven." Thus treaty and other relations should be established with other nations, always with the object in view of "laying a foundation for securing the hegemony over all nations."[21] Developing this theme in greater detail, Lord Hotta continued:[22]

> When our power and national standing have come to be recognized, we should take the lead in punishing the nation which may act contrary to the principle of international interests; and in so doing, we should join hands with the nations whose principles may be found identical with those of our country. . . . Such a policy could be nothing else but enforcement of the power and authority deputed (to us) by the Spirit of Heaven. Our national prestige and position thus ensured, the nations of the world will come to look up to our Emperor as the Great Ruler of all nations, and they will come to follow our policy and submit themselves to our judgment.

Whether or not Lord Hotta himself accepted this line of reasoning is not easy to say. What is important for our purpose is the fact that he expected the courtiers who surrounded the Throne to be influenced by it. His arguments did not prevail, since Imperial sanction for the Harris treaty was withheld. Nevertheless, in the minds of many court nobles, who had been deeply influenced by the writings of Shinto scholars, the arguments were weighty.

The historical background for the significant revival, during the Tokugawa period, of interest in ancient Shinto doctrine was provided by scholars working under the direction of Mitsukuni, the Daimyo of Mito (1622–1700). To the library which he had inherited from his grandfather, Tokugawa Iyeyasu, Mitsukuni added old books acquired from many sources. Thereafter, with

[21] Payson J. Treat, *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Japan 1853–1895* (Stanford University, 1932), I, 66.

[22] *Ibid.*, 67.

the aid of numerous scholars, he began the writing of the *Dai Nihon-shi,* or History of Great Japan. This monumental history, which is still of major importance, stressed the origin of the imperial line, emphasized the principle of legitimate succession, and placed the emperor in the forefront of national development.[23] From the work of the Shinto historians many nationalists subsequently derived their fanatical reverence for the Throne.

Parallel with and in some degree influenced by the antiquarian studies of the Mito school of historians was the work of a line of scholars known as Wagakusha who, beginning in the seventeenth century, raised the standard of revolt against Chinese influence in Japanese life and thought. These scholars turned their attention to such long-forgotten works as the *Kojiki,* the *Nihonshoki,* and the *Manyoshiu,* the latter being an anthology of Japanese poetry belonging chiefly to the Nara period. Two lines of thought, both important for our purpose, were accepted by practically all of the scholars of the Wagakusha school. In the first place, they emphasized the Heavenly commission of a line of emperors, divine in origin, to rule over the land created by the gods and under the favored protection of the gods. Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) declared that Japan was the land which had given birth to Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, which "fact" proved its superiority over all other countries. The Sun Goddess, having endowed her grandson, Ninigi no Mikoto, with the three sacred treasures, proclaimed him and his descendants sovereigns of Japan for ever and ever.[24]

From the central truth that Japan was the land of the gods, and

[23] Masaharu Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion with Special Reference to the Social and Moral Life of the Nation* (London, 1930), 272–75. Sir E. M. Satow, "The Revival of Pure Shin-Tau," in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan,* III (Part I, 1874), Appendix. Reprint (Yokohama, 1905), 4. Hugh Borton, "A Survey of Japanese Historiography," in *The American Historical Review,* XLIII (April, 1938), 492–93.

[24] Satow, *op. cit.,* 21–22. Motoori was answered by a rationalist named Ichikaha Tatsumaro as follows: "To say that the sun was born in Japan is a fiction which was probably invented by the earlier Mikados in order to support the assertion that this country is the root and all other countries only branches. The gods in heaven make no difference between the different races of mankind, who are formed into separate nations by the seas and mountain ranges which divide them off from each other, and the sun shines equally over all. . . . The ancestors of the Mikados were not gods but men, and were no doubt worthy to be reverenced for their virtues, but their acts were not miraculous or supernatural. If the ancestors of living men were not human beings, they are more likely to have been birds or beasts than gods." *Ibid.,* 26–27.

its rulers the direct descendants of the gods, was derived the second tenet upon which the Shinto scholars unanimously agreed. Politically and culturally, Japan, the divine land, was immeasurably superior to her neighbors, and all foreign countries were bound to render homage to the Japanese sovereign and pay tribute to him. Mabuchi (1697–1769) pointed out that the benighted Chinese for ages past, unlike their Japanese neighbors, had had a succession of different dynasties to rule over them, each new dynasty being founded on rebellion and parricide. Seeking to discredit adherents of the Confucian school in Japan, Mabuchi declared that a philosophy which produced such results must be a false system.[25]

Motoori was another scholar who took immense pride in the presumed fact that Japan had been ruled from the beginning by a single line of divine sovereigns. Since other countries, notably China and India, were not the special domains of the Sun Goddess, they had no permanent rulers; in those countries any bad man who could manage to seize on power became sovereign.[26] Referring to the mission sent by Suiko Tenno to the Sui court of China in the year 607, the same writer said, "It was unworthy of Japan to enter into relations with a base barbarian state, whatever might be the benefits which she expected to obtain. . . . Had the Chinese ruler paid due reverence to the Mikado as being infinitely superior to himself, the objection would have been less."[27]

Another of the Wagakusha scholars, Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), argued that Japan lay at the summit of the globe, all other countries having been formed at a much later period. Foreign countries were of course produced by the power of the creator gods, but they were not begotten by the original creators, Izanagi and Izanami, nor did they give birth to the Sun Goddess; hence their inferiority. The fact is patent, therefore, that the Mikado is the true Son of Heaven, who is entitled to reign over the four seas and the ten thousand countries.[28] Hirata insisted, further, not merely that Japan was the land of the gods, but that her inhabi-

[25] *Ibid.*, 13. [26] *Ibid.*, 22.

[27] *Ibid.*, 32. For the diplomatic mission of 607, see Kuno, *op. cit.*, 229–31.

[28] Satow, *op. cit.*, 46.

tants were all descendants of the gods. Between the Japanese people and the Chinese, Hindus, Russians, Dutch, Siamese, Cambodians, and other peoples of the world there was a difference of kind rather than degree. It was not out of vain-glory alone that the Japanese called their country the land of the gods. For the gods who created all countries, belonging without exception to the Divine Age, were all born in Japan. Thus Japan was their native country, all the world acknowledging the appropriateness of the title.[29]

The best of these Wagakusha scholars sought merely freedom from the dead weight of Chinese philosophy which was considered to be a burden upon the Japanese mind. The worst of them were, on the other hand, bigoted reactionaries and narrow-minded patriots who derided all things Chinese in order to enhance the glory of all things Japanese. In their patriotic zeal to discredit the culture of China, some of these writers descended to levels which can scarcely be called creditable. Mabuchi insisted that the Chinese were bad at heart, in spite of the teaching which they got, their bad acts being of such magnitude that society was thrown into disorder.[30] Motoori referred repeatedly to the "vicious nature of the Chinese" which necessitated ethical teachings of which the spontaneously good Japanese had no need. Lao Tzu, he declared, was born "in a dirty country not under the special protection of the Sun Goddess."[31] According to Hirata, the immeasurable superiority of the Japanese people to the natives of other countries in courage and intelligence stemmed from their divine descent.

Aside from the Mito school of historians and the Wagakusha scholars, other influences operated during the middle of the nineteenth century to impress upon the Japanese the sacred character of their empire and its divine ruler and, as a corollary, Japan's Heaven-bestowed destiny in the world. One of the most potent of these influences, having regard to ultimate consequences, was the teaching of Yoshida Shoin, a youthful samurai of the Choshu clan, who was executed in 1859, when he was but twenty-nine

[29] *Ibid.*, 41. For further discussion of the work and influence of the Wagakusha scholars, see in addition to Satow, W. G. Aston, *A History of Japanese Literature* (London, 1899), 315–41.

[30] Satow, *op. cit.*, 14. [31] *Ibid.*, 25–26.

years old, for complicity in a plot to murder one of the shogun's officials in Kyoto.[32]

Foreshadowing the Imperial Restoration of November, 1867, Yoshida Shoin taught reverence for and undivided loyalty to the Emperor and respect, amounting almost to religious worship, for the Land of the Gods over which the Emperor reigned. In this respect his convictions approximated those of the Mito historians, although Shoin was not himself an adherent of that school. For our purpose, what is important is his conception of Japan's place in a system of international relationships. He was aware that the English were then invading the East. India had already fallen under their control, China would be the next to be humiliated, and thereafter the "poison" of English influence and strength would spread to the Liuchiu Islands and Nagasaki.[33] Self-defense, however, was not enough. From his reading of Japanese history, Shoin recalled the emperors of ancient times, "how their power was feared by foreigners, how their favor extended to other peoples, and that their great plans and strategy shine throughout a thousand generations. . . ." He therefore advocated the acquisition of Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands. The Koreans must be compelled to pay tribute to Japan "as in former times";[34] in addi-

[32] For sketches of his life and teachings, see Tokutomi Iichiro, "The Life of Shoin Yoshida," translated by Horace E. Coleman, in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, XLV (Part I, 1917), 119–88. Also Heinrich Dumoulin, "Yoshida Shoin (1830–59). Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Geistigen Quellen der Meijineurung," in *Monumenta Nipponica* (Tokyo), I (No. 2, July, 1938), 58–85.

[33] Tokutomi, *op. cit.*, 136–37.

[34] According to Dr. Kuno, all standard Japanese histories agree that for a period of at least 200 years, ending 663–668, Japan held suzerain power in one or another of the Korean states then existing. However, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean historians are agreed that after the destruction of the Kingdom of Kudara in 663, and the Kingdom of Korai in 668, the Japanese were compelled to abandon completely their suzerain claims in the peninsula. "None of the Chinese, Japanese, or Korean histories states that during the period of approximately thirteen hundred years beginning in the latter part of the seventh century Japan ever claimed suzerainty over Korea; nor do they state that Korea ever sent tribute to Japan." Kuno, *op. cit.*, 234. The late Dr. Robert K. Reischauer was disposed to use very cautiously the word "tribute" as applied to early relations between various Korean Kingdoms and the Kingdom of Yamato. What passed as tribute represented evidences of Chinese culture in which the Japanese ruling class was then interested. The warring states in Korea showered the Yamato Kingdom with gifts of artisans, scholars, books, and objects of art in order to gain its support in the triangular struggle then going on for the control of the peninsula. *Early Japanese History (c. 40 B.C.–A.D. 1167)* (Princeton, 1937), Part A, 18–20.

tion, Formosa, the Liuchiu Islands, and part of Manchuria were deemed suitable for the extension of the Heavenly task.[35] This territorial expansion, Shoin professed to believe, would serve the double purpose of holding Russia and America at a distance and humiliating them, and of compensating at the same time for the damage which their commerce would do to Japan. As a concrete first step, he advocated the seizure of an island off the coast of Korea as a measure preparatory to military operations on the continent. On another occasion he advocated the annexation of the islands to the south and their use as a base for an attack upon India.[36]

The effect which Yoshida Shoin's teaching had upon the Choshu samurai can scarcely be overestimated. Among the students who sat at his feet, sipping the heady wine of imperial destiny, were men who were later to become powerful and famous. Aritomo Yamagata, who organized Japan's modern army and died both a prince and a Genro, was one of them. Two others were Hirobumi Ito, who likewise gained princely honors and the status of Genro, and Koin Kido, whose untimely death in 1877 cut short a career that promised to be as significant as Ito's was to be.[37] After Shoin's execution, Ito and Kido took his body and buried it.[38]

One can see in the disputes over foreign policy after 1871 some of the effects which Shoin's teaching, and others like it, had upon the minds of the western clansmen who were then in control of the Japanese government. Some, making capital of the snubs administered by Korean officials to Japanese missions which had been sent to the peninsula, strongly favored an attack upon Korea, even if such action meant conflict with China. At the same time, Japanese claims to the Liuchiu Islands were asserted vigorously while similar and equally valid Chinese claims were denied. By 1879 the latter policy culminated, despite Chinese objections, in the formal incorporation of the Liuchius into the Japanese Empire. The Korean problem, however, required somewhat more cautious handling. Fearing the complications which might result,

[35] Tokutomi, *op. cit.*, 160–61.
[36] Dumoulin, *op. cit.*, 70–71.
[37] *Ibid.*, 59.
[38] Tokutomi, *op. cit.*, 123.

the opponents of a strong policy toward Korea persuaded their colleagues in the government to delay the ultimate decision until the return of the Iwakura mission, then in Europe. Lord Iwakura and his associates returned to Japan in September, 1873. Of the members of the mission, Ito had already, during a previous visit to England, seen and heard enough to appreciate both the strength and the ambitions of the Western powers. From their more recent survey of conditions in the United States and Europe, the other members of the mission, including particularly Koin Kido of Choshu and Toshimichi Okubo of Satsuma, had reached the conclusion that it would be well for Japan to tread softly. A war with Korea, which might involve China, would bankrupt the government and leave the empire, financially and otherwise, so weak that it might easily fall a prey to the land-hungry nations of Europe. These and other arguments were heard in the debates which took place in the Council of State between October 14 and 23, 1873.[39] The debate resulted in a victory for the advocates of internal reform, the consequence being that the opposing faction withdrew from the government.

As a sop to the expansionists, sanction was given in the spring of 1874 to an expedition to Formosa, where savage head-hunters, in December, 1871, had massacred a considerable number of shipwrecked Liuchiuan sailors over whom the Japanese government claimed jurisdiction. When the Chinese government somewhat belatedly asserted exclusive jurisdiction over Formosa and began to make military preparations, Okubo was sent to Peking to liquidate the Formosan expedition on whatever terms were possible. A satisfactory settlement was reached October 31, 1874, and by December the Japanese troops were out of the island. Thus expediency dictated a postponement until 1894 of the fulfillment of Yoshida Shoin's dreams of empire. The reorganized Japanese government, set up in 1874, was dominated by men who had traveled with Lord Iwakura. They realized that before attempting to challenge the West, Japan would need a modern army and navy, rail-

[39] Walter Wallace McLaren, *A Political History of Japan during the Meiji Era, 1867–1912* (London, 1916), 99–100; Tyler Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia* (New York, 1922), 441–42.

roads, factories, schools, and a modern banking and currency system. With that work the Japanese leaders occupied themselves during the next two decades.

The work of the Mito school of historians, the Shinto theologians, and Yoshida Shoin had produced what might be called the messianic complex of the Japanese—their sense of divine destiny and their conviction that they were infinitely superior to their less-favored neighbors. So much greater was the shock, therefore, when they discovered the low esteem in which they were held in the eyes of the Western world. Western nations, as the members of the Iwakura mission discovered, tolerated no extraterritorial jurisdiction within their borders, nor did they allow foreign nations to control by treaty their tariff rates on imports and exports. No residential concessions existed where foreigners ruled themselves, as they did at Yokohama and Kobe, and in each country the coastwise trade was ordinarily closed to foreign vessels. The discovery that Japan was considered not even an equal, much less a superior, in the family of nations, motivated the amazing transformation to which the empire was subjected after 1873, together with the determined movement for treaty revision which culminated in the British commercial treaty of 1894. The same determination to achieve equality among the nations was responsible very largely for the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, which MacNair aptly calls, "Japan's First Challenge to Europe."

In the history of Japanese expansion, the first war with China is significant with regard to both probable causes and evident consequences. Friction over Korea was less a cause than the occasion of the war. As to actual causes, one factor was undoubtedly the constitutional struggle then going on in Japan between the Sat-Cho oligarchy and its critics in the Diet. Count Ito's constitution of 1889 refused to work. Despite the use of bribery, intimidation, and official control over elections, neither Yamagata nor Matsukata, as prime ministers, had been successful in getting from a majority in the House of Representatives that coöperation which the government required, if only because of its financial needs. In August, 1892, therefore, Ito himself, as the author of the constitu-

tion, was reappointed premier. If anyone could make the instrument work, is was presumed that he could. His reputation as a constitution maker being at stake, Ito resorted first to persuasion and soft words, and then to repeated dissolutions of the House of Representatives in his effort to get a complacent majority willing to rubber-stamp the measures which the government desired. Whatever may have been the immediate motives which influenced Ito's decision to unleash the dogs of war, it is significant that his constitution, which could not be worked in peace time, did function magnificently in time of war. Parliamentary opposition dissolved as if by magic, the Diet voted immense sums for war purposes without a dissenting vote, and the nation was a unit.[40] Dangerous as it may be to reason from effect to antecedent cause, it is at least worthy of note that the Sino-Japanese War saved Ito's reputation as a constitution maker.

Another cause of hostilities in 1894 may have been the desire to test the temper and fighting effectiveness of the war machine which, since the early 1870's had taken form under the guiding hand of Yamagata. Not a few fiery spirits among the ex-samurai, particularly Satsuma disciples of Takamori Saigo who profoundly mistrusted the policy of entrusting the safety of the empire to conscripts drawn from the masses of stupid people, feared that the new civilization imported from the West was emasculating the Japanese. The war served to lay these fears at rest, for it indicated that the adoption of Western ways had not dulled Japanese swords, diminished Japanese courage, or lessened Japanese patriotism.[41]

Probably the major cause of the first Sino-Japanese War, however, was the overwhelming determination of the Japanese to achieve equality with the modern nations of the West. In China Japanese subjects, under the treaty of 1871, were not accorded extraterritorial rights. Nor did they enjoy most-favored-nation treatment in other respects. In order to gain this equality of status, achievements in the arts of peace were not enough. Railroads, a telegraph and postal system, schools, hospitals, factories, modern

[40] Takeuchi, *op. cit.*, 109–13.

[41] Arthur Doisy, *The New Far East* (5th ed., London, 1904), 33.

law courts, and even a Western parliament indicated the adaptability of the Japanese to the ways of the modern world. In spite of these achievements, and in part perhaps because of them, the Western world continued to look upon Japan as an interesting and clever child, precocious, but never for a moment to be taken seriously. Knowledge of this attitude of patronage and condescension was not concealed from the Japanese. They were aware, indeed, that in the West power was the test of national greatness. Very well, then, they would give a demonstration of their power. That China was the unwilling and incompetent sparring partner in this conflict was merely incidental. What was important was the fact that, by victory in a war, whether against China or any other nation, the Japanese demonstrated that, by the tests of power politics which prevailed in the West, they were entitled to that position of equality which they coveted.[42]

If the first Japanese clash with China was motivated in large part by a desire for political equality, the unforeseen result was a momentary setback for these ambitions. With regard to China, the Japanese did get extraterritoriality and a recognition of their right to most-favored-nation treatment. As the tripartite intervention of 1895 indicated, however, they did not get as yet the right to share in the partition of China. The first fruits of the threatened partition went to other powers, while the Japanese were compelled to stand helplessly aside. In the years from 1896 to 1904, Russia marked out Manchuria and Mongolia as fields suitable for monopolistic exploitation and possible ultimate annexation. French influence, meanwhile, was spreading through the provinces of Kwantung, Kwangsi, and Yunnan. The Germans were busy in Shantung, and the modest British were forced to be content with the entire Yangtse Valley.

Since 1898, one might say, and certainly since 1900, it has been the evident ambition of the Japanese to liquidate these toe holds of Western imperialism in China. A Russian naval base at Port Arthur, a German base at Tsingtao, and even a French base at Kwangchow-wan, were menaces to the political safety of Japan no

[42] *Ibid.*, 33–35.

less than to the territorial integrity of China. Russian dominance in Manchuria and German dominance in Shantung, in addition, hindered or destroyed entirely the economic access of the Japanese to those areas.

One can see in this immediate situation, or one can see in the expansionist dreams of Yoshida Shoin, the motivation behind the determination of the Japanese, beginning in 1904, to oust the Western world from that position of dominance in the Far East which it had achieved up to that time. As a result of the Russo-Japanese War, the Russians were expelled from southern Manchuria and denied a share in the exploitation of Korea. In 1914, the policy was applied against the Germans in Shantung. Making use of opportunities presented in 1917 by the political collapse of the Tsarist Empire, the Japanese attempted to possess themselves of Russia's interests in northern Manchuria and at the same time to acquire control, by the use of puppet governments, of Russian territories east of Lake Baikal.[43]

From the more extreme of these positions, in the years immediately after the World War, the Japanese were compelled to withdraw somewhat by the Washington Conference, the rise of nationalism in China, and the political revival of Russia under the Communists. In 1931, however, Japan's advance was resumed, and since that time the Japanese aims have been stated with the utmost frankness. The determination to be supreme in eastern Asia is evident in the Japanese demand for naval parity, which would leave them free to work out their political destiny in that part of the world without fear of interference from either of the other great naval powers. The same desire to be recognized as the overlord of eastern Asia is evident in the Amau doctrine of April, 1934, which is merely a semiofficial statement of ambitions enter-

[43] In November, 1907, Theodore Roosevelt predicted that some such policy would eventually be applied to the territorial interests of all Western nations in China. He told the German ambassador in Washington, Baron Speck von Sternburg, that he believed Japan would for the time being coöperate with Russia, England, and France, all of whom would work together for the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire. He added that, in his judgment, Japan would take the lion's share when this dismemberment took place, meanwhile satisfying the other three powers with other sections of Chinese territory. Eventually, however, the Japanese would reach for this territory also. *Die Grosse Politik,* XXV, 78–79.

tained by highly-placed Japanese as early as 1915 and certainly as early as June, 1917.[44] An equal determination is evident in the published statements of highly-placed Japanese since the beginning of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1931. Writing in *Kaikosha* (Army Club Magazine) in the spring of 1932, General Sadao Araki condemned in bitter terms the selfish greed of the Western powers in eastern Asia, and summoned the Japanese to a holy crusade against this evil influence. The peoples of the Orient, he declared, were being oppressed by the white nations. Torn with internal dissention, China, true to its time-honored strategy of fighting barbarians with barbarians, turned mistakenly to the nations of the West. The 300,000,000 people of India were suffering under British rule. Central Asia and Siberia were "in the grip of an eagle," and the same sinister influence was spreading among the formerly peaceful peoples of Mongolia. The United States of America loudly championed the cause of righteousness and humanity in the Far East; meanwhile its policy in Mexico and Central America hardly revealed the high moral purposes which it sought to make effective in other parts of the world. The time had come, said Araki, to punish the impudence of the white peoples in the Far East. It was the duty of Japan to oppose every action by the powers which was not in harmony with the fundamental spirit of the empire—*Kodo*—which was the embodiment of justice and righteousness.[45]

In 1932, General Araki was expressing the sentiments of an extremist faction in the Japanese army. By the fall of 1938, however, the views of this faction had become the views of the entire Japanese government. Addressing the nation on November 3, the

[44] On June 5, 1917, the Chinese government, then considering a declaration of war against Germany, and torn with internal dissention which led eventually to the establishment of an autonomous government at Canton, received from the American government a note suggesting that the question of restoring and maintaining political unity in China was of primary importance, and that the question of war against the Central Powers should receive secondary consideration only. The Japanese worked themselves into a high pitch of indignation over this fancied "interference" by the American government in the domestic affairs of China without prior consultation with Japan. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1917* (Washington, 1926), 48–49, 58 ff.

[45] Hugh Byas, article, *New York Times,* July 31, 1932. *Kodo,* translated literally as "imperial way," combines the ancient Confucian principle of paternalistic benevolence with the Japanese principle of kindly rule by a descendant of the gods.

prime minister, Prince Konoye, declared that, following the capture of Canton and the Wuhan cities, the Kuomintang government had ceased to exist, except as a mere local regime against which, so long as it continued its "anti-Japanese, pro-Communist" policy, the Japanese army would never lay down its arms. What Japan sought was the establishment in eastern Asia of a new order having for its foundation "a tripartite relationship of mutual aid and coördination between Japan, Manchukuo, and China in political, economic, cultural, and other fields." The establishment of this new order, said Konoye, was "in complete conformity with the very spirit in which the (Japanese) Empire was founded; to achieve such a task is the exalted responsibility with which our present generation is entrusted." Japan was confident that other powers would correctly appreciate her aims and policy, and would adapt their attitude to the new conditions prevailing in east Asia.[46]

The implications of Prince Konoye's manifesto, which certain observers mistakenly regarded as having been designed merely for domestic consumption, were clarified by Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita's reply, published November 18, 1938, to Secretary Hull's note of October 6 protesting against the nullification in China of the principle of equal opportunity. Two features of this reply are significant. In the first place, the Japanese foreign office gave evidence of a willingness to answer internationally for the actions and policies of what were ostensibly Chinese governments and institutions. Arita defended both the paper currency issued by the Federal Reserve Bank of north China and the tariff policies of the new regimes in north and central China. By clear implication, Japan had established a protectorate over large sections of China and was disposed to assume international responsibility for the acts of the new regimes which had been set up there. The newer Japanese attitude toward puppet states was at least preferable to the older attitude under which the Japanese enjoyed the actuality of power without being embarrassed by any corresponding international responsibility. In the second place Arita, while denying that any real discrimination against American enterprise in China

[46] *New York Times*, January 7, 1938.

existed, insisted that any attempt to apply to conditions of today and tomorrow ideas and principles which had been applied in the past would contribute neither toward the establishment of real peace in east Asia nor to a solution of immediate issues.[47]

Commenting on the substance of the Japanese note, a spokesman of the foreign office said later that Japan did not like the terms "open door" and "equal opportunity" since such principles were applicable nowhere else in the world and should not, therefore, be applied in China.[48] Subsequently the foreign minister himself, in conversations with the British and American ambassadors in Tokyo, insisted that the Nine Power Treaty, under which China was treated as little more than a foreign colony, was rendered obsolete by recent developments and must therefore be considered of no practical significance.[49]

Thus according to current Japanese intentions, the exclusiveness of European powers within their spheres of interest in China must be replaced by a new Asiatic exclusiveness covering the whole of China of which the Japanese are to be, politically and economically, the chief beneficiaries. Within the Japan-China-Manchukuo economic bloc, the Japanese will hereafter be entitled to privileges denied to their European competitors. No longer will the white world enjoy rights and privileges which belong to a bygone age. Foreign residential concessions must be surrendered, extraterritorial rights must be abandoned, and in general the liquidation of white dominion in China must be considered complete. A special Japanese grievance results from the refusal of the wrongheaded Chinese to coöperate in the achievement of these apparently praiseworthy purposes. Japan appears to be determined to achieve these purposes, however, with or without Chinese assent and assistance. It is probably no accident that throughout the conflict which has raged intermittantly since 1931, the Japanese government has refrained from declaring war. For in many Japanese minds the campaigns in China represent not interna-

[47] *Ibid.*, November 19, 1938, p. 2, for text of Japanese note.

[48] *New York Times*, November 22, 1938, p. 10.

[49] *Ibid.*, December 10, 1939, p. 1.

tional war but merely successive punitive expeditions, and the Chinese who resist are bandits who block the extension of the Heavenly task.

Thus it seems apparent, whether from the teachings of Shinto scholars during the Tokugawa period or from the recent utterances of General Araki and others of the school of mystical militarism, that not a little of the driving force behind the Japanese expansion stems less from population pressure and industrial needs than from delusions of grandeur, a messianic complex, and resentment against both the refusal of the Western world to accept the Japanese as equals abroad and against special privileges which the white nations have hitherto enjoyed in the Far East. There is, to be sure, something decidedly incongruous in the spectacle of a modern Japanese army, amply supported by tanks, heavy artillery, and airplanes, doing the work of the gods in the extension of the Heavenly task in China. No less incongruous, on the other hand, is the position of an emperor, divinely descended and himself worshipped as a Shinto deity, reigning over a land alive with the roar of heavy industry which makes possible the military effort in China.

It is well to recall, however, that the gods of Shinto, while omnific, are neither omnipotent nor omniscent. One thoughtful student of Japan's native religion has said that Shinto is a primeval subconscious intuition that conceives humanity and nature as divine spirit self-creating material progress without omnipotent guidance.[50] This divine spirit, working through nature and man, operates experimentally by a process of trial and error. It is pragmatic. The apparent success of the Japanese military and economic effort in Manchuria proved that the *kami* and their earthly representatives wearing the uniforms of the Japanese army were acting in harmony with some eternal and cosmic scheme of which even the gods themselves were but dimly aware. Divine spirit, on the other hand, may take the wrong road as well as the right. In this case, failure is merely an incentive to make a fresh effort in a new direction. The *kami,* working through men, learn not by intelligent foresight but rather by experience. And divine spirit,

[50] J. W. T. Mason, *The Meaning of Shinto* (New York, 1935), esp. Chs. I, III, V.

seeking always to create by effort, by experimental action, and if need be by suffering, expresses itself occasionally in failure, in order thereby to create right (i.e., successful) ways of progress.

All this may sound whimsical and highly unhistorical, but it does have its implications with regard to Japanese imperialism. Success in a military adventure on the continent implies that the *kami* have successfully achieved. The war minister, Lieut. General Seishiro Itagaki, indulged in no mere patriotic flourish of the pen when he attributed the capture of Hankow, in the fall of 1938, to "the august virtues of His Imperial Majesty," the Emperor. That the Emperor personally is probably no very enthusiastic supporter of the sanguinary conflict in China is incidental and of little importance. Little brown men fighting in the name of the Emperor have achieved success; that is important.

On the other hand, the whole China venture, despite the capture of Hankow and Canton, may end ultimately in economic loss and political disaster. The practical-minded financiers of New York and London may refuse to participate in the reconstruction of China under Japanese auspices. And in that event a devastated China will absorb few of the products of Japanese factories, and natural resources which guerrilla warfare prevents the Japanese from exploiting, will be of little value. Or there may eventually be a political and military setback administered by the Russians, the rejuvenated Chinese, or both acting together. In that event, Japanese attention might be diverted toward the rich islands of the East Indies. Or it might, given determined opposition and the certainty of failure in that quarter, be turned inward. Certain it is that, even in the land of the gods, there are social, economic, and political conditions which, so far as they remain uncorrected, furnish at least a pretext and perhaps even a cause for Japanese imperialistic expansion. A modification of those conditions, to the end that the benefits of modernization come within reach of the masses of people, might remove one basic excuse for aggression and at the same time enable some of Japan's neighbors to enjoy a measure of peace and security such as they have not enjoyed since 1905.

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