



The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective

World War Zero — VOLUME II

*Edited by David Wolff, Steven G. Marks,
Bruce W. Menning,
David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye,
John W. Steinberg and Yokote Shinji*

B R I L L

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
VOL. II

HISTORY OF WARFARE

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VOLUME 40

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE
WAR IN GLOBAL
PERSPECTIVE
World War Zero

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On the cover: "After the Battle: Kindness to the Fallen Foe" by Shunko, c. 1904 (In battlefield desolation, a young Japanese soldier is giving water to a wounded Russian. Probably after nightfall, the usual time to collect dead and wounded. The Japanese wears his summer khaki uniform placing the event in summer 1904. Numerous such acts of humanity were reported on both sides in the Japanese and Western media.)

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PREFACE

Delivery of this manuscript to the publisher completes the odyssey of our editorial board. After many smaller events, five years of planning saw Keio University in Tokyo graciously host a weeklong conference that included the discussion of over 50 papers—these two volumes—and concluded with a public debate held at Keidanren Hall in cooperation with Yomiuri Shimbun Research Institute. Many views that were new at the academic venue were news for public dissemination by the end of the week! But only the first volume of essays was between covers before the Tokyo events. Now the remaining contributors add a whole new dimension to our attempt at a global treatment, for this volume is almost exclusively authored by Asian scholars, mainly treating issues that have simply remained untouched in English. We hope they will be of interest to the English-reading world, as we round out our coverage of a war, followed closely, through very different lens, the world round. World War Zero was fateful for Russia and Japan, but even more so for the European powers, who for all their observers on both sides, failed to see how crippling the next great war would be, even though nearly all the murderous new technologies were on full and horrible display.

Starting off the volume, as he did the conference, Iriye Akira elegantly examines the war through the prism of five isms, the grandest forces of the day: imperialism, nationalism, regionalism, internationalism, and transnationalism. The military section that follows adds much to our knowledge of prewar intelligence, whereas Volume One focused more on wartime intelligence. Also, if Volume One punctured the Nogi myth, Volume Two takes Togo to task for failing to exterminate the Russian Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur as called for in the Combined Fleet Plans, thereby setting up Nogi's siege, shame and sorrow. The mythic heroes fall and fail together, or so new evidence suggests.

Volume One's section on the home front is largely devoted to studies regarding cross-cultural representations, but Volume Two provides different perspectives. A study of the Russian government's loss of public support for the war adds to the earlier study on the tie between war and revolution. Two papers then contrast this sorry

state of Russian affairs with the self-sacrificing patriotism with which the Japanese bore the burden of war. The public's complacency in Japan is all the more interesting for Kato Yoko's finding that both strong anti-Russian sentiment and the war cause argument based on Russia's violation of the "Open Door" in Manchuria appeared only a few months before the war.

Displaying all the necessary languages to chart Northeast Asia's rise, the six essays on regional relations provide a kaleidoscope of viewpoints from the various capitals of the region, where most observers agreed that the curtain was about to lift on a next act, one in which Japan and the US would certainly be playing major parts. But the drama at the Portsmouth conference, where crucial scenes would be enacted, denied seats to both Korea and China, as non-combatants. China had been pressured into neutrality during the war; Korea was denied it, losing *de facto* independence from that moment. Both appealed to the United States to intervene on their behalf, but Theodore Roosevelt had little appreciation for weak countries.

On "culture," we have too much variety to constitute a genuinely coherent section. The treatments are all deeply interdisciplinary, even within the cultural category. As in the previous volume, coverage is multimedia-oriented, with public events, films and publications all under review. But Egawa's *manga* will probably provide the most widely consumed images of the war in Japan. Millions of Japanese will know this version, but only a handful of foreigners will have seen Egawa's handiwork among the illustrations for this volume. And few will forget the dark vision of Natsume Soseki, an essential Meiji thinker, writing in January 1906:

Perhaps on account of the weather, God himself went insane. A voice from above the thick clouds covering the sky over the Sea of Japan and Manchuria thundered, "Butcher men and feed the hungry dogs with them!" whereupon the Japanese and Russians answered all together, "Yes, certainly," and started slaughtering each other in a battlefield whose front lines stretched more than four hundred kilometers long. Out of the horizon of the endless wild plain rushed thousands of dreadful wolf-like quadrupeds ripping through the winds that reeked of human blood, like artillery shells and bullets. Scarcely did the insane God, treading on air, have time to shout, "Suck blood," when the boisterous gulping of the monstrous wolves was heard, their red flames of tongues flashing over the dark ground.

In fact, it is Mr. Kushami, the owner of the famous Cat, who delivers himself of this prose poem. We can reasonably assume it is the voice of Soseki.

Among other revelations, essays in this volume introduce previously unknown or under-exploited materials from the Japanese side, though not exactly archival, like the fruits of glasnost highlighted in Volume One. *The Secret Navy History* is known from Corbett's distillation of its lessons for the British Navy, but in this volume the original resurfaces as a source. The draft version of the official Army history also reveals much that the Army thought expedient to remove from the final published version for both military and political reasons. Finally, it is revealed that the Japanese campaign goal was none other than the city of Harbin, the site of Russian rear headquarters during the war.

All that remains is for the editorial *kollektiv* to take leave of the contributors without whose cooperation and expertise, there would be nothing new to say and to thank Brill of the Netherlands and Marcella Mulder, our editor, for the patience and fortitude to guide this large, unwieldy, multinational project to its intermediate objective, thereby setting the bar for future studies of the Russo-Japanese War just a little bit higher.

INTRODUCTION

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR IN TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY

Iriye Akira

One way of examining the Russo-Japanese War is to put it in the context of various themes that characterized the history of the world at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹ Rather than just viewing the war as a bilateral affair or as a military episode—which of course it was—we may also try to relate it to certain overall developments whose significance went much beyond Russia and Japan.

What overall themes can we identify? In this essay I propose to focus on the issue of global governance or world order and take up five mechanisms that have, since the nineteenth century, provided some semblance of order in the world. Those five are: imperialism, nationalism, regionalism, internationalism, and transnationalism. These themes are not mutually exclusive, but for the purpose of this essay I shall distinguish them, at least conceptually, and try to examine the Russo-Japanese war as an important episode in terms of each.

First, there will be little dispute about putting the war in the context of the history of imperialism. The conflict, of course, meant that any system of global order that may have existed at the turn of the twentieth century was undermined. What should be kept in view is the fact that the two combatants re-established some semblance of regional order as soon as the war ended. Of course, the conflict demonstrated that the imperialist powers viewed one another as hypothetical enemies and that conflict could arise among them when they were not able to agree upon their respective domains and spheres of influence. Moreover, the war was an imperialistic one in that it

¹ This essay is a distillation of some of my recent writings on twentieth-century history. For more details, see my *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (1997), *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (2002), and *Rekishi o manabu to iukoto* (The study of history, 2005).

was fought in Chinese territory without Chinese consent, and when it ended Russia ceded some rights in Manchuria to Japan, again without prior Chinese consent. As early as 1907, however, Russia and Japan were coming to terms by entering into an agreement about dividing Manchuria into their respective spheres of influence. In that sense, imperialism provided a system of global (or at least regional) governance.

That system was vulnerable at two levels. Among the imperialist powers, their temporary balances and deals were not such as to help build a stable mechanism for world order, as could be seen in the Russo-Japanese war and eventually in the Great War. Although there were many factors behind the latter conflict, surely the imperialistic rivalries among the European nations, in particular between the entente powers (Britain, France, Russia) on one hand, and Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman empire on the other, was a key ingredient in the sense of crisis that built up in the wake of the war between Russia and Japan. At the same time, the imperialist system grew increasingly unstable as anti-imperialist movements developed in various colonies and semi-colonies. The traditional method of imperial governance had been to separate out colonial populations between “collaborators” and the rest, recruiting the former in essence as partners in imperial governance. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, “collaborators” in turn became divided between those who began to question and ultimately reject the system and those who did not do so. The growth of anti-imperialism was a permanent source of instability in global governance in the age of imperialism.

The Russo-Japanese war can be understood in such a framework. Although Russia and Japan managed to stabilize their imperial relations, Japanese imperialism came into conflict with the United States, which was building its own empire in the Pacific. The crisis across the Pacific strained Anglo-Japanese relations, forcing Britain ultimately to choose between Japan and the United States as its primary imperial partner. Equally serious was anti-imperialism in Korea and China that emerged as soon as the Russo-Japanese war ended. The fact that the war was fought on Chinese territory, that Japan decided to annex Korea once the war was over, and that Russia and Japan effectively divided up Manchuria into their respective spheres of influence ensured that anti-imperialism in China and Korea would grow. Thus the Japanese empire would never be a source of

regional stability. In order to ensure its survival, Japan cooperated with other empires in Asia to suppress anti-colonial struggles, but this made matters worse as Asians viewed Japan, not as a liberator as some of them had imagined during the war, but as an anti-Asian imperialist, the more baneful for having betrayed Asia.

The instability of the imperialist system was revealed during the Great War and ultimately led to its replacement by a system of nationalism, that is, a world order to be built on the existence and cooperation of independent nations. It may be said that, whereas the nineteenth century had been a century of empires, the twentieth century was now visualized as one in which they would be replaced by independent nations as the key units in world affairs. Henceforth, what Woodrow Wilson called “the community of nations” would provide its own order of global governance through international organizations such as the League of Nations.

In such a context, the Russo-Japanese war may be said to have taken place in the transition period from the age of imperialism to the new age of nationalism. The war not only provoked nationalistic responses in Korea and China against imperialism, it also encouraged anti-colonial movements in Egypt, India, Indochina, and elsewhere. In the aftermath of the war, the Japanese government chose to identify the nation with the imperialist powers and to cooperate with them to suppress Asian nationalism, but one of the imperialists, the United States, grew more sympathetic toward such nationalism, especially that in China. The government as well as public opinion in the United States steadily came to support Chinese efforts at “rights recovery” and at what would later be called “nation-building,” attempts to reform the country’s political, economic, and social institutions so as to unify and strengthen the nation. American sympathy for these efforts would take the form of sending out educators, doctors, and advisors to Beijing and other parts of China as well as inviting large numbers of Chinese students and scholars to American colleges and universities. Philanthropic organizations, notably the Rockefeller Foundation, were at the forefront of the initiative to encourage and support China’s nation-building. The emerging bond between Chinese and Americans was confirmed in the years after 1911, the year that ended the Qing dynasty and gave birth to the new Republic of China. In sharp contrast to such a development, Japanese policy never departed from one of holding

onto, and expanding, control over Manchuria and other parts of China, as exemplified by the “twenty-one demands” episode of 1915. Clearly, the United States and Japan were diverging in their approaches to Chinese nationalism, and this would continue to characterize trans-Pacific relations for decades to come.

Trans-Pacific relations provide yet another framework in which to view the significance of the Russo-Japanese war. That framework is regionalism, or the issue of defining regional order. In the world of the twenty-first century, regional communities would come to constitute an important and influential part of global governance. In a way, regionalism followed nationalism, when the latter proved incapable of providing regional, let alone international, stability. Despite the promising beginnings in the wake of the Great War, nationalism as a principle underlying international order did not translate itself into a workable global system. It was as if the more nations were created, the less stable the world became. Not only among the nations that had existed for decades and even centuries, but also among the newly created states, conflict remained endemic, and the only way to bring about a less conflictual relationship among nations, an increasing number of statesmen and thinkers came to believe, was through the establishment of some regional community in which member states would pool their energies and resources so as to create shared interests and concerns.

That remained a distant vision at the turn of the twentieth century, but there were voices even at that time that called for a system of East Asian regional order, not the kind of imperialistic regional order that was defined by the Russo-Japanese entente or the Anglo-Japanese alliance but a more pervasive and equitable system encompassing other countries as well. Most such voices did not go beyond a rudimentary form of pan-Asianism, the idea that Asian countries ought to come together to build a region of peace, free from Western encroachment. If such a regional order were to materialize, an essentially equal partnership among Japan, Korea, China, and other Asian countries would be required, something only a handful (such as Sun Yat-sen) was willing to advocate at that time. During the 1930s the Japanese government would define and promote a regional scheme, but it was more a hierarchy of states in Asia, with Japan at the top, designed to expel all Western influence from the region. It would only be after the failure of such a scheme that a more equitable

regional scheme for East Asia and elsewhere would be defined. At the time of the Russo-Japanese war, the regional system was essentially a system consisting of colonial powers seeking to establish some order on the basis of their collaboration, a system from which Asians themselves (apart from the Japanese) were excluded.

Even if some system of regional partnership were to develop in East Asia, however, the question of how to define the connection between it and trans-Pacific relations would have proven a major obstacle. This is a problem even today, but a century ago it would have been far more formidable, given the growing estrangement between the United States and Japan. East Asian and trans-Pacific affairs were becoming more and more closely interconnected, but they were never integrated. An East Asian regional scheme without U.S. participation would have been impossible to develop, but some system of trans-Pacific order could have developed only if the United States and Japan had pursued parallel policies on the Asian continent. In such a perspective, the Russo-Japanese war and the subsequent crisis across the Pacific may be seen as developments antithetical to the growth of Asian-Pacific regionalism.

The above three frameworks—imperialism, nationalism, regionalism—all were state-centric schemes. In other words, governments and armed forces constituted the sinews of governance. International affairs, however, consist of more than states and governments. Non-state actors are just as critical ingredients. These include private businesses, non-profit organizations, religious institutions, and, ultimately, citizens. They comprise civil society in a country, as distinguished from the state that monopolizes (at least in theory) political and military power and provides for the wellbeing of the people. The latter, in their turn, establish their own organizations that are oriented toward the pursuit of economic, cultural, religious, and other objectives. Sometimes the state and non-state actors work together for a common end, but at other times they pursue different objectives. In affairs among nation-states, it is important to keep in mind that interstate relations and interactions among non-state actors across boundaries often move with their respective momentums and agendas. International relations are often identified with interstate relations, but that would be too narrow a perspective. “International” implies affairs among nations, and nations consist of people and their organizations, of which public institutions constitute but one part.

In the world arena, non-state actors would involve religions, civilizations, and ethnic groups that are not interchangeable with separate nation-states. International organizations are also non-state actors in the sense that they are not synonymous with sovereign states. Both intergovernmental organizations and international non-state organizations belong in this category. Intergovernmental organizations are those that are established through some agreement by independent states, so that they are not independent of the latter. At the same time, however, they do not pursue separate national policies but are concerned with global issues such as peace, public health, and humanitarian relief. International non-governmental organizations refer to private associations that have branches in various parts of the world.

Thus understood, the Russo-Japanese war should be examined not simply as a conflict between two national entities represented by their respective governments and armed forces, but also as an episode in an evolving story of non-state affairs. These relations were developing at the turn of the twentieth century just as surely as interstate affairs. This story would not be comprehensible within the framework of imperialism, nationalism, or regionalism unless these, too, were seen as phenomena involving non-state actors. In order to avoid conceptual ambiguity, I shall use different categories to refer to movements and activities by non-state actors: internationalism and transnationalism. Internationalism may be taken to mean ideas and institutions that bring together separate nation-states so as to promote their common interests and objectives. The best example in the early twentieth century would be the League of Nations, but its establishment came more than a decade after the Russo-Japanese war. At the time of the war, there were several other international organizations such as the International Court of Arbitration and the Universal Postal Union.

Internationalism was in its infancy at that time, but there nevertheless were strong and persistent voices advocating international institutions that would promote peace among nations and enable them to cooperate in the interest of the whole world. The fact that war came between Russia and Japan, then, may be interpreted as a failure of internationalism to prevent such a conflict. To be sure, there existed a mechanism for arbitrating differences among nations, but neither St Petersburg nor Tokyo saw it fit to turn to the Hague court. And there was no other international body that would assist

them in solving their differences peacefully. It would be another forty years before internationalism would be strengthened institutionally.

Transnationalism, in contrast to internationalism, may be taken to refer essentially to transactions among non-state actors across national boundaries. These transactions existed between Russia and Japan prior to, and even during, their war. In the history of transnationalism, the Russo-Japanese war is of interest since it brought two nations representing different religions, civilizations, and races into head-on collision. There was much comment at that time about these aspects of the war. Of course, Japanese spokesmen worked hard to ensure that people in the West would not view the war in civilizational terms, as a clash of Eastern and Western civilizations. Rather, the official propaganda emanating from Tokyo was that this was a conflict between civilization and barbarism. But the “sub-text” was understood by people in Japan and elsewhere in Asia. In Europe and the United States, too, some expressed alarm that an Asian nation with its own tradition appeared to be defeating a Christian nation, although Russia’s Christianity had long estranged itself from both the Catholic church and the Protestant denominations in the West. Japan’s victory was welcomed by Islamic countries such as Egypt and Turkey as an indication that Western civilization was not invincible, an impression that appeared to be confirmed when the allegedly civilized nations of Europe went to war against each other in 1914.

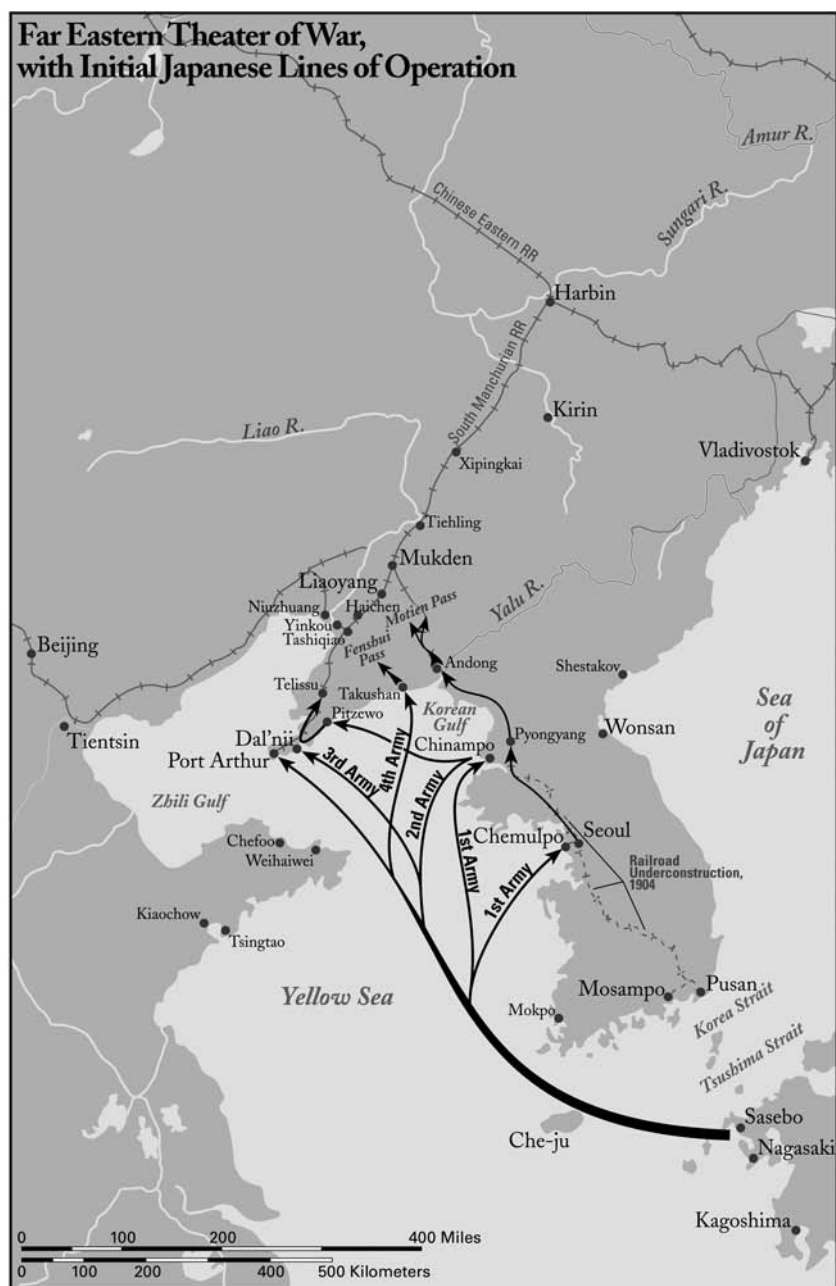
Such thought had in fact little to do with the actual origins or consequences of the war. But a transnational history of the Russo-Japanese war would have to include this aspect of the two countries’ encounter. Transnationalism, however, includes much more than civilizations and religions. Transnational connections are created by business enterprises and non-governmental organizations as well. Little research seems to have been done on private business affairs of Russians and Japanese during the war, or about activities by non-governmental associations in both countries. We do know, however, that socialists in the two countries expressed their opposition to the war and even met in Amsterdam to declare their solidarity. But inquiry into non-state actors should not be limited to those in the combatant nations but should be expanded worldwide. The Russo-Japanese war took place at a time when the tempo of globalization

was accelerating. Technological and economic globalization was creating networks of connections among countries and regions of the world, and Russia and Japan were clearly part of such networks. How did the war affect such connections? That is a question of transnationalism. Globalization is a pervasive technological and economic phenomenon, but transnationalism connotes the creation and development of connections across and transcending national boundaries. Likewise, historians have documented the growth of non-governmental organizations at the turn of the century. These organizations became so numerous that in 1910 some of their leaders came together in Brussels to establish a headquarters, Office Central des Associations Internationales. It would be interesting to know how active Russian and Japanese organizations were in such an undertaking.

Transnationalism was developing as a counterforce to geopolitical developments and creating a sense of global community (most often referred to at that time as “a single world community”). Personal and organizational ties across national boundaries—through business people, tourists, religious leaders, exchange students, scholars, artists, athletes, as well as organizations dedicating themselves to certain causes (such as women’s rights)—were growing stronger, competing with national and regional identities as determinants of human behavior. Although national identities proved resilient and decisive at various moments in the twentieth century, transnational ties remained substantial. The tension between a world defined by nations and that visualized by transnational forces would remain. But to ignore the latter and examine only the former in discussing modern and recent history is to distort the reality. The Russo-Japanese war, too, must be put in the framework of transnational relations as well as that of interstate affairs.

The twentieth century was to witness calamitous wars and international crises, and it is tempting to see the Russo-Japanese war as the first incident that ushered in such a dismal century. We should not forget, however, that the war did not dampen forces of globalization and transnationalism, two themes that would emerge particularly notable in the second half of the century. The war must be related to such a development. Besides, religions, civilizations, languages, and many other non-national entities have developed with their own momentum, never entirely submerged under national identities and issues. One fruitful way of further enriching our under-

standing of the Russo-Japanese war would be to investigate how these non-national entities were affected by the conflict. Only by embracing non-national as well as national and international issues in our study of history would it be possible to understand the changing human condition.



Map 1. Far eastern theater of war, with initial Japanese lines of operations.

PART I

MILITARY VISIONS AND REVISIONS

STUDY YOUR ENEMY:
RUSSIAN MILITARY AND NAVAL ATTACHÉS IN JAPAN

Wada Haruki

Old Perceptions and New Materials

The Japanese have long maintained that the Russians paid scant regard to Japanese military capabilities during the period preceding the Russo-Japanese War. Shiba Ryotaro's historical novel, *Sakanoue no Kumo* [A Cloud at the Top of the Slope], aptly reflects this perspective. Serialized in 1968–72, the novel won long-standing popularity and became the basis for prevailing contemporary Japanese notions about the war. Shiba wrote that, "Strange as it may seem, neither Russian officers nor generals evaluated Japanese capabilities fairly. They did not even analyze them soberly."¹

Shiba cited three examples. The first was Colonel G. M. Vannovskii, Russian military attaché in Japan, 1900–1902. According to Shiba, Vannovskii reported that, "the Japanese army is an army of infants" and that, "it will take one hundred years for the Japanese army to have the moral foundations of the weakest army in Europe." "An army of infants" was a phrase that Vannovskii had evidently borrowed from Major General M. N. Ivanov, who with Vannovskii in 1901 had observed Japanese maneuvers near Sendai.² It is well-known that Vannovskii habitually underestimated Japanese military capabilities.³ It is less well-known that neither his predecessors nor his successors shared Vannovskii's assessments.

¹ Shiba Ryotaro, *Sakanoue no Kumo*, in series of 5 vols. (Tokyo, 1971–84), II, 209.

² Voennno-istoricheskaiia komissiiia po opisaniuu russko-iaponskoi voiny [hereafter VIK], *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, 9 vols. in 16 bks. (SPB, 1910–13), I, 437.

³ I. V. Derevianko, "Predislovie" to "Russkaia razvedka i kontrrazvedka v voine 1904–1905 gg.," *Tainy Russko-iaponskoi voiny* (M, 1993), 149–50; and David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, "Russkaia voennaia razvedka na Man'chzhurskom fronte, 1904–1905," *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905: Vzgl'iad cherez stoletie*, ed. O. R. Airapetov (M, 2004), 143–44.

The second example that Shiba cited was Captain 1st rank K. A. Grammatchkov, who attended the 1903 naval review in Japan. Shiba wrote that Grammatchkov remarked to Ambassador R. R. Rosen that the material part of the Japanese Navy seemed to be excellent indeed, but that there were doubts about Japanese ship-handling competence. Shiba's source for Grammatchkov's comment was Tani Toshio's book, *Kimitsu Nichiro Sensoshi* [A Secret History of the Russo-Japanese War], a collection of lectures originally presented at the Military Academy in 1925.⁴ But if Shiba had bothered to read Baron Rosen's memoirs, he would have discovered that Captain 2nd rank A. I. Rusin, Russia's naval attaché in Japan, had reacted to Grammatchkov's comment with a sarcastic smile, indicating silent dissent with the senior officer's superficial observations.⁵

The third example was War Minister A. N. Kuropatkin, who toured Japan briefly during the late spring of 1903. According to Shiba, Kuropatkin remarked that, "a Russian soldier can contend with two Japanese soldiers," and that, "the coming war with Japan will not be a war, but a march." The first assertion is a distorted paraphrase from Count S. Iu. Witte's memoirs, while the second is sheer fabrication.⁶ Although Kuropatkin tended to underestimate Japanese capabilities, he probably would not have dared to degrade the Japanese military so thoroughly.

Then-Major Tani Toshio's lectures at the Military Academy were not appreciably different from Shiba's novel in their treatment of Russia's generals and "diplomats in shoulder straps." In fact, Tani singled out Major General K. I. Vogak, the first Russian military attaché in Japan, for special ridicule:

General Vogak, who once served as military attaché in Japan, studied Japan's situation and secretly said that the Japanese army was not to be feared. His estimate was well-known. He was also military attaché at the Beijing Embassy and participated in negotiations with China about a secret agreement on Manchuria. When a Chinese mandarin said to him that, if China concludes such an agreement with Russia, serious hindrance should be expected from a foreign country, Vogak replied with contemptuous laughter, "Which foreign country have you

⁴ Tani Toshio, *Kimitsu Nichiro Sensoshi*, ed. Inaba Masao (Tokyo, 1966), 34.

⁵ Baron Roman Romanovich Rosen, *Forty Years of Diplomacy*, 2 vols. (London, 1922), I, 212-13.

⁶ S. Iu. Vitte, *Vospominaniia*, 3 vols. (M., 1960), II, 297.

in mind? Japan? Oh, Japan is aha, ha, ha.” He completely ignored Japan. There was no doubt that he stood for initiating a war with Japan.⁷

Such assertions notwithstanding, an in-depth review of relevant primary and secondary materials indicates that both Tani and Shiba were one-sided and even outright wrong in their assessments of Russian generals and other officers who studied Japan.

Until recently, Russian military and naval attachés in Japan figured either haphazardly or not at all in historical studies of the Russo-Japanese War. Immediately after the conflict, Russian official histories devoted limited space to attaché activities in Japan. In 1910–13, the Main Staff’s Military-Historical Commission published its nine-volume *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–05 gg.* [The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05], the first volume of which briefly surveyed the studies and views of Russian military attachés K. I. Vogak (1893–96), N. I. Ianzhul (1896–99), G. M. Vannovskii (1900–02), and V. K. Samoilov (1903–1904). Vannovskii’s negative assessments garnered more than passing attention.⁸ In 1912–18, the Historical Commission of the Naval General Staff published its own seven-volume history, *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–05 gg.* [The Russo-Japanese War, 1904–05], in which the first volume devoted limited attention to the activities of the naval attachés, Lieutenant I. I. Chagin (1897–1900) and Captain 2nd rank A. I. Rusin (1901–1904).⁹

After the Russian revolution of 1917, a long silence ensued, during which the subject, documentation about it, and the military archives in general remained shrouded in secrecy. Only in 1996 did V. A. Petrov publish 19 reports and telegrams by Rusin in *Russkoe proshloe* [The Russian Past], a St. Petersburg historical journal. Petrov followed in 1998 with an article, “Russian naval attachés in Japan (1858–1917),” for a Moscow journal, *Žnakom’tes’—Iaponiia* [Let’s Get Acquainted—Japan].¹⁰ In 2000, E. V. Dobychnina published an article-length

⁷ Tani, 31. With reference to War Minister A. N. Kuropatkin, Tani wrote that “Kuropatkin, who had once insisted on continuing the occupation of Manchuria, came to have a comparatively moderate view after his visit to Japan.”

⁸ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, I, 421–50.

⁹ Istoricheskaia komissiiia deistvii flota vo voine 1904–1905 gg. pri Morskome General’nom Shtabe [hereafter IK], *Russko-Iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, 7 bks. incomplete (SPB and Petrograd, 1912–18), bk. 1, pp. 123–36.

¹⁰ V. A. Petrov, “Iz predystorii russko-iaponskoi voiny: Doneseniia morskogo agenta v Iaponii A. I. Rusina (1902–1904 gg.),” *Russkoe proshloe*, no. 6 (1996), 52–94;

treatment of Russian military attachés in the Far East, with particular attention to K. I. Vogak.¹¹ These were pioneering studies.

With the approach of the centennial of the Russo-Japanese War, there was a general upsurge in academic efforts focusing on the conflict. Serious articles on Russian attachés by two young Russian scholars, P. V. Kondratenko and V. B. Kashirin, appeared in a Russian collection edited by O. R. Airapetov.¹² With new secondary and primary materials available, the time now seems ripe for a re-evaluation of Russian military and naval attachés, in particular their best representatives, K. I. Vogak and A. I. Rusin. With the above-mentioned works as a guide, the current study draws from Russian and Japanese archives for added perspective.¹³ The topic retains significance not only for area studies specialists interested in “knowing the other,” but also for the way that it reveals how attaché assessments figured in Russian preparations for war with Japan.

K. I. Vogak's Study of Japan

On 20 February 1893 (O.S.), Konstantin Ippolitovich Vogak received orders for posting as military attaché to Japan. Since 26 March of the previous year, he had been serving as military attaché in China. Assignment to Tokyo was an additional task that required Vogak to remain in Japan annually for two months. According to Kashirin,

V. Petrov, “Russkie voenno-morskie agenty v Iaponii (1858–1917),” *Žnacom’tes’—Iaponiia*, no. 19 (1998), 52–61.

¹¹ E. V. Dobychina, “Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka na Dal’nem Vostoke v 1895–1897 godakh,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 1 (January 2004), 161–70.

¹² P. V. Kondratenko, “Rossiiskie morskii agenty ob usilenii iaponskogo flota v kontse XIX-nachale XX veka,” in Airapetov, ed., *Russko-Iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, 62–110; V. B. Kashirin, “Russkii Mol’ke smotrit na vostok. Dal’nevostochnye plany Glavnogo Shtaba Rossiiskoi imperii vo vremia iaponsko-kitaiskoi voiny 1894–1895 gg.,” *Ibid.*, 150–82.

¹³ Particularly useful were the Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv [RGIA], fond 560 (Finance Ministry), opis’ 28 and f. 1282 (V. K. Pleve), op. 1; Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Voennno-Morskogo Flota [RGAVMF], f. 32 (E. I. Alekseev), f. 417, op. 1, f. 1335 (A. I. Rusin); Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [GARF], f. 601 (Nikolai II); and Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voennno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv [RGVIA], f. 165 (A. I. Kuropatkin). The author is also grateful to Bruce Menning for the opportunity to read a pre-publication version of his forthcoming article, “Miscalculating One’s Enemies: Russian Military Intelligence before the Russo-Japanese War,” which has since appeared in *War in History*, XIII, no. 2 (Spring 2006), 141–70, and which is reprinted in this volume.

Vogak was born into a noble family on 3 August 1859 in the province of Kaluga.¹⁴ His family was said to be of Swedish origin.¹⁵ His father, Ippolit Vogak, was a vice admiral, who had advanced to become deputy commander of the Baltic Fleet.¹⁶ Young Vogak completed the Second Petersburg Military Gymnasium and the Nicholas Cavalry School. In 1878, he began his military service as an officer in the Life Guard Ulan Regiment. Between 1881 and 1884, he attended the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff. His service with the Main Staff began in 1889, and in 1893, its chief, General N. N. Obruchev, assigned Vogak to the Far East.¹⁷

It is known that Vogak hired an interpreter in Japan.¹⁸ His abilities came into full play during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. His voluminous reports were collected in two volumes of the *Sbornik geograficheskikh, topograficheskikh i statisticheskikh materialov po Azii* [Collection of Geographic, Topographic and Statistical Materials on Asia], published by the Military Scientific Committee of the Main Staff. On 24 June (6 July) 1894 he was already reporting from Tienjin:

The last year, during which I devoted more than a little attention to a study of the Japanese army on the basis of documents translated into Russian, . . . has persuaded me that we should very, very seriously take the Japanese army into account. I think it my duty to report in a military respect that Japan is positively the strongest state in the Far East, including Russia. Its 60,000-man army, which can be expanded almost three times on mobilization, is worthy of attention both in terms of organization and personnel. This is the opinion of all people who have observed this army. And one should not forget Japan's very good navy, too.¹⁹

Vogak had arrived in Tokyo during April 1894, at the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. Although annoyed by the Japanese obsession with secrecy, he nonetheless obtained materials for analysis

¹⁴ Kashirin, 152; and *Posluzhnyi spisok K. I. Vogaka*, RGVA, f. 409, op. 1, d. 183718. The dates cited here and subsequently, unless provided in dual form, are rendered according to the Julian calendar (or O. S., for Old Style), which at the time lagged the Gregorian by 13 days.

¹⁵ Iu. Ia. Solov'ev, *Vospominaniia diplomata. 1893–1922* (M., 1959), 58.

¹⁶ See his younger brother's *posluzhnyi spisok*, RGVA, f. 409, d. 99–143, l. 1; and "Dnevnik Kuropatkina," *Krasnyi arkhiv*, II (1922), 114.

¹⁷ Kashirin, 152.

¹⁸ *Sbornik geograficheskikh, topograficheskikh i statisticheskikh materialov po Azii*, 87 vols. (SPB, 1883–1914), LX, 87.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 60.

through negotiations with Kawakami Soroku, deputy chief of the General Staff. On 22 September (4 October), Vogak reported:

There is no doubt that the mobilization and transport of the army by rail and sea are positively accomplished so well that any European power might envy them. . . . The railroads work splendidly. . . . Embarkations are done with a perfection I have never seen. . . . In a word, all goes as if oiled, and the Japanese General Staff can be proud of the results achieved. . . . I think that we have a dangerous neighbor in Japan, which we should very much take into account in the future, and which will give us many worries and difficulties. . . . In the face of Japan a new force has been born, which will have great influence upon the destinies of the Far East.²⁰

This evaluation of Japanese capabilities occurred before Vogak ever saw the Japanese army in combat. On 27 September (9 October), he left Tokyo with Major Ikeda for Hiroshima to visit the Japanese General Headquarters. There, he conversed frankly with Kawakami, who asserted that Russia and Japan should unite against Great Britain. Vogak also enjoyed the privilege of an audience with Emperor Mutsuhito, who asked him about suggestions and advice for the coming military campaign against China.²¹

On 8 (20) October, Vogak embarked for Chemulpo by Japanese ship. From there, he followed the First Division of Oyama Iwao's Second Army to witness the battle of Pyongyang and the battle on the Yalu. In his report of 16 (28) February 1895, he evaluated the Japanese Army:

To me there is no doubt that in Japan we have a neighbor worthy of our undivided attention. . . . The Japanese army already appears to be an impressive force, organized wonderfully and composed of excellent soldiers, very well trained and educated and very well led by officers who are devoted totally to their own cause and treating their service with enviable affection and reasonable passion. As for the sense of duty and patriotism in the army, it is needless to desire more. These characteristics are inherent in Japanese from birth. This is the character of the nation. I saw Japanese troops on the march in winter, under extremely difficult conditions. I saw them in battle, indeed against the Chinese, but under very heavy fire. And I cannot but talk of them with sincere respect and great admiration. The organization of the rear, transportation, and the preliminary preparation of operations left

²⁰ Ibid., 80–81, 83.

²¹ Ibid., 90, 92.

little desire for improvement, if we account for difficult conditions within the theater of the war and its great distance from main bases. Everything is calculated beforehand, and everything is put in order, nothing escapes attention. Such a successful resolution of the most complicated and delicate problems of contemporary operations could doubtlessly be counted as an achievement for the general staff of any European army. The medical aspect is unrivalled. No army of Europe displays such attainment in regard to medical support on the battlefield, or in the organization of hospitals, evacuation, and related activities.²²

Vogak's Successors

Vogak proposed accrediting a separate attaché to Japan. Consequently, Colonel Nicholas Ivanovich Ianzhul, former chief of staff for the 13th Infantry Division, arrived in Tokyo during the latter half of 1896 as the first full-time Russian military attaché in Japan. Ianzhul's assessments of the Japanese army varied little from Vogak's. After observing the field maneuvers of 1896, Ianzhul reported:

Although it is difficult to judge the qualities of the army on the basis of three or four days' observation, I should nevertheless testify that infantry regiments of the 5th and 6th Divisions impressed me most favorably. I dare say that with regard to training (individual and also on the company and battalion levels), equipment and mobility these regiments can fairly be deemed as ranking with any European troops.²³

Subsequently, a memorandum of June 1898 revealed the degree of expertise which Ianzhul came to cultivate as an attaché. Should the Russian army be required to invade Japan, Ianzhul proposed the port of Shimizu as a landing site. From there, the Russian landing force should first dominate the city of Shizuoka and then proceed to Nagoya. In broad outline, Ianzhul prescribed a plan of conquest for the central part of Honshu, Japan's largest island. However, Japanese agents obtained a copy of the memorandum and presented it to Emperor Mutsuhito. It was evident from the document that Ianzhul was receiving assistance from priests of the Russian Orthodox Church in Japan.²⁴ The prejudicial content of the memorandum

²² Ibid., 107–08.

²³ VIK, *Russko-japonskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, I, 427.

²⁴ Hara Go, "Yanshuru' no Ikensho" [Ianzhul's Memorandum], *Gunjishi shigaku*, 112, XXVIII, no. 4 (March 1993), 47–57.

notwithstanding, Ianzhul's study of Japan and its military appeared to demonstrate the attributes of a very competent attaché.

Meanwhile, General Aleksei Nikolaevich Kuropatkin replaced the aging P. S. Vannovskii as war minister at the beginning of 1898. When Ianzhul requested leave to address family matters, Kuropatkin temporarily replaced him during 1898–99 with Colonel Gleb Mikhailovich Vannovskii, the nephew of the previous war minister. In 1900, the appointment became permanent.²⁵ Born on 5 March 1862, Vannovskii received his education at the elite Corps of Pages and began his military service as a cavalry officer. After completion of the Academy of the General Staff, he was assigned in 1891 to the Main Staff.²⁶ On 22 February 1900, prior to his permanent posting to Japan, he penned his first known memorandum on the Japanese army. He wrote:

The Japanese Army has not yet emerged from the internal confusion which all armies organized on completely alien cultural foundations inevitably experience. They were appropriated with typically Japanese blind accuracy and almost only in form, but never in essence, as is the case also in all other aspects of contemporary Japanese life . . . Decades, perhaps hundreds of years will pass before the Japanese army might attain the moral foundations on which all European armies are based.²⁷

Vannovskii's assessment appears to have been the product of speculation based on his reading of contemporary Russian books about Japan. For example, Alexander Pelikan, the former Russian Consul-General in Yokohama during 1879–1884, had in 1895 published a book, *Progressing Japan*. He characterized Japan and its military as follows:

Imitating totally the example of European powers, Japan retains a large army, which is completely unnecessary for such a geographically maritime power as Japan. . . . Just as the material progress of Japan does not testify to its cultural growth, its intellectual success is also completely illusory and does not correspond to people's desires.²⁸

²⁵ Bruce Menning, *War in History*, 143n, 150–51. Previously, G. M. Vannovskii had often been confused with another Vannovskii, Boris Petrovich, the son of the former war minister.

²⁶ *Posluzhnyi spisok G. M. Vannovskogo*, RGVA, f. 403, d. 150–504, ll. 267ob.–68ob.

²⁷ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, I, 430–31.

²⁸ A. Pelikan, *Progressiruiushchaia Iaponiia* (SPB, 1895), 158, 162.

Vannovskii appears to have adopted these views. More noteworthy here, War Minister Kuropatkin evidently agreed with Vannovskii, annotating the latter's memorandum on 6 March 1900 with the remarks: "I have read. The enthusiasm of our former military attachés has already vanished. A sober view."²⁹

After arrival in Japan, Vannovskii submitted negative reports on the Japanese army. His notations about the maneuvers near Sendai in 1901 included the following comments:

As to tactical preparation of the infantry, it is weak and there has been no progress in the last three years. . . . The artillery proved unsatisfactory in its own organization. . . . The cavalry in these maneuvers proved to be the weakest branch of the Japanese army. . . . Against such an army a strong cavalry detachment, armed with artillery, will enjoy certain and decisive victory in . . . speedy and energetic partisan actions.³⁰

Vannovskii's perceptions of the Japanese army accorded well with Kuropatkin's policy and outlook. Kuropatkin himself believed that the Japanese army was not a formidable foe for Russia. Vannovskii's views were known to Russian military and naval attachés in the Far East, including Vogak. Vogak could well look upon Vannovskii with contempt, while speculation holds that Vogak's relations with War Minister Kuropatkin probably deteriorated between 1900 and 1903.

Vogak and Bezobrazov

At the end of 1902, the aristocratic entrepreneur and adventurer Alexander Mikhailovich Bezobrazov journeyed to the Far East as a representative of the East Asian Industrial Company and also as a special envoy of Emperor Nicholas II. Bezobrazov consulted with Vogak and evidently accepted his perceptions of the Far Eastern situation. Bezobrazov also evidently importuned the Emperor to recall Vogak to St. Petersburg. On 2 March 1903, Rear Admiral A. M. Abaza, a Naval Ministry functionary and a close associate of Bezobrazov, informed Kuropatkin it was the Emperor's desire that Vogak

²⁹ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaiia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, I, 431.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 431–34.

participate in Bezobrazov's East Asian Industrial Company.³¹ But the message might have been an exaggeration. On 5 March, Kuropatkin privately expressed his reservations to the tsar about Bezobrazov's activities, but the tsar nonetheless ordered Kuropatkin to recall Vogak.³²

On 21 March (3 April) 1903, D. D. Pokotilov, a representative of the Finance Ministry, reported from the Far East:

Bezobrazov left Port Arthur on 3 March. He is temporarily stopping over in Harbin. He proposed that Vogak assume responsibility for [the company's] military section with a salary of 24,000 rubles per year. General Vogak has just returned to China from vacation. He is called to Petersburg by special order of tsar. This order was issued after Bezobrazov's negotiation [with the tsar].³³

On 27 March, Bezobrazov and Vogak returned together to St. Petersburg.³⁴

They arrived in the capital at the beginning of April. Meanwhile, a special conference of ministers on 26 March had rejected Bezobrazov's proposals for overt governmental support of his expanded Far Eastern commercial enterprise. Nicholas II did not receive Bezobrazov immediately. When Vogak and Kuropatkin met, the war minister showed Vogak the minutes of the 26 March meeting. The war minister said that if Vogak were going to work for Bezobrazov's company, the attaché should resign his post in China.³⁵ The situation grew more complex when Abaza proposed that Vogak write a memorandum, "The Significance of the Treaty of 26 March 1902 on the Development of the Problem in Manchuria." On 25 April, the tsar invited Vogak to confer over the memorandum.³⁶

Vogak's memorandum constituted a critique of Russian Far Eastern diplomacy after the Sino-Japanese War.³⁷ In his view, Russia had

³¹ "Dnevnik A. N. Kuropatkina," 33. For an overview of the activities of Bezobrazov and his clique, see, Igor V. Lukoianov, "The Bezobrazovtsy," in John Steinberg, *et al.* eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden and Boston, 2005), 65–86.

³² "Dnevnik A. N. Kuropatkina," 34.

³³ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 275, l. 193.

³⁴ Telegram, Iugovich and Ignatsius, 27 March 1903, *Ibid.*, l. 205.

³⁵ Letter, Vogak to Alekseev, 21 May 1903, RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 179, l. 2.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, l. 2; Diary of Nikolai II, 25 April 1903, GARF, f. 601, op. 1, d. 245, l. 174.

³⁷ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, ll. 135–41.

failed both to avail itself of Chinese gratitude and to assure its own security against a strong Japan. Because “the military successes of Japan were not fully recognized,” Vogak held that, “Mikado’s empire was not given a corresponding place in solving the problems of the Far East.” Instead, Russia had adopted an ambiguous policy of no animosity and no friendship for Japan, thus pushing Japan into an alliance with England. The treaty of March 26, 1902, according to which Russia agreed to withdraw its troops from Manchuria, was the result of diplomatic failure. Russian concessions were interpreted as a sign of Russian weakness. It was believed that Russia could not wage a war in the Far East because of internal Russian conflicts and financial crisis. If Russia were to withdraw its army from Manchuria, China would colonize Manchuria and the powers would replace Russia. Russia, meanwhile, would lose its exclusive influence and might be forced to wage war. But a war in Manchuria would be disadvantageous. As a potential foe, Japan was in a far more advantageous position. If Russian troops withdrew, Port Arthur would be isolated. If Port Arthur were lost, Russian prestige would suffer great damage.

Vogak proceeded from these premises to the conclusion that “to avoid war in the Far East is a primary task of state [policy].” To address this task, he made four proposals: 1) Halt the policy of concessions; 2) Withdraw Russian troops from Manchuria in accordance with the treaty of 26 March 1902; 3) Make clear Russia’s determination not to surrender Manchuria without a resort to arms; and 4) Increase Russian military forces in the Far East to signify determination. The purpose behind the increase was to avoid an undesired war. According to Vogak, the tsar questioned him about the situation in the Far East for an hour and a half, during which Nicholas demonstrated a better grasp of Far Eastern affairs than the attaché had expected.³⁸

From the tsar’s diary, we know that Nicholas met with Abaza on 27 April and with Bezobrazov on the following day. It was only after the audience with Vogak that the tsar accepted Bezobrazov’s proposal for a changed course in the Far East. On 29 April, Nicholas met once again with Bezobrazov and Abaza. In his diary the tsar

³⁸ Letter, Vogak to Alekseev, 21 May 1903, RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 179, l. 2.

recorded, "Received Bezobrazov and Abaza at length about the problem of unifying all governance and direction for the cause in the Far East."³⁹ The primary variable in this situation was Vogak's memorandum, which had apparently catalyzed a new course in Russian Far Eastern policy and the creation of the Far Eastern Viceroyalty.

The new course was immediately evident. On 2 May, Nicholas sent a telegram to Vice Admiral E. I. Alekseev, commander-in-chief of Russian naval forces in the Far East. The tsar informed Alekseev of his determination to concentrate in the admiral's hands supreme governing authority—answerable only to the tsar—for the Far East. Nicholas issued instructions to "prepare for these activities and to outline the form which Alekseev's new position should assume." Alekseev's immediate tasks included measures to hinder foreign influences from penetrating Manchuria after implementation of the treaty of 26 March 1902. The first measure was to heighten military preparation in Manchuria in response to Russian requirements. The second measure was to develop Russian entrepreneurship mainly in Manchuria.⁴⁰

There was no mention of the formation of a Far Eastern Viceroyalty. Later, however, Vogak explained to Alekseev that the tsar's telegram had ordained the creation of such an entity.⁴¹

Vogak's Memorandum and the Special Conference of 7 May 1903

On 6 (19) May, Bezobrazov received the title of *stats-sekretar'*, according him ministerial rank. And Vogak received the unprecedented title of *Svity Ego Imperatorskogo Velichestva General* (General of His Imperial Majesty's Own Suite).⁴² On the next day, the tsar himself presided over a special conference of his ministers, with Vogak in attendance.⁴³ Bezobrazov opened the meeting with a report on his Yalu timber

³⁹ Diary of Nikolai II, 27–29 April 1903, GARF, f. 601, op. 1, d. 245, pp. 176–78.

⁴⁰ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, ll. 132–32ob.

⁴¹ Letter, Vogak to Alekseev, 21 May 1903, RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 179, ll. 2–3.

⁴² P. N. Simanskii (comp.), *Sobytiia na Dal'nem Vostoke, predshestvovavshie Russko-Iaponskoi voine. 1891–1903 g.g.*, 3 pts. (SPB, 1910), pt. 3, p. 90.

⁴³ *Otchet ob Osobom Soveshchanii 7-go maia 1903 goda v Vysochaishem Ego Imperatorskogo Velichestva prisutstviu*, RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, ll. 150–58.

concession. He proposed seven amendments to the decision of the 26 March meeting. In the ensuing discussion, Minister of Finance Witte favored compromise, while Foreign Minister V. N. Lamsdorf opposed Bezobrazov's amendments in principle.

The tsar expressed the conviction that, "concession leads to concession," and requested that Vogak read his memorandum. Witte subsequently held that three of Vogak's proposals could not be realized, while asserting that, "the situation in the Far East is not as dangerous as described in this memorandum." Lamsdorf criticized Vogak for excluding important documents and expressed willingness to write a memorandum of refutation. Chief of the Main Staff V. V. Sakharov pronounced the situation in the Far East so grave that conflicts with Japan should be avoided. According to Minister of Internal Affairs V. K. Pleve, Vogak's memorandum portrayed the Russian position in the Far East as so weak that Bezobrazov's commercial enterprise should pursue moderate actions to avoid trouble.

The tsar concluded that Bezobrazov's amendments should nullify prior decisions and then ordered a reading of his telegrams of 2 May to Admiral Alekseev and General Kuropatkin. With regard to the latter, the tsar ordered the war minister to remain in the Far East to await the arrival of Vogak and Bezobrazov and to anticipate new decisions and new discussions.⁴⁴ The protocol of the special meeting confirmed Bezobrazov's seven amendments. However, more significant was the fact that Vogak's memorandum implicitly became the foundation for Russia's new Far Eastern course.

To counter Vogak's charges, Foreign Minister Lamsdorf wrote a long memorandum in defense of Russian foreign policy after the Sino-Japanese War.⁴⁵ Lamsdorf sent the memorandum to Witte on 17 May.⁴⁶ Witte concluded that if Russia did not challenge Japan, Russia would be safe, but cautioned that, "time is Russia's sole ally."

Vogak and Kuropatkin in Japan and at Port Arthur

After the 7 May meeting, Vogak returned to the Far East. He arrived at Port Arthur on 26 May (8 June) and handed Kuropatkin all

⁴⁴ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, l. 133.

⁴⁵ Ibid., ll. 164–75ob.

⁴⁶ Ibid., l. 179.

materials concerning the 7 May meeting, along with several additional memoranda. Kuropatkin wrote in his Japan diary that Vogak still retained his trust and sympathy and that the two officers' discussions remained friendly, but the war minister's remarks were probably disingenuous.⁴⁷ Kuropatkin's blunt judgment was that Vogak's memorandum embodied a correct diagnosis but an incorrect treatment.⁴⁸ In essence, the war minister opposed the attaché's views. For Kuropatkin, the gravest military danger to Russia always emanated from Europe; therefore, it was impossible for Russia to devote an increased part of its military budget to the Far East.⁴⁹ Among the documents that Vogak conveyed to Kuropatkin was a memorandum without title and author, on which the war minister later wrote, "This was written by Bezobrazov in company with Vogak and Abaza, and handed to me on 26 May by Vogak."⁵⁰ This memorandum proposed the unification of all governing authority in the Far East under a single all-powerful plenipotentiary and the formation of supervisory Special Committee on the Far East. At the time, however, Kuropatkin failed to see the significance of the proposal.

On 28 May, Vogak accompanied Kuropatkin to Japan. There, Kuropatkin met Emperor Mutsuhito, Genro [Elder Statesmen] Yamagata Aritomo, Vice Admiral Ito Hirobumi, Prime Minister Katsura Taro, Foreign Minister Komura Jutaro, War Minister Terauchi Masatake, Chief of the General Staff Oyama, and General Murata Tsuneishi. Vogak remained Kuropatkin's constant companion, sometimes serving as interpreter. To Terauchi, Kuropatkin dared to say that cavalry was a weakness for the Japanese army, and that in the event of war, the Russian army would quickly annihilate the Japanese cavalry.⁵¹

After reviewing military exercises of the Tokyo garrison, Kuropatkin wrote that "it is prudent enough to recognize the Japanese armed forces on their merits as equal with any European army." But Kuropatkin still insisted that night-time cavalry attacks would be the most effective way to contend with the Japanese army.⁵² He also

⁴⁷ A. N. Kuropatkin, "Iaponskie dnevniki," *Rossiiskii arkhiv*, VI (1995), 398.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 400.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 399.

⁵⁰ RGVA, f. 165, op. 1, d. 872, ll. 1-2.

⁵¹ Kuropatkin, "Iaponskie dnevniki," 414.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 418.

devoted special attention to the lack of religiosity among Japanese. He wrote that, "This is a serious weak point within the Japanese Army."⁵³ It should be noted that Kuropatkin now harbored a more sober view of Japanese military capabilities, but his perceptions still remained closer to those of Vannovskii than to those of Vogak.⁵⁴

Kuropatkin returned to Port Arthur on 17 June and conferred with Alekseev and Bezobrazov on the following day. They were joined by Vogak on 19 June. In the first and second meeting all participants agreed over the impossibility of implementing the treaty of 26 March 1902, and over the necessity to strengthen Russian armed forces in Manchuria. They further agreed over the undesirability of a Russian occupation of either northern Korea or Korea in its entirety. A Japanese occupation of either southern Korea or Korea in its entirety was similarly undesirable. In the likely event that the Japanese occupied southern Korea, Russia should protest, but take no military action.⁵⁵ With regard to the Russian Lumber Association (a scaled-down successor to the East Asian Industrial Company), the participation of active-duty servicemen sparked disagreement between Kuropatkin and the Bezobrazov group.⁵⁶ The compromise solution was to seek the tsar's decision. During the discussion, Admiral Alekseev noted that, "all information from Japan and impressions conveyed by those coming from there lead me to the conviction that we are nearing the possibility of war with Japan." Therefore, he concluded that the Russians should act cautiously to avoid an acceleration of the possible explosion.⁵⁷

Various conclusions were virtually unanimous among the three participants. However, Bezobrazov expressed some reservations on 20 July in a letter to the tsar. Bezobrazov's position was that Russia

⁵³ Ibid., 436–37. Later, at the end of 1903, in the final report on his visit of Japan Kuropatkin stressed this weakness of the Japanese Army in his concluding remarks. See the draft of his report, RGVIA, f. 165, op. 1, d. 957, ll. 24–24ob.

⁵⁴ Bruce Menning writes that, "Kuropatkin's faith in mobile partisan operations reflected a disregard for the strength and combat readiness of the Japanese army that appears readily traceable not only to Colonel Vannovskii . . ." but that, "the War Minister's private remarks reveal a perspective on the Japanese military that more resembled General Vogak . . . than Colonel Vannovskii." See, Menning, *War in History*, 155, and 165.

⁵⁵ *Zakliuchenie Soveshchaniia po voprosu o Man'chzhurii*, Nos. 1, 2, RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, ll. 196–97.

⁵⁶ Ibid., No. 6, l. 204ob.

⁵⁷ Ibid., No. 9, l. 209.

might permit Japan to continue its actions in southern Korea, but that the Japanese must never be permitted into northern Korea.⁵⁸ Bezobrazov viewed northern Korea as a buffer for Russia against Japan. Bezobrazov's letter also detailed the military situation in the Far East, writing that the Russians were militarily weak and in a critical situation there.⁵⁹

Bezobrazov's evaluation of the military situation in the Far East doubtlessly owed much to the observations of General Vogak. When Bezobrazov crafted a special memorandum, "The Forces of Russia and Japan in the Far East," Kuropatkin criticized its conclusions and defended the Russian military build-up in the Far East. Bezobrazov indicated that during wartime a weak Port Arthur could not benefit from timely reinforcement, so that the fortress might have to be abandoned or surrendered. However, Kuropatkin rejected this argument while praising the merits of Port Arthur's garrison and the Russian Pacific Squadron.⁶⁰

The Far Eastern Viceroyalty and Vogak

At the end of July 1903, on the eve of the imperial decree creating the Far Eastern Viceroyalty, a serious problem arose. Admiral Alekseev, who was the sole candidate of the tsar and Bezobrazov for viceroy, declined the offer, citing lack of personal preparation and exhaustion of power and energy from his previous four years' work.⁶¹ Bezobrazov importuned Alekseev several times, while Vogak personally wrote Alekseev to assert that the admiral was the tsar's sole candidate and that only the admiral could fully realize the tsar's will.⁶² But Alekseev continued to decline the post of viceroy. At last, on 30 July (12 August), the Emperor issued his decree on the formation of the Far Eastern Viceroyalty without Admiral Alekseev's assent. The latter learned of the decree and his elevation to viceroy status only on 5 (18) August, while in Vladivostok. He was obliged to accept the appointment.⁶³

⁵⁸ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, ll. 218ob.-19.

⁵⁹ Ibid., l. 217.

⁶⁰ Text of Bezobrazov's memorandum with Kuropatkin's commentaries, 1 August 1903, RGVA, f. 165, op. 1, d. 900, l. 15.

⁶¹ RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 6, ll. 1-1ob.

⁶² Ibid., ll. 7-8.

⁶³ Ibid., l. 10.

Meanwhile, in imperial St. Petersburg the ministers of war, foreign affairs, and finance were amazed to learn of the decree from the newspapers.⁶⁴ They met two days later to conclude that the Yalu timber concession was so provocative that it should be halted.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Vogak was angered because War Minister Kuropatkin had changed his mind after returning to the capital.⁶⁶

On 16 August, Bezobrazov's long-standing campaign to remove Witte from office finally produced results. But Bezobrazov's anti-Witte plan for Far Eastern economic expansion was faring little better than Witte's earlier initiatives. Bezobrazov had earlier expressed the hope in a memorandum of 21 July that Vogak would succeed in negotiating the cooperation of the American capitalist Hunt in the Yalu timber concession.⁶⁷ But on 27 August Vogak wrote a memorandum, "On the Problem of Inviting American Capital into Russian Enterprises in the Far East." His conclusion was that it was impossible to count on American capital, because the Americans perceived conflicts between Russian and American interests, and because the Americans believed a war between Japan and Russia was inevitable.⁶⁸ On the prospects for war, Vogak wrote:

The measures adopted for strengthening our military situation in the Far East, no doubt, allow us to look to the future and go firmly ahead in the accepted direction. In general, we can be unconcerned about rumors of imminent war between Russia and Japan.⁶⁹

As if to reinforce this conviction, Vogak discussed possibilities for agreement between Russia and Japan. In his view it was necessary for Japan to acknowledge two facts: without agreement with Russia there would be no solution of the Korean problem; and without termination of Japan's alliance with England there was scant prospect for improved relations with Russia. For its part, Russia must improve its military preparations and maintain a sufficiently strong position in Manchuria to persuade Japan of the necessity for an agreement with Russia.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ "Dnevnik A. N. Kuropatkina," 45.

⁶⁵ Simanskii, pt. 3, pp. 137–39.

⁶⁶ Letter, Vogak to Alekseev, 22 October 1903, RGIA, f. 1282, op. 1, d. 761, l. 155.

⁶⁷ RGIA, f. 1282, op. 1, d. 759, l. 182ob.

⁶⁸ RGIA, f. 560, op. 28, d. 213, ll. 229–34.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 231.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, l. 231ob.–33.

In October, the tsar established the Special Committee on the Far East, for which Vogak was to work. During the second half of the month he returned to the Far East, where he conferred with Viceroy Alekseev. Vogak reported to Abaza, the Committee's secretary:

The admiral has no definite idea how to proceed with Manchuria, but I could understand that he deems simple military occupation insufficient. . . . I thought it possible to point out that the problem annoying him would be solved naturally as our politico-economic plan is duly defined. This idea pleased the admiral very much, and he said that he himself attributed completely exclusive significance to economic problems and wished to talk about them with me.⁷¹

These comments revealed Vogak's conviction that Russian economic expansion in the Far East would strengthen the Russian position. Following the failure of Witte's economic policies, Bezobrazov and Vogak shared faith in their own version of a vague kind of economism that was doomed to the same failure. Their Yalu timber concession was living proof: Trees were cut down, but there were no lumber mills, and the enterprise sold nothing. In the same letter about Alekseev, Vogak wrote to Abaza about a conversation with I. P. Balashev, who headed the Russian Lumber Association in Port Arthur:

I have drawn no final conclusion from discussions with him. . . . The whole business is so confused that much time is required to make sense of it. . . . the enterprise can be saved, but only under following indispensable conditions. . . . [including giving] leadership of the enterprise to a competent and totally independent local person.⁷²

That is, the idea was to remove Balashev, a practical impossibility. Meanwhile, the generally untenable situation left the Russian Lumber Association on the brink of bankruptcy.⁷³

With respect to the larger Far Eastern picture, Bezobrazov's views assumed a very unexpected tack on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War. Perhaps he had come to realize that Russia's "new course" was proving ineffective in preventing a military clash with Japan. In a memorandum of 28 December 1903 (10 January 1904), he pro-

⁷¹ Vogak to Abaza, 23 October 1903, *Ibid.*, f. 1282, op. 1, d. 761, l. 157ob.

⁷² *Ibid.*, ll. 158–158ob.

⁷³ See, *Obzor snoshenii Rossii s Kitaiskim i Iaponskim pravitel'stvami, predshestvovavshikh vooruzhennomu stolknoveniiu s Iaponiei*, RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 27, ll. 29ob.–30.

posed an alliance between Russia and Japan.⁷⁴ He wrote that, “a stable peace in the Far East . . . can be created only by the most sincere alliance of Russia with Japan based on a genuine coordination of interests.” Conditions for the alliance included no annexation of Manchuria and Korea respectively by Russia and Japan, and a free-hand for Russian development of Manchurian resources and Japanese development of Korean resources. Bezobrazov concluded: “If the idea elaborated in this memorandum is approved by those people who understand the situation and possess the power, it is *essential* to conclude an alliance *immediately*.”

On 29 December 1903 (11 January 1904) Bezobrazov revealed this memorandum to Tano Yutaka, an interpreter for the Japanese Embassy in St. Petersburg. Bezobrazov asked Tano to convey the following message to Ambassador Kurino Shinichiro: If this idea were acceptable to the Japanese, and if it were certain that Emperor Mutsuhito might send a telegram expressing “his hope for maintenance of peace and friendly cooperation,” then Bezobrazov “would like to make every effort for a peaceful solution in order to achieve the final aim.” Bezobrazov believed that he could persuade Tsar Nicholas II to accept such a *demarche*.⁷⁵ Three days later, however, Bezobrazov departed for Geneva, leaving Ambassador Kurino puzzled about the significance of the proposal.⁷⁶

If Bezobrazov had concluded that Russia’s “new course” could not prevent war with Japan, there is reason to believe that Vogak might have figured in the revisionist line of thought. Indeed, during December 1903, a rumor circulated in St. Petersburg that Bezobrazov wished to replace Kuropatkin as war minister with V. V. Sakharov, the current chief of the Main Staff. The idea was that Vogak would, in turn, replace Sakharov.⁷⁷

In contrast with Bezobrazov’s alliance-oriented initiative, it is known that War Minister Kuropatkin was floating his own solution to the Far Eastern conundrum. During the last quarter of 1903, Kuropatkin

⁷⁴ This memorandum resides in the archives of Interior Minister V. K. Pleve, RGIA, f. 1282, op. 1, d. 761, ll. 208–14.

⁷⁵ *Nihon gaiko bunsho* [Japanese Documents on Foreign Policy], XXXVII, pt. 1, p. 40.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 40–41.

⁷⁷ Japanese Ambassador Kurino reported this rumor to Tokyo on 12 (25) December 1903. *Ibid.*, XXXVI, pt. 1, p. 804.

proposed the return to China of the Kwantung peninsula with Port Arthur, the sale of the South Manchurian Railroad to China, and the Russian annexation of northern Manchuria.⁷⁸ The overall intent was to prevent war with Japan.

Later, in a well-known memorandum about the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war, Kuropatkin contrasted his bold proposal with a supposedly near-simultaneous memorandum by Vogak, "The General Far Eastern Situation (Manchuria and Korea)." According to Kuropatkin, his own proposal and Vogak's memorandum had reached Nicholas II "almost at the same time."⁷⁹ "The General situation" was rife with proposals for active operations in Manchuria and Korea. At the top of this memorandum, which is retained in Kuropatkin's papers, is a penciled notation, "Note presented by Major General Vogak in September 1903."⁸⁰ The memorandum itself is neither signed nor dated. This author doubts that Vogak actually wrote it. Whatever the case, the document has little direct bearing on events at the end of the year, since the date of receipt was September 1903.

Therefore, we can safely assume that Kuropatkin's proposal to abandon Port Arthur should be contrasted only with Bezobrazov's proposal—presumably with Vogak's input—for a Russo-Japanese alliance. Neither proposal would have prevented the coming war. Once war did come, Kuropatkin left for the Far East to become commander-in-chief of Russian ground forces, while Bezobrazov and Abaza disappeared from public life. Vogak, meanwhile, managed to retain the tsar's trust, and on 24 March 1905, the one-time attaché to China and Japan became the Russian military attaché in London.⁸¹

Alexander Rusin as the Fourth Naval Attaché in Japan

The first Russian naval attaché in Japan was Lieutenant A. F. Shvank, who arrived in 1894. Captain 1st rank A. M. Dmochilov collected

⁷⁸ Kuropatkin first formulated his proposal to withdraw from southern Manchuria and to annex northern Manchuria in a memorandum of 15 October 1903. See, RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 204, ll. 1–23ob. His final proposal to abandon Port Arthur was formulated in a memorandum of 24 November 1903. RGVA, f. 165, op. 1, d. 944, ll. 1–15.

⁷⁹ *Russko-iaponskaia voina. Iz dnevnikov A. N. Kuropatkina i N. P. Linevicha* (L, 1925), 36.

⁸⁰ RGVA, f. 165, op. 1, d. 923, l. 1.

⁸¹ Evgenii Sergeev and Artem Ulunian, *Ne podlezhit' oglasheniui: Voennye agenty Rossiiskoi imperii v Evrope i na Balkanakh 1900–1914 gg.* (M, 2003), 435.

and edited Shvank's detailed reports on the Japanese navy in the Sino-Japanese War for the *Sbornik materialov po voenno-morskim voprosam* [Collection of Materials on Naval Questions].⁸² The second attaché was Lieutenant I. V. Budilovskii, an officer from the Naval Main Staff, who had authored a pamphlet on the Japanese Navy.⁸³ It was he who laid the institutional foundations for the activities of subsequent Russian naval attachés in Japan by choosing a house and office in Yokohama and by hiring Takahashi Monsaku as interpreter.⁸⁴

The third attaché was Lieutenant I. I. Chagin who came to Japan in 1896.⁸⁵ He spent four years there, using the opportunity for a thorough study of the Japanese navy. In 1898, he published an article in *Morskoi sbornik*, the professional journal of the Imperial Russian Navy, about the history and status of the Japanese navy.⁸⁶ In October 1899, he concluded a report on the Japanese navy to the Naval Main Staff with the comment:

All this leads us to the following conclusion: it is very, very difficult and rather impossible to fight with Japan in her waters. For such a war the attacking side should have very large naval and ground forces. For the time being, there is no country in the East with such forces.⁸⁷

Returning from Japan in 1900, Chagin became executive officer of the cruiser *Rossia*⁸⁸ and during the winter of 1902–03, he played the role of the Japanese chief of the General Staff in the Russian naval strategic war game held at the Nicholas Naval Academy. The game's theme was a possible war with Japan.⁸⁹

Meanwhile, Alexander Ivanovich Rusin arrived in Japan during December 1899 to become Russia's fourth naval attaché. Born in 1861 the son of a priest, Rusin graduated from the Naval Corps in 1881 and the Nicholas Naval Academy in 1888. He began his active

⁸² Kondratenko, 62–71. See, also, *Sbornik materialov po voenno-morskim voprosam*. Vyp. I. *Iaponsko-Kitaikaia voina* (SPB, 1896).

⁸³ Kondratenko, 73–82. See, I. Budilovskii, *Iaponskii flot* (SPB, 1890).

⁸⁴ Petrov, "Russkie voenno-morskie agenty v Iaponii," 54.

⁸⁵ Kondratenko, 83–99.

⁸⁶ Chagin, "Ocherk razvitiia iaponskogo flota," *Morskoi sbornik*, CCLXXXVI, no. 7 (July 1898), 45–66.

⁸⁷ Report of I. I. Chagin, 12 October 1899, RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2128, l. 97a.

⁸⁸ A. P. Chagodaev-Sakonskii, *Na "Almaze"* (*Ot Libavy cherez Tsusimu-vo Vladivostok*), (SPB, 2004), 122–23. Chagin became captain of the cruiser *Almaz* in 1902.

⁸⁹ *Voina Rossii s Iaponiei v 1905 godu. Otchet o prakticheskikh zaniatiakh po strategii v Nikolaevskoi Morskoi Akademii v prodolzhenii zimy 1902–1903 goda* (SPB, 1904), 2.

naval service on the cruiser *Rossia* under Captain Dmochilov. Later, it was Dmochilov who recommended that Rusin receive appointment as naval attaché in Japan.⁹⁰

In Japan, now-Captain 2nd rank Rusin was totally reliant on the interpreter Takahashi, whom he had inherited from Chagin. Coming from Fukushima, Takahashi Monsaku was the son of a samurai, who in 1880 had converted along with his family to Russian Orthodoxy. Monsaku's elder sister, Ine, immediately began study at the women's gymnasium affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church in Tokyo, and he followed her example to study in Tokyo at the Orthodox Seminary. There, "Grigorii" Monsaku mastered the Russian language before departing for Kyushu as a missionary. However, he soon adopted a life of dissipation that compelled him to leave the Russian Orthodox Church.⁹¹

At this point, the Russian naval attaché Budilovskii came to Takahashi's rescue by engaging him as an interpreter. Takahashi not only translated Japanese newspaper articles and various published materials on the Japanese navy, but also recruited Japanese collaborators. Rusin himself gleaned information from English-language newspapers, and both he and his interpreter frequently observed Japanese naval bases. As Bruce Menning has indicated, naval attachés counted an important advantage over their ground force counterparts owing to "the sheer visibility of Japanese naval assets, the majority of which were concentrated in a handful of naval bases that might be kept under direct observation."⁹² Meanwhile, Rusin brazenly approached Japanese naval authorities with requests for visits to navy-related factories and similar facilities.

His activities naturally attracted the attention of the Japanese police. The earliest police report in the Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives on Rusin is dated March 23 (10) 1900. The Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture reported:

⁹⁰ Petrov, *Russkoe proshloe*, 52. The author could not find Rusin's *posluzhnyi spisok* in the Russian Naval Archives.

⁹¹ Nakamura Kennosuke and Nakamura Etsuko, *Nikoraido no Joseitachi* [Women of the Russian Orthodox Church in Japan] (Kyobunkan, 2003), 373–74, 378–80, and 408–09. The authors studied Takahashi Ine, principal of the Orthodox girls' school in Kyoto.

⁹² Menning, *War in History*, 148.

Since his arrival, the new Russian attaché Rusin could not get materials for reports useful to his own country. Therefore his reports were fewer than the reports of his predecessor, Chagin. This leads to a bad reputation. So he [Rusin] tried to go to each naval base in order to obtain information. But, worried about the possibility of appearing suspicious, he decided to send in his place Takahashi Monsaku to observe naval bases. Takahashi left Yokohama by train at 11:10 am today for Yokosuka.⁹³

Rusin forwarded his reports to Rear Admiral Z. P. Rozhstvenskii, chief of the Naval Main Staff in St. Petersburg. Routine reports required nearly a month in transit, but telegrams to the capital through Port Arthur and Admiral V. K. Vitgeft, chief of staff of the Russian Pacific Squadron, required only several days. Although Rozhstvenskii regularly received Rusin's reports, he often disregarded the attaché's sober assessments and special warnings.

Nor was Rozhstvenskii particularly attentive to the results of the strategic war game played at the Nicholas Naval Academy during the winter of 1902–03. Captain 2nd rank L. A. Brusilov, the brother of the illustrious future General A. A. Brusilov, played as chief of the Russian Naval Main Staff, while now-Captain 2nd rank Chagin played his Japanese counterpart. The Russian side in the simulation anticipated that Japan would make every effort “to declare war as unexpectedly as possible.” Yet, the war game began notionally with near-simultaneous declarations of war by each side.⁹⁴ However, the concluding report on the simulation held that to neutralize Russian naval power in the Far East, the squadrons at Port Arthur and Vladivostok had to be destroyed, and that:

... the best way is a surprise attack without declaration of war. Under present-day naval conditions, the fleet which is attacked at anchor might perish totally. Because our fleet regularly stands at anchor in the unprotected roadstead at Port Arthur ... the fleet will vanish in a few minutes, if it is attacked by Japanese torpedo boats.⁹⁵

This assertion was an important warning that might have saved the Russian Pacific Squadron from severe damage at the outset of the Russo-Japanese War. Although Admiral Rozhstvenskii served as an

⁹³ File of materials concerning the activities of suspect in military espionage, Takahashi Monsaku, Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives, 5–1–10–11.

⁹⁴ *Voina Rossii s Iaponiei v 1905 godu*, 3–4.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 133.

umpire during the strategic war game, he does not seem to have paid due attention to the game's final report.⁹⁶ Under these circumstances, it comes as no surprise that messages from the Russian naval attaché in Japan usually failed to arouse a sense of urgency within the Naval Main Staff.

Rusin's Reports in 1903

During 1903, Rusin sent many reports and telegrams to warn St. Petersburg and Port Arthur of Japanese preparations for war. In January 1903, Rusin informed Admiral Alekseev about four possible options for Japanese military action in the event of war. These included: 1) sending troops into northern Korea, either to Pyongyang or to the Yalu; 2) landing troops at Pusan and marching to Seoul; 3) landing troops near Port Arthur and marching into Manchuria; and 4) occupying Korea and awaiting a Russian attack.⁹⁷ Until the very outset of the war in early 1904, Rusin would bend every effort to discern which option or combination of options the Japanese might pursue.

Over the course of 1903, the threat imminence reflected in Rusin's reports would wax and wane with the tenor of relations between Russia and Japan. In telegram of 3 (16) May, he noted that a rumor of special military preparations had proved incorrect, and that what actually had transpired was a verification of the Japanese mobilization system.⁹⁸ However, in telegrams of 20 June (3 July) and 21 June (4 July), he pointed out that Japan might initiate "military demonstrations" to protest Russian nullification of its promise to withdraw from Manchuria.⁹⁹ On 3 (16) July, at the end of a long report on Prime Minister Katsura's resignation, he wrote:

In conclusion I should report that the Japanese navy and army are as combat-ready as possible in peacetime. In a technical sense, there is no difficulty in sending two divisions (about 30,000 troops) to the continent in one or two weeks. In two weeks, the entire army can be

⁹⁶ V. Iu. Gribovskii and V. P. Poznakhirev. *Vitse-admiral Ź. P. Rozhdestvenskii* (SPB, 1999), 133; Kondratenko, 106.

⁹⁷ IK, *Russko-Iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 g.g.*, bk. 1, p. 123.

⁹⁸ RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, l. 162.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, l. 162ob.

mobilized and in readiness, and in three months up to 150,000 troops can be concentrated at the mouth of the Yalu River.¹⁰⁰

On 20 August (2 September), Rusin reported that on-going negotiations between Russia and Japan might not lead to an agreement. The prevailing anti-Russian sentiment among politicians and in the press would make agreements between the two governments difficult to achieve. Moreover, support for Japan from Great Britain and the United States hindered agreement. Therefore, Russian concessions would not prove effective. His assessment was that:

Only strong counter-action from our side can make Japan sober. That is, counter-action based on the presence of Russian military forces in the Far East, which would make the Japanese success, even initially, on the battlefield questionable for the Japanese themselves.

It should also be stressed that Rusin paid attention to the fact that Japanese military and naval preparations for war were carried out “as if demonstratively and too overtly.” He held that, “If such *glasnost* exists, it can be explained, on the one hand, by the Katsura cabinet’s desire to persuade the people that the government does not sleep and that it is preparing the most energetic measures, and, on the other hand, by its wish to force us to make concessions.” If Russo-Japanese negotiations proved futile, Rusin held that Japan, taking advantage of any pretext, would present an ultimatum to Korea and send its troops north to the Yalu River. He nearly negated the possibility of a direct Japanese attack on Russia.¹⁰¹

Although Rusin sensed the danger of manipulation, he nevertheless tended to ascribe continuing importance to the possibility for a Japanese occupation of Korea, a widely-discussed subject in Japanese newspapers. On 7 (20) September, Rusin finally telegraphed that Japan might send one mixed brigade to northern Korea in ten days.¹⁰² On 16 (29) September, he reported a lingering rumor and press speculation that the Japanese 12th Division might depart from the port of Kokura.¹⁰³ On 17 (30) September, Rusin added that five Japanese battleships, six cruisers, and ten torpedo boats had assembled in the

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., l. 146ob.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., ll. 156–159. Petrov, *Russkoe proshloe*, 73–5.

¹⁰² RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2823, l. 1.

¹⁰³ Ibid., l. 4.

Korean port of Masampo.¹⁰⁴ These telegrams incited a high degree of tension at Port Arthur and in St. Petersburg. They were forwarded to the Russian Foreign Ministry and to the titular head of the Naval Ministry, General-Admiral Grand Duke Aleksei Aleksandrovich, in Paris.¹⁰⁵ Terrified by information about an imminent Japanese landing in Korea, Viceroy Alekseev pestered St. Petersburg with queries about how the Russians should respond.¹⁰⁶ Alekseev proposed immediate counter-measures, including an attack on Japanese landing forces, if they should put ashore either at Chemulpo or at the mouth of the Yalu. But, Nicholas II hastened to forbid such measures, even if the Japanese were to occupy territory between Seoul and the Yalu.¹⁰⁷ At the same time, Admiral F. K. Avelan, the administrator of the Naval Ministry, asked the Foreign Ministry “to inform me whether according to the Foreign Ministry’s opinion the situation in the Far East is recognized so serious and threatening as to satisfy immediately the Viceroy’s request or not.”¹⁰⁸

Within the Naval Ministry itself, on 4 (17) October, Captain 2nd rank Brusilov, a very competent and offensive-minded staff officer, presented a memorandum to Admiral Rozhdestvenskii. He recommended avoiding war with Japan at present and declaring war on Japan in two years, following the completion of Russia’s ship-building program for the Far East. Rozhdestvenskii annotated Brusilov’s memorandum with his own view: “It is not necessary to have overwhelming superiority over Japan at sea. It is sufficient for us to stand at parity with Japan and not allow the Japanese command of the sea.” Rozhdestvenskii added, “Now we are ready, better than at any time, for a war with Japan.”¹⁰⁹

On 25 October (7 November), Rusin muted the sense of urgency, writing that, “Generally now Japan supposes that only in the coming early spring it may be necessary for the use of its armed forces.”¹¹⁰ As the foundation of this supposition he cited several facts. First, the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., I. 11.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., II. 12–13.

¹⁰⁶ Alekseev sent telegrams to Nicholas II on 20 and 24 September 1903. Ibid., II. 19, 31–31ob.

¹⁰⁷ Nicholas II-Alekseev, 22 September 1903, RGAVMF, f. 32, op. 1, d. 170, I. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Avelan-Foreign Ministry, 25 September 1903, Ibid., f. 417, op. 1, d. 2823, I. 33ob.

¹⁰⁹ IK, *Russko-Iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 g.g.*, bk. 1, pp. 105–06.

¹¹⁰ RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, I. 172ob.; Petrov, *Russkoe proshloe*, 77.

Japanese government was proceeding with the purchase of commercial vessels. Second, Japan was buying 60,000 tons of coal from England. And, third, Japan had just bought the armored cruiser *Constitution* from Chile.¹¹¹ Because all these transactions would require time to realize benefits, Rusin tended to see a possible clash as postponed. On 19 November (2 December), the attaché wrote Viceroy Alekseev that there was no foundation to believe that the self-conceited Japanese would take any risky steps. In spite of serious Japanese military and naval preparations, Rusin's view was that for at least a month Japan would not attempt any active operations.¹¹²

However, on 7 (20) December, Rusin repeated "a rumor, which though not founded, nevertheless shows one possible outcome for the present situation." The Japanese government would continue negotiations with Russia, but at the same time, Japan would send one or two brigades to Korea, in order to mollify popular passions. In the spring of 1904, when negotiations had not led to the desired results, military actions would be begun.¹¹³ During this fatal period directly preceding the beginning of the war, Rusin had stepped forward to warn against an imminent crisis that he understood only in terms of a Japanese occupation of Korea.

His next report followed on 12 (25) December 1903. Rusin vehemently warned against an imminent Japanese occupation of Korea:

The frenzied demonstrative uproar in Japan will culminate in the near future (in two or three weeks, if not earlier) in the form of a military expedition to Korea. Probably one mixed brigade (about 8,000 troops) is to be sent and landed mainly (if not exclusively) at Pusan and partly at Chemulpo, for which the War Ministry has chartered 8–10 ships, displacing 20,000–25,000 tons.

Rusin drew this assessment from Japanese newspapers. He wrote that, "semi-official newspapers persistently stand for the necessity of sending troops to Korea in order to secure Japanese interests and to oppose Russian influence on the Korean peninsula."¹¹⁴ On this report, Rozhestvenskii penciled the notation, "I read. Z R 9/1."¹¹⁵ He had received the report on 9 (22) January 1904.

¹¹¹ Ibid., ll. 173–74ob.; Petrov, *Russkoe proshloe*, 77–8.

¹¹² Petrov, *Russkoe proshloe*, 80.

¹¹³ RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, ll. 176ob.–77, Petrov, *Russkoe proshloe*, 82.

¹¹⁴ RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, ll. 178ob.–79ob.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., l. 178.

The last report from Rusin to reach St. Petersburg before the outset of hostilities was sent on 23 December 1903 (5 January 1904) and received on 20 January (2 February) 1904. He wrote that, judging from various kinds of information, Japan would send three mixed brigades to Korea on 26 December (4 January).¹¹⁶ Right up to the time of this report, Rusin still supposed that Japan would only send troops to Korea without a declaration of war.

These reports from Rusin, presumably together with the reports from the military attaché, Lieutenant Colonel V. K. Samoilov, informed the thinking of the Russian government. Nicholas II and Admiral A. M. Abaza in St. Petersburg and Viceroy Alekseev in Port Arthur exchanged telegrams and discussed the degree to which a Japanese occupation of Korea would be tolerable. On 24 December, Alekseev requested the emperor's permission for mobilization in the Far Eastern provinces in the event that Japan occupied Korea.¹¹⁷ Nicholas granted his permission,¹¹⁸ but on 14 (27) January 1904 the tsar modified his decision by ordering Alekseev to tolerate a Japanese occupation as far north as Seoul.¹¹⁹

On 31 December (13 January 1904) Rusin dispatched his final report from Japan. He wrote that the 40 vessels chartered by the Japanese government could transport two divisions. Because commercial shipping links with various countries were now terminated, more vessels were available for charter, providing transport capacity for two additional divisions. He warned that, "In case of a direct rupture with us and direct antagonistic actions against us, the Japanese will first strive to meet our fleet to solve the problem of command of the sea." Even as he wrote these lines, Rusin still thought that Pusan and Chemulpo would be the main landing sites in the event that Japan sent troops to Korea without a war declaration.¹²⁰ However, Admiral Rozhdestvenskii received Rusin's last report of 30 January (12 February) 1904 only after the beginning of the war.

During January 1904, telegrams transited only through Port Arthur. On 15 (28) January, Rusin telegraphed that the Japanese had chartered 60 commercial vessels, and that coal was being transported

¹¹⁶ Ibid., I. 186.

¹¹⁷ Osobyi Komitet Dal'nego Vostoka, *Dokumenty po peregovoram s Iaponiei v 1903–1904 godakh, khraniavshiesia v kantseliarii Osobogo komiteta Dal'nego Vostoka* (SPB, 1905), 33–5.

¹¹⁸ Nicholas II to Alekseev, 26 December 1903, Ibid., 35–6.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 40.

¹²⁰ RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, l. 191ob.

from Amoy to Sasebo. Meanwhile, a large amount of military materials was being transported to Ujina. Rusin added:

It is possible to expect a general mobilization. The size of preparations and their cost, amounting to 50 millions, indicate Japan's large-scale plans. Excitement is great. My interpreter was arrested on suspicion of handing me important military secrets. There is no evidence.¹²¹

It was now clear to Rusin that Japan was about to wage war against Russia. But there is no sign that Rusin's decisive warning had any immediate effect. St. Petersburg and Port Arthur continued to anticipate the Japanese occupation of Korea.

After 16 (29) January, Rusin devoted increasing attention to the imminent arrival of the cruisers *Kasuga* and *Nisshin* in Asiatic waters. Originally destined for south America, they had been purchased by the Japanese, and were now enroute to Japan from Genoa. It was Rusin's conviction that their arrival would signal the advent of war. On 23 January (5 February), he cabled Port Arthur that the Japanese navy had recalled to duty all specialists and some reservists, and that there had been a partial call-up of reservists for every army division. The next day, he sent his last telegram: "General mobilization. Rusin."¹²²

Meanwhile, Rusin's interpreter, Takahashi Monsaku, had been arrested on 9 (22) January 1904. The news made Japanese papers on 12 (25) January.¹²³ On 10 (23) February, he was tried in Yokohama District Court and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.¹²⁴ Takahashi had approached a draftsman of the Yokosuka Naval Factory and a navy policeman at Port Maizuru for maps of navy ports, plans of warships, and other information. But, these two men, "keeping in mind the empire's interests, handed over reports only about unclassified facts." Therefore, Takahashi obtained no military secrets from them.

This information meant that those two persons in question cooperated closely with the Japanese police, and that they gave Takahashi

¹²¹ Ibid., I. 197ob. This telegram was published by V. Petrov in *Russkoe proshloe*, 86, but the most important phrase, "It is possible to expect a general mobilization," is missing.

¹²² RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, l. 198.

¹²³ *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun*, 25 (12) January 1905, 5

¹²⁴ Decision of Court, 23 (10) February 1904, File of materials concerning the activities of suspect in military espionage Takahashi Monsaku, Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives, 5-1-10-11.

and Rusin only what the Japanese navy wished to give to the Russian navy for disinformation. Takahashi testified in court that, “he himself once cooperated with Japanese police officials and tried to serve the interests of the empire,” and that, “he had no evil intention as indicated.” But, there was no doubt that he was faithful to the Russians. Therefore, he was closely watched and manipulated by the Japanese police.

Takahashi’s arrest was a great shock to the Russian Orthodox Church in Japan and its head, Reverend Nicholas.¹²⁵ Rusin explained in an addendum to his financial report that Takahashi had devoted himself to the cause and had been of the utmost utility during his long years of service. Consequently, Rusin felt obliged to give the interpreter 500 yen. Rusin asked a French banker to give Takahashi’s wife 40 yen per month.¹²⁶

Rusin left Japan on 3 (16) February 1904.¹²⁷ During the war, he worked as head of the Navy Section at the General Headquarters of the Russian Manchurian Army. From there he traveled to Portsmouth during the summer of 1905 to join the Russian delegation at negotiations to conclude the Russo-Japanese War. After 1907, he continued to occupy important posts within the naval command structure until 1913, when he became the last pre-revolutionary serving chief of the Naval General Staff.

Conclusion

Konstantin Vogak can probably be labeled the most talented and influential of the Russian military attachés who served in Japan before hostilities in 1904–05. At the beginning of 1903, his assessments of Japanese military forces and the Far Eastern situation were sufficiently sober and sophisticated to earn respect and adherents in high places. It was no accident that Emperor Nicholas II and the Bezobrazov clique chose Vogak to be the architect for their “new course” in

¹²⁵ See Nikolai Iaponskii’s diary, *Dnevnik Sviatogo Nikolaia Iaponskogo* (Sapporo, 1994), 375, 384–85.

¹²⁶ RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, ll. 195–195ob. After his imprisonment, Takahashi was hired in 1907 as an interpreter for the Russian Consulate at Kobe. See, Nakamura and Nakamura, 431.

¹²⁷ RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2486, l. 198ob.

Russian Far Eastern policy. Yet, the consequences of the “new course,” including the formation of the Viceroyalty of the Far East, the limited strengthening of Russian military forces, and initiatives for economic expansion in Manchuria, failed to produce the desired results. In the end, these measures only heightened the Japanese concerns and suspicions that gave rise to an increasingly aggressive posture. The “new course” ultimately could not prevent a war with Japan. Too late, Bezobrazov proposed a Russo-Japanese alliance. Presumably, it was Vogak who had helped formulate this idea.

Meanwhile, Alexander Rusin was perhaps the best Russian naval attaché in Japan. He worked hard with his assistant Takahashi Monsaku to warn his superiors of Japanese preparations for war. In 1903, he repeatedly informed the Naval Main Staff in Petersburg and the Viceroy at Port Arthur that the Japanese were preparing to send occupation forces to Korea. He was suspicious of the totally open preparations for such an endeavor, but failed to ascertain the true strategy of the Japanese navy, a sudden attack against Port Arthur before war declaration. Rusin altered his stance only on 15 (28) January 1904, when he warned that a general Japanese mobilization was imminent. However, St. Petersburg and Port Arthur continued to focus their attention on possible responses to a Japanese occupation of Korea.

Generally speaking, the Russian military and naval attachés in Japan did impressive work, but conflicting jurisdictions, various analytical deficiencies, and often-myopic perceptions within the tsarist government and its military establishment meant that attaché contributions could not be fully exploited to Russia's benefit.

MISCALCULATING ONE'S ENEMIES: RUSSIAN INTELLIGENCE PREPARES FOR WAR*

Bruce W. Menning

Military intelligence constitutes one of the “blank spots” in modern Russian history to which historians have devoted increasing attention since the collapse of the Soviet Union. After 1991, a thirst for “the truth” about lesser-known aspects of Russian preparation for war benefited from accessibility to once forbidden materials, spawning a number of studies on Russian and Soviet military intelligence. They have ranged from Mikhail Alekseev’s multi-volume work to a semi-official outline history of Russian external intelligence.¹ The genre has recently (and fashionably) embraced the larger concerns of *spets-sluzhby*, that is, not only intelligence, but also counter-intelligence.²

With the centenary of 1904–05 now upon us, intelligence preparation for the Russo-Japanese War has increasingly figured in various studies.³ And, indeed the Russo-Japanese War presents special

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¹ Mikhail Alekseev, *Voennaia razvedka Rossii ot Riurika do Nikolaia II*, 4 vols. in 3 bks. (Moscow, 1998–2001), and E. M. Primakov, et al., eds., *Ocherki istorii rossiiskoi vneshnei razvedki*, 5 vols. incomplete (Moscow, 1996–2003). See also, E. Iu. Sergeev and Ar. A. Ulunian, *Ne podlezhit oglasheniuiu* (Moscow, 1999). All dates that appear in the main text of this article are rendered according to the Julian calendar, in use by the Russians at the beginning of the twentieth century, and at the time lagging the Gregorian by 13 days.

² See, for example, A. A. Zdanovich, *Otechestvennaia kontrrazvedka 1914–1920* (Moscow, 2004); I. N. Kravtsev, *Tainye sluzhby imperii* (Moscow, 1999); I. N. Kravtsev, “Spetssluzhby Rossii v rusско-iaponskoi voine 1904–1905 godov,” Avtoref. diss. k. i. n. (Moscow, 1996); D. B. Pavlov, “Rossiiskaia kontrrazvedka v gody rusско-iaponskoi voiny,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 1 (January–February 2004), 14–28; N. V. Grekov, *Rusckaia kontrrazvedka v 1905–1917 gg.* (Moscow, 2000); and Akashi Motojiro, *Rakka ryusui: Colonel Akashi's Report on His Secret Cooperation with the Russian Revolutionary Parties during the Russo-Japanese War* (Helsinki, 1988).

³ P. V. Kondratenko, “Rossiiskie morskii agenty ob uselenii iaponskogo flota v kontse XIX-nachale XX veka,” in O. R. Airapetov, ed., *Rusско-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905. Vzgliaid cherez stoletie* (Moscow, 2004), 62–110; V. B. Kashirin, “‘Russkii Mol'tke’ smotrit na vostok. Dal'nevostochnye plany Glavnogo Shtaba Rossiiskoi imperii vo vremia iaponsko-kitaiskoi voiny 1894–1895 gg.,” in Airapetov, ed., *Rusско-iaponskaia voina*, 150–82; E. Iu. Sergeev, “Voennaia razvedka Rossii v bor'be s

problems for students of military intelligence. These problems include the subject of war imminence, or more precisely, the closely-related issue of surprise, the difficulty of strategic net assessments, especially as they related to the combat readiness and potential strength of a fully mobilized Japanese army, and the vagaries associated with gauging likely enemy intentions. Although histories in the immediate post-1905 period treated these and related problems, coverage often suffered from proximity to the events themselves, from the familiar politics of cover-up, and from a genuine lack of reliable sources.⁴ For other reasons, the Soviet period did not lend itself to extensive elucidation of the intelligence picture.⁵

The purpose of the following remarks is to provide fresh insight into the above-mentioned fundamental problems on the basis of archival-based research and a mixture of traditional and new materials. The thesis holds that the overall quality of Russian military and naval intelligence about the Japanese was uneven, but probably better than might have been expected, especially with regard to the Japanese navy. However, important situational and structural con-

Iaponiei (1904–1905 gg.),” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 3 (March 2004), 78–92; Devid Skhimmel’pennink van der Oie, “Shapkami ne zakidali,” *Rodina*, no. 1 (January 2004), 34–37; E. V. Dobychina, “Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka na Dal’nem Vostoke v 1895–1897 godakh,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 4 (August–September 2000), 61–70; David H. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, “Russian Military Intelligence on the Manchurian Front, 1904–05,” *Intelligence and National Security*, XI, no. 1 (January 1996), 22–31; V. A. Petrov, “Iz predystorii russko-iaponskoi voiny: Doneseniia morskogo agenta v Iaponii A. I. Rusina (1902–1904 gg.),” *Russkoe proshloe*, bk. 6 (1996), 52–94; Ch. Inaba, “Iz istorii ravedki v gody russko-iaponskoi voiny (1904–1905). Mezhdunarodnaia telegrafnaia sviaz’ i perekhvat korrespondentsii protivnika,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, nos. 4–5 (1994), 222–27; I. V. Derevianko, comp., “Russkaia razvedka i kontrrazvedka v voine 1904–1905 gg. Dokumenty,” in *Tainy russko-iaponskoi voiny* (Moscow, 1993); and I. V. Derevianko, “Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka v 1902–1905 gg.,” *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 5 (May 1989), 76–8.

⁴ See, for example, Asiaticus, *Reconnaissance in the Russo-Japanese War*, tr. J. Montgomery (London, 1908), P. I. Izmet’shev, *O nashei tainoi razvedke v minushuiu kampaniiu* (Warsaw, 1910), and V. N. Klembovskii, *Tainye razvedki*, 2nd ed. (St. Petersburg, 1911). Several sections within the official military and naval histories of the Russo-Japanese War treat intelligence aspects of the conflict. See, Voenno-istoricheskaiia komissiia po opisaniuiu russko-iaponskoi voiny [hereafter VIK], *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 g.g.*, 9 vols. in 16 bks. (St. Petersburg, 1910–13), I, 154–59, 409–53, and 752; and Istoricheskaiia komissiia pri Morskom General’nom Shtabe [hereafter IKpriMGSh], *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 g.g.*, 7 bks. incomplete (St. Petersburg and Petrograd, 1912–1918), I, 123–37.

⁵ Pioneering, but incomplete studies include K. K. Zvonarev [Zvaigzne], *Agenturnaia razvedka*, reprint ed., 2 bks. (Moscow, 2003), and P. F. Riabikov, *Razvedatel’naia sluzhba v mimoe i voennoe vremia* (Tomsk, 1919).

straints often precluded access to crucial sources and materials on Japanese ground forces. Still other constraints prevented officials in St. Petersburg from drawing pertinent and timely conclusions about war imminence and Japanese intentions. Whatever the cause for these miscalculations, their net consequence was that Russia would enter a Far Eastern conflict at a substantial disadvantage.

As prelude to the larger discussion, a few caveats are in order. First, the treatment is based mainly on materials drawn from the most common form of intelligence-related information, the reports of Russian military attachés and various official and unofficial military observers either stationed in or visiting the Far East. Although materials from other sources, most notably emissaries from the Foreign Ministry, provided additional grist for the mill, the narrow military focus of this chapter precludes an excursion into their content and implications. Second, the following remarks provide firm grounds for response to only one of the three major problems at issue: discrepancies in net assessments of Japanese ground forces and their combat readiness. The other two problems, surprise and Japanese intentions, were so closely tied to perceptions and politics that it is difficult for the historian to proceed much beyond identifying and separating major strands within the larger skein of interpretation and (mis)understanding. Finally, many of the conclusions remain tentative, subject to verification in light of additional materials, and subject to alteration on the basis of scholarly discourse.

Proceeding from the more known to the lesser known, we now know the identities of the major *dramatis personae*. During the period between 1896 and early 1904, only three officers from the Russian army received appointment as military attachés in Tokyo. They were Major General Nikolai Ivanovich Ianzhul (1896–99), Colonel Gleb Mikhailovich Vannovskii (1900–02), and Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Konstantinovich Samoilov (1903–04).⁶ During annual Japanese maneuvers,

⁶ See the tables in Alekseev, *Voennaia razvedka*, bk. 1, 319 and 322. Gleb Mikhailovich Vannovskii is often confused with Boris Petrovich Vannovskii, the son of the former War Minister, Petr Semenovich Vannovskii. See, for example Derevianko, comp., "Russkaia razvedka," 150–51, and Primakov, *et al.*, eds., *Ocherki*, I, 192. Alekseev mistakenly refers to B. P. Vannovskii in the text of *Voennaia razvedka*, bk. 1, p. 147, but correctly refers to G. M. Vannovskii in his appendices, bk. 1, pp. 245, and 319. The official military history, VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 430, distinctly identifies the attaché in question as "Gleb" Vannovskii. Meanwhile, Zvonarev,

they were usually joined in Japan by official military observers, including representatives of the Priamur [maritime] military district and the Kwantung special region. Meanwhile, in the seven years before the Russo-Japanese War, only two attachés represented the Russian navy, Lieutenant Ivan Ivanovich Chagin (1897–99) and Captain 2nd rank Aleksandr Ivanovich Rusin (1899–1904). Occasionally these military and naval attachés assisted with the official visits of various representatives of the Russian military, including War Minister Aleksei Nikolaevich Kuropatkin, who toured Japan briefly during the spring of 1903. Materials produced during these visits augmented periodic reports from the attachés on the nature, scale, and implications of Japanese military and naval activities. While on leave from the Far East in St. Petersburg, both military and naval attachés sometimes participated as consultants and observers for war games held under the auspices of the Naval Ministry.

It should also be mentioned that other officers held corresponding assignments in Korea and China. These included the long-tenured Major General Konstantin Ippolitovich Vogak, who in 1893–96 had preceded Ianzhul in Japan, and who subsequently received assignment to Beijing until mid-1903. Attachés in Korea included the equally long-tenured Colonel Ivan Ivanovich Strel'bitskii, who served in Seoul between 1895 and 1903, and who was followed by Colonel Leonid Rudol'fovich von Raaben (February–November 1903) and Guards Captain Aleksei Stepanovich Potapov (November 1903–January 1904).⁷ Although reports from these attachés largely focused on the countries to which they were accredited, force of circumstances often involved reporting on the Japanese, especially from Seoul.

In general, it was the mandate of these officers to serve as overt spies, gathering all possible information on the nature and status of the armed forces in the countries to which they were accredited. There was no formal apprenticeship for military and naval espionage, but the officers who served as attachés often displayed a set of similar attributes. They were generally well-educated by the military-

Agenturnaia razvedka, bk. 1, p. 20, identifies G. M. Vannovskii correctly as the former War Minister's nephew.

⁷ Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv [RGVIA], fond [collection] 400 [Glavnyi Shtab], opis' [inventory] 4, delo [file] 319, listy [folios] 94–7; other attachés in the Far East included Lieutenant Colonel F. E. Ogorodnikov in Chifoo and Colonel K. N. Desino in Shanghai. See, Sergeev, "Voennaia razvedka," 79.

professional standards of their day, they had usually risen through successive troop-duty and staff assignments to attain field-grade rank or its equivalent, and they had generally earned reputations for thinking on their feet and expressing themselves accurately and concisely, especially in writing.⁸ Their reports often reveal knowledge of military subjects that would have surpassed their peers. Army attachés also often came from previous staff assignments in which they had served with an adjutant's section, that is, the section that usually dealt with military intelligence as a collateral responsibility. They also often displayed prior service in close proximity to the country of their assignment. Almost none of the attachés seemed to have viewed his assignment as a calling in itself. Rather, attaché duty appeared to have been considered as a necessary posting during a series of necessary postings over the course of an unfolding military career.⁹ And, indeed, a number of the attachés noted above later advanced to general officer or flag rank, with subsequent service not necessarily related to intelligence.

Regrettably, officers who served as attachés in the Far East almost universally shared another common attribute: almost none was conversant in the language of the country to which he was posted. Consequently, they had to work through interpreters and translators, with all the shortcomings, inadequacies, and vulnerabilities inherent in conducting sensitive work through intermediaries.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, attachés often found themselves overloaded with work that involved traveling, observing, collecting information, reporting, and encrypting and decrypting sensitive communications that of necessity had to be transmitted by commercial telegraph. Moreover, they were expected to discharge collateral assignments that might include training assistants, recruiting agents, assembling and collating topographical

⁸ Dobychna, "Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka," 162–65; see also the service entries for Generals Ianzhul and Vogak in *Spisok generalam po starshinstvu. Sostavlen po 1-e Ianvaria 1904 goda* (St. Petersburg, 1904), 682 and 904, and the entries for Generals Vannovskii and Samoilov in *Spisok generalam po starshinstvu. Sostavlen po 15-e Aprelia 1914 goda* (St. Petersburg, 1914), 495 and 593. Cf. Zvonarev, *Agenturnaia razvedka*, bk. 1, pp. 27–8.

⁹ See especially the commentary of Captain 2nd rank Rusin in Petrov, "Iz predystorii russko-iaponskoi voiny," 64–5.

¹⁰ These difficulties are summarized by then-Colonel Ianzhul and essentially repeated by Colonel Vannovskii in VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 156–59. Lieutenant Colonel Samoilov was an exception: he was fluent in French and English and could manage orally in Japanese.

materials, and escorting visiting officials and delegations. And, not surprisingly, some of the attachés complained about their work load and lack of support, especially financial support for their various activities.¹¹

Another common theme in attaché reports from both Japan and Korea involved the difficult proposition of contending with the closed nature of local societies. In Japan especially, officials were often inaccessible, while documents, even open-source government documents, were unobtainable.¹² Without fluency in the native language, recruitment of covert agents was difficult in the extreme. Even the more experienced attachés (Rusin in Yokohama/Tokyo and Strel'bitskii in Seoul) counted only two or three useful recruits, who probably served only as observers and reporters of military and naval activities in remote locales.¹³ Perhaps the only recruit of a "breakthrough" variety was the Belgian assistant to the Korean emperor, whom Colonel von Raaben was able to bring into Russian service in late 1903.¹⁴ In Japan, when attachés formed part of an official delegation, they were assigned escort officers, one of whose chief roles appeared to have been limiting access to unrehearsed events and unvetted persons. When official observers arrived in Japan to witness military exercises, the observers were herded together and permitted to view only what the Japanese military wanted them to view. When relations between Japan and Russia turned more sour than usual, observers were treated to only the most perfunctory and even prosaic overviews of field exercises.¹⁵

Under these circumstances, it was something of a minor miracle that Russia's military attachés were able to provide official St. Petersburg with anything like accurate reporting on Japanese military capabilities and intentions. Yet, the attachés submitted both periodic and special reports at an impressive rate and often with impressive insight into Japanese military and naval affairs. On the basis of these reports, appropriate sub-divisions within the Main Staff in St. Petersburg—

¹¹ See especially the comments of Colonel Strel'bitskii, RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 319, ll. 3–5; see also, Dobychina, "Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka," 162, 168.

¹² VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 158.

¹³ Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Voenno-Morskogo Flota [RGAVMF], f. 417 [Glavnyi Morskoi Shtab], op. 1, d. 1929, l. 269 obratnaia [obverse side], and RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 319, ll. 41–41ob.

¹⁴ RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 319, ll. 18–18ob.

¹⁵ Ibid., d. 327, l. 428.

until late 1900 the Military Scientific Committee, then until April 1903 the Statistical Section of the Quartermaster General Element [*Chast'*], and finally the 7th Section (Military Statistics of Foreign Powers)—compiled intelligence digests for the quartermaster general, the chief of the Main Staff, the war minister, and the tsar. Within the Naval Ministry, the Naval Scientific Section until 1903 and subsequently the Strategic Element of the Naval Main Staff fulfilled an analogous function.¹⁶ Intelligence digests included extracts from attaché reports, and the War and Naval Ministries often exchanged intelligence materials, along with reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁷ After the formation of the Viceroyalty of the Far East in late July 1903, copies of intelligence digests and attaché reports also went to Admiral Evgenii Ivanovich Alekseev and his staff at Port Arthur. For any historian accustomed to inter-ministerial warfare, the amount of exchange seems impressive in itself. However, smooth cooperation did not always characterize interagency relations either within diplomatic and military missions abroad or among contending military and naval jurisdictions in the Far East.¹⁸

Of great significance in the flow of materials was the near-annual publication by the Main Staff and the Naval Main Staff of what we would now call “threat books.” These were compilations of intelligence-related materials, often based on attaché reports, on the armed strength of various potential foes. These books represented an officially-sanctioned version of the threat, and materials from them constituted the threat estimate that usually formed much of the basis for war plans.¹⁹

The latest naval version before the war of 1904–05 was the *Sbornik voenno-morskikh svedenii ob inostrannykh gosudarstvakh* [Digest of Naval Information about Foreign States], Volume IV, *Iaponiia* [Japan] (corrected 1 January 1904). Within this volume, the third chapter contained a complete listing of vessels in the Japanese Navy, including their silhouettes, tonnages, armaments, and places of manufacture.

¹⁶ Alekseev, *Voennaia razvedka*, bk. 1, pp. 84–5. See also, “Polozhenie o Glavnom Shtabe,” *Voennyi Sbornik*, no. 5 (May 1903), 291–95.

¹⁷ Petrov, “Iz predystorii russko-iaponskoi voiny,” 56. See also, RGVA, f. 400, op. 1, d. 95, ll. 9–18, 22–28, 34–35ob.; op. 4, d. 327, ll. 354–354ob.; RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 1723, ll. 92–92ob.; and d. 2823, ll. 96–96ob.

¹⁸ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 167–68; see also, “Dnevnik A. A. Polovtseva,” *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, no. 4 (1923), 81.

¹⁹ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 158–59.

Subsequent chapters listed all active flag officers and ship commanders of the Japanese navy, along with personal profiles.²⁰ In the aggregate, much of this information was based on the reports and observations of Captain 2nd rank Rusin, who had served as attaché in Japan since 1899. One of the few sour notes in the entire composition was Rusin's characterization of Vice Admiral Togo Heihachiro, of whom he wrote, "Vice Admiral Togo is ill-informed on questions of tactics and strategy; the permanent squadron maneuvers poorly under his command."²¹

This ill-founded assessment of Admiral Togo was atypical within the flow of otherwise high quality naval intelligence from the Far East. Between 1897 and 1904, Lieutenant Chagin and Captain 2nd rank Rusin submitted a steady stream of reports that accurately reflected the Japanese naval build up for possible future war with Russia. The two attachés reported on the construction and purchase from abroad of vessels for the Japanese.²² They tracked naval deployments and training exercises, and they maintained careful records on the characteristics of Japanese naval vessels, often including even their construction blueprints.²³ They also monitored activities of the Japanese commercial fleet and generally remained attuned to indicators of war imminence.²⁴ In the absence of their ground force counterparts, the naval attachés also submitted reports on developments within the Japanese army.²⁵ And, unlike at least one of their ground force counterparts, the naval attachés never deluded themselves about the qualities and combat capabilities of the Japanese armed forces, especially the navy. Indeed, as early as August 1897, Lieutenant Chagin wrote that in the event of war with Japan "everything boils down to command of the sea," something that Russia might retain "if our Pacific fleet at any given moment will not be weaker than the Japanese fleet."²⁶ At least in Chagin's eyes, the Japanese would have to be fought on equal terms.

²⁰ Excerpts from this volume, *Voenno-morskoi uchenyi otdel Morskogo shtaba, Sbornik voenno-morskikh svedeniï ob inostrannykh gosudarstvakh*, IV. *Iaponiia* (St. Petersburg, 1904), are in RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 329, ll. 101–117.

²¹ *Ibid.*, l. 115.

²² RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 1929, ll. 25, 30, 111–115, and 193–96.

²³ *Ibid.*, d. 2317, ll. 9–10, 120–127, and 157–159; and d. 2318, ll. 1–46, 87–88ob.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, d. 2315, ll. 57–60ob., and IKprimGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, p. 135.

²⁵ RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2128, ll. 49–52.

²⁶ RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 329, l. 69.

The general high quality of Russian naval intelligence was more than just a function of attentive and hard-working attachés. It was also a function of selective access to French naval and military intelligence, an advantage that the naval attachés held in common with the Russian army attachés. Because of the local language barrier in Japan and because of the closed nature of Japanese society, Russian diplomats and attachés alike regularly shared information with their alliance partners from the west. The French provided blueprints of Japanese vessels under construction in French shipyards and passed to the Russians their observations and conclusions about the Japanese navy. In effect, the French enabled the Russians to multiply their presence in Japan. Indeed, the French became so useful in this respect that Captain 2nd rank Rusin successfully recommended St. Ann crosses for two of his more forthcoming French counterparts.²⁷ For various reasons, Colonel Vannovskii did not enjoy the same amicable relations with the French, but his successor, Lieutenant Colonel Samoilov, regularly plied the French for assistance, rewarding them with the Order of St. Stanislas.²⁸

Whatever the state of relations with French allies, naval attachés counted two other substantial advantages over their ground force counterparts in estimating growing Japanese strength, at least in its naval dimension. The first was the sheer visibility of Japanese naval assets, the majority of which were concentrated in a handful of naval bases that might be kept under direct observation.²⁹ To this end, Chagin and Rusin traveled to these bases whenever possible and recruited several reliable informants to provide information on significant Japanese naval developments and deployments. Observers in and around Sasebo and other important naval facilities easily tracked acquisitions, fleet movements, exercises, and supply build-ups. On the basis of these observations, the Russian naval attachés submitted bi-monthly updates on Japanese naval deployments. Whenever possible, Chagin and Rusin (or their French counterparts) were also present as official observers during naval exercises. A second major advantage for the Russian naval attachés was the sheer publicity that surrounded naval construction in an era of navalism and

²⁷ RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2322, l. 12; see also, Petrov, "Iz predystorii russko-iaponskoi voyny," 65–6.

²⁸ Primakov, *et al.*, eds., *Ocherki*, I, 193.

²⁹ RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2128, ll. 55–63ob.

naval arms races. Both commercial and naval establishments eagerly tracked shipbuilding around the world and published handbooks detailing the latest acquisitions and technological advances.³⁰ These handbooks were readily available to naval attachés, and so also was a Japanese version on their own navy that was published in French until 1903. In effect, Chagin and Rusin had little reason for not being up to date on Japanese naval developments.

The same was not true for Japanese ground force developments. The Russian army's version of its own threat book was *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh silakh inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia* [Digest of the Most Recent Information about the Armed Forces of Foreign States. Japan], and its latest edition before hostilities in 1904–05 had been edited by Lieutenant Colonel Samoilov in May 1903.³¹ In contrast with the exactness of the navy's book, Samoilov was very circumspect over the accuracy of estimates about the true size and composition of the Japanese army. He noted that, "Anything related to the numerical composition of the army constitutes a great secret in Japan, and the attainment of any information occurs only accidentally, while the information communicated to me by foreign attachés, although at variance with ours, cannot be considered accurate."³² Consequently, Samoilov entered very few corrections in the threat estimate, relying primarily on the previous year's estimate.³³ And, that estimate was based in large part on information gathered by his predecessor, Colonel Vannovskii.

A major problem was that Vannovskii had left an uncertain legacy, of which his contribution to the threat book was only part of the larger and damaging picture. For one thing, he had left Japan early in 1903 under a cloud, having been formally relieved from duty on 4 July 1902, for failing to submit timely and substantive periodic reports.³⁴ Both he and Colonel Strel'bitskii in Korea had run afoul of reporting requirements, perhaps because of stress associated with covering the last stages of the Boxer uprising and subsequent foreign

³⁰ See, for example, the handbook published under the auspices of Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich, *Voennye floty i morskaiia spravochnaia knizhka na 1904 god* (St. Petersburg, 1904), 784–802.

³¹ Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh silakh inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia* (St. Petersburg, 1903).

³² RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 327, ll. 384–85.

³³ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 410.

³⁴ Alekseev, *Voennaia razvedka*, bk. 1, pp. 147–48.

troop withdrawals from China. As a result, there was a continuity problem as Vannovskii's replacement, Samoilov, had to settle himself in and begin assembling pieces of the Japanese military jigsaw.³⁵ For another thing, the Japanese army was in the latter stages of thorough reform and reorganization. Beyond the obvious novelties, including Arisaka field guns and rifles, it was unlikely that any outsider could have obtained accurate information on the overall combat readiness and fully-deployed size of the Japanese ground forces.³⁶

However, as a protégé of War Minister Kuropatkin, Colonel Vannovskii was a special kind of outsider, an officer who understood official predispositions in St. Petersburg, where "any significant increase in Japanese soldiers produced an illness that made swallowing hard."³⁷ Possibly for this reason Vannovskii's views of the Japanese military varied considerably from his fellow attachés. A cavalryman who had served in the horse artillery, he was a product of the Imperial Corps of Pages and a graduate of the first rank from the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff. He was also a nephew of the previous War Minister, Petr Semenovitch Vannovskii, and during 1898–99 he had served briefly in Japan as a temporary replacement for General Ianzhul.³⁸

On 27 February 1900, several months before Vannovskii's permanent assignment as attaché in Tokyo, he completed an analysis of the Japanese army that depicted it in terms much more negative than either of his predecessors, Generals Vogak and Ianzhul. During the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, Vogak had witnessed ground combat first-hand, and he came away from that experience and subsequent observations full of admiration for the Japanese army. Two months into the conflict, he wrote that any European power could envy the mobilization of the Japanese army, and that "Russia has a neighbor that must be very seriously taken into account."³⁹ After observing the Japanese field maneuvers of 1896, Vogak's successor, then-Colonel Ianzhul wrote, "these units must justly be placed on a

³⁵ Primakov, *et al.*, eds., *Ocherki*, I, 192.

³⁶ On the growth of the Japanese army, see, V. K. Shatsillo and L. A. Shatsillo, *Russko-iaponskaia voina. 1904–1905. Fakty. Dokumenty* (Moscow, 2004), 131–34.

³⁷ Quoted in A. A. Polivanov, *Iz dnevnikov i vospominanii po dolzhnosti voennogo ministra i ego pomoshchnika 1907–1916 gg.*, ed. A. M. Zaionchkovskii (Moscow, 1924), 87.

³⁸ *Ibid.*; see also, "Dnevnik A. A. Polovtseva," 81.

³⁹ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 422.

level with any European troops.”⁴⁰ Although Ianzhul subsequently noticed various deficiencies within the Japanese army, especially the lack of formal military education among senior officers, he remained unstinting in his praise for the quality of junior officers and the army’s overall high level of training. In fact, his reporting probably did not sit well after the beginning of 1898 with a new war minister, General Kuropatkin, who remained consistently more interested in parrying the threat from Austria-Hungary and Germany than in manufacturing a robust threat in the Far East. For Kuropatkin, the military fate of Russia would always be determined on the western frontier.⁴¹

Unlike Vogak and Ianzhul, Vannovskii came to his assignment with a bias that emphasized culture more than capability and possibility. In his eyes, the Japanese army was neither an oriental horde nor a genuine European-style army. For Vannovskii, the Japanese army lay somewhere in the middle, wrestling with a difficult and problematic transition to military modernity. If a nation’s military establishment flowed organically from its society and its martial traditions, then the kind of army the Japanese were attempting to fashion was “completely alien to Japanese cultural foundations.” Accordingly, Vannovskii felt that significant aspects of change merely reflected slavish Japanese adherence to external formalism rather than essential progress. From these premises flowed Vannovskii’s much-quoted conclusion that “decades, perhaps even hundreds of years will pass before the Japanese army might assimilate the moral foundations that lie at the basis of any European army.”⁴² The clear implication was that the Japanese were busily creating a hollow army, and, after reading Vannovskii’s report on 6 March 1900, War Minister Kuropatkin almost gleefully penciled in its margin, “The enthusiasm of our former military attachés for the Japanese army is no more. A sober view.”⁴³

⁴⁰ Ibid., I, 427.

⁴¹ RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 503, ll. 24–5; see also, Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv [RGIA], f. 1622 [Vitte, S. Iu.], op. 1, d. 269, ll. 89ob.–90.

⁴² VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 430–31.

⁴³ Ibid., I, 431, and 817n. As evident from the official history, this analysis antedated and not post-dated Vannovskii’s formal tenure as attaché. The source of later misunderstandings over the date of Vannovskii’s report appears to be Zvonarev, *Agenturnaia razvedka*, bk. 1, pp. 28–9.

Vannovskii formally served scarcely more than two years (late 1900–early 1903) in Tokyo, but his brief tenure brought near-irreparable harm in at least four important ways to Russian assessments and evaluations of the growing Japanese threat. First, his reports on the Japanese military lacked substance, focus, and frequency. Major General Iakov Grigor'evich Zhilinskii, quartermaster general of the Main Staff in St. Petersburg, observed that English-language newspapers (the *London Times*, the *Japanese Weekly Times*, and the *North China Telegraph*) provided more and better intelligence than Colonel Vannovskii. During the first half of 1902, Vannovskii had submitted only four reports, only one of which had responded to direct queries from the Main Staff.⁴⁴ Perhaps worse, from the perspective of inter-service rivalry, Vannovskii failed to focus single-mindedly on the Japanese army, instead frequently crossing service lines to report on naval matters. To compensate for Vannovskii's lack of coverage, the chief of the Main Staff, General Adjutant Viktor Viktorovich Sakharov, had to importune his counterpart at the Naval Main Staff to formalize heretofore *ad hoc* arrangements for intelligence-sharing on subjects of mutual interest. Sakharov ascribed special importance to Japanese capabilities for landing ground forces on the Asian mainland.⁴⁵ Second, for reasons that remain unknown, but that were probably related to Vannovskii's systematic denigration of the Japanese threat, the French military attachés in Tokyo refused to share the results of their intelligence-gathering activities with him.⁴⁶ As a result, the Main Staff had to dispatch Lieutenant Colonel Mikhail Alekseevich Adabash from the Statistics Section to Tokyo, both to smooth relations with the French and to attempt a hurried on-site assessment of Japanese military developments. With tsarist sanction, Adabash remained in Japan between 9 August and 19 November 1902⁴⁷ Third, the tone of Vannovskii's evaluations of the Japanese actually became even more disparaging over time. He had participated in the Russian navy's strategic war games of 1900, and his negative views even drew the attention of the games' umpires. They specifically noted that in

⁴⁴ During the same period, General Vogak had submitted 17 reports, and Colonel Desino, 23. See, RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 108, ll. 3ob.–4, and 8–9.

⁴⁵ RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2325, l. 24.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, ll. 20 and 46–46ob.

⁴⁷ Polivanov, *Iz dnevnikov i vospominanii*, 87; on Adabash's assignment, see, RGVIA, f. 409 [Posluzhnye spiski ofitserov], op. 1, d. 155–62, ll. 12–15.

contrast with the overall cautiousness of other participants, he was the lone officer who consistently had made “an extraordinary low assessment of the combat qualities of the Japanese army.”⁴⁸ Subsequently, while in Tokyo and Yokohama, Vannovskii reported on a wide variety of strikes, minor riots, and purported naval mutinies, all of which seemed to indicate a society and its military coming apart at the seams. For him, the fact that in January 1902 an entire Japanese infantry unit had frozen to death during winter maneuvers on a northern island revealed not only poor training but also an inability to cope with extreme winter conditions.⁴⁹ Finally, evidence demonstrates that Vannovskii successfully tainted various visitors and official military observers with his negative views. He must have been an officer of impressive persuasive talent, because the reports of observers and commentators with whom he associated often duplicated, in some respects nearly verbatim, the attaché’s own negative evaluations of the Japanese army. In the end, the official history dryly comments that while Vannovskii’s less-than-flattering commentary might have been insulting to the Japanese, over the long term he served their interests with his steady diminution of the Japanese military threat.⁵⁰

This was the legacy with which Lieutenant Colonel Samoilov had to contend in the spring of 1903 as he groped for a footing on which to base information gathering in a society that was increasingly more hostile and less accessible to Russians, no matter their formal affiliation. Like his naval counterpart, Samoilov dutifully milked the community of foreign military attachés, especially the French, for whatever information they might provide. However, despite various forms of assistance, Samoilov found it difficult with any surety to reach much beyond conventional wisdom and the obvious when questions turned on the size of the Japanese army. The obvious stated that its peacetime composition included one guards division and 12 field divisions.⁵¹ How these divisions might be deployed on the Asian mainland and what might be the army’s total wartime mobilized strength remained elements of conjecture, assumption, and mystery. Unlike

⁴⁸ IKpriMGSH, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, pp. 109–10n.

⁴⁹ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 442–45.

⁵⁰ Ibid., I, 430.

⁵¹ Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh silah inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia*, 18–19.

naval vessels, which could be easily counted, Samoilov lacked sure-fire means and methods for visiting every Japanese military district to discover the secrets inherent in troop mobilization and military transit schedules. He did, however, apparently have the opportunity to observe select military installations during 1903, and his observations provided reasonably accurate information on the pace of the Japanese military build-up.⁵² He also observed the Japanese field maneuvers of November 1903, but because of an increased emphasis on secrecy, the Japanese revealed little that was novel, save perhaps greater emphasis on their troops' physical conditioning. However, unlike Colonel Vannovskii, Samoilov readily admitted that "it would be a mistake on the basis of these maneuvers 'for show' to draw any kind of conclusions about the strategic and command capacities of the higher-ranking Japanese commanders."⁵³

Increased Japanese secrecy, together with Samoilov's comparatively recent assignment to Japan, meant that the attaché had no means to verify estimates of Japanese troops strength that were at variance with the conventional threat estimate. The 1903-version of the Russian army's threat book on Japan placed the wartime mobilized strength of the Japanese army at 358,809 officers and men, of which reserve troops might account for some 217,000.⁵⁴ However, these figures were at substantial variance with those of Captain 2nd rank Rusin, who, relying on French estimates, put the fully mobilized strength of Japanese ground forces at 634,000.⁵⁵ The French insisted on this higher estimate because they believed that increased financial allocations and the reorganization of the Japanese army had provided increased means and a larger foundation for the training and integration of reserve personnel. When confronted with this yawning discrepancy between French and Russian estimates, Samoilov adhered to that version which he perceived to be true. That is, he asserted, "I would propose for now to leave information about the composition of the army in that form as written in the *Sbornik*, since no information has been received that might refute some of the figures;

⁵² See, for example, RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 481, ll. 438–438ob.

⁵³ Ibid., d. 327, l. 393.

⁵⁴ Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh sil inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia*, 21, 24.

⁵⁵ IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, pp. 136–37. See also, RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2310, ll. 63–9.

consequently, there is no basis to assume that the data in the *Sbornik* is mistaken.”⁵⁶ As a result, the prior figures, based in no small part on Colonel Vannovskii’s calculations, remained the foundation for threat calculations. Interestingly, even after the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, the same figures were repeated in the 1904—version of the threat book.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, the most readily available open-source publication on Japan and its military forces virtually duplicated the 358,000 figure. Nonetheless, the compiler, Colonel Nikolai Dmitrievich Boguslavskii, noted that French sources put the same figure at 520,000, with perhaps another 50,000 available trained reservists.⁵⁸

As a result of officially-sanctioned intelligence information about the seemingly exact wartime deployable strength of the Japanese army, Russian staff and planning estimates about potential ground force opposition on the mainland varied little between 1901 and late 1903. Russian conventional wisdom for 1901, based no doubt in part on the experience of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, assumed in the event of war that the Japanese might land 130,000–140,000 troops on the Asian mainland.⁵⁹ If the Russian Pacific Squadron suffered initial defeat, this number might rise to 200,000 by the end of the eighth week of Japanese troop mobilization. By late 1903, it was assumed that the Pacific Squadron would not suffer defeat, and that initially the Japanese might land about 160,000 troops on the mainland.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, the official Russian threat book put the total mobilized strength of the Japanese army at slightly fewer than 359,000, of which perhaps 250,000 might be deployed for combat in various theatres.⁶¹ Of this quarter million, the War Ministry in 1903 expected

⁵⁶ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 420.

⁵⁷ Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh sil inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia i Koreia* (St. Petersburg, 1904), 25–6. The similarity in figures is explained by the fact that after relief from their assignments, Vannovskii and Strel’bitskii were ordered to collaborate on the updated and evidently combined Japanese and Korean *Sbornik* for 1904. See, Alekseev, *Voennaia razvedka*, bk. 1, p. 148.

⁵⁸ N. D. Boguslavskii, *Iaponiia. Voenna-geograficheskoe i statisticheskoe obozrenie*, 2nd ed. (St. Petersburg, 1904), 296–97.

⁵⁹ IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, pp. 93–4; see also, Voennoe Ministerstvo, *Vsepoddanneishii otchet o deiatel’nosti glavnykh upravlenii Voenmogo Ministerstva vyzvannoi voinoiu s Iaponiei v 1904–1905 g.g.* (St. Petersburg, 1912), 2–3.

⁶⁰ IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, p. 96.

⁶¹ Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh sil inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia*, 21, 24.

in the event of war to encounter no more than the conventionally estimated 120,000–160,000 in Manchuria.⁶² The latter figure became the benchmark for Russian planning for initial operations in the event of conflict.

However, wartime reality would be quite different. By the end of April 1904 the Japanese already counted 204,000 troops in Manchuria. By the end of the war, they had deployed 442,000 troops in all theaters of the conflict, and the Japanese had actually succeeded in mobilizing some 1,185,000 troops.⁶³ This figure meant that pre-war Russian estimates of the Japanese aggregate were off the mark by a factor of three, while estimates of utilizable combat power were off by a factor of 1.7 (150 battalions estimated versus 250 actual). Little wonder that General Kuropatkin might leave St. Petersburg for the Far East early in February 1904 with the assumption that he would counter initial Japanese forays inland with mobile cavalry detachments fighting partisan-style delaying actions while he laboriously transited and concentrated reinforcements from Siberia and European Russia.⁶⁴ However, as one recent observer has noted, because of the absence of timely and accurate intelligence, Kuropatkin's situation was actually akin to a boxer stepping into the ring blindfolded.⁶⁵ The analogy might even be extended with the phrase "against an unknown number of opponents."

The result was initial uncertainty and even surprise, then passivity. By mid-May 1904, the Japanese had speedily and unexpectedly deployed three full field armies in Manchuria. Meanwhile, combat experience in Central Asia during the 1870s and 80s had taught Kuropatkin that Asiatic foes were unduly emboldened by initial success.⁶⁶ To deny the Japanese this psychological advantage, he at first refused decisive action. However, under goading from the tsar and Admiral Alekseev, Kuropatkin acted against his own better judgment, only to suffer substantial reverses on the Yalu (April) and at Wafangou (June). Subsequently, continuing poor theater-level military intelligence failed to compensate for poor pre-war intelligence,

⁶² RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 498, l. 53; see also, *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg. Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow 1941), 488–90.

⁶³ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 409–10, 419–20.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 277.

⁶⁵ Derevianko, comp., "Russkaia razvedka," 154.

⁶⁶ L. N. Sobolev, *Kuropatkinskaia strategii* (St. Petersburg, 1910), 283.

and Kuropatkin came to live in fear of exaggerated Japanese numbers and ghostly enveloping forces. Both of these prospects rendered him tentative at Liaoyang (August).⁶⁷ The same prospects encouraged him, like Russian naval commanders at Port Arthur, to cede the initiative by playing for time and reinforcements.⁶⁸ Indeed, it was not until operations on the Sha-ho in September–October 1904 that Kuropatkin shook off his apprehensions of overwhelming Japanese numbers.

The initial uncertainty over numbers, together with Kuropatkin's faith in mobile partisan operations, reflected a disregard for the strength and combat readiness of the Japanese army that appears readily traceable not only to Colonel Vannovskii, but also to the reports from official military observers who witnessed the Japanese field maneuvers of 6–9 November 1901. After 1896, Russian delegations observed most large Japanese naval and field maneuvers, but the army exercises of 1901 appeared to have left the greatest impression, especially within the War Ministry, and quite likely, with the tsar. Three Russian officers, Major General Mikhail Nikitich Ivanov, Colonel Vannovskii, and Captain Iaroslav Petrovich Gorskii, witnessed the maneuvers. Ivanov, the senior officer, was chief of staff of I Siberian Army Corps, while Gorskii came from the 10th East Siberian Rifle Regiment at Port Arthur. A total of 19 western officers were present, and they were rigidly separated from the 60 Chinese officers in attendance. In the presence of the Japanese Emperor, Marshal Oyama Iwao presided over the maneuvers. They involved the march-maneuver to contact of two opposing division-size forces, which then fought a meeting engagement, followed by alternating deliberate attacks against hasty defensive positions.⁶⁹

Russian impressions of these maneuvers varied from the extremely negative observations of General Ivanov to the more positive commentary of Captain Gorskii. Colonel Vannovskii stood somewhere between these poles, but with views more inclined to support Ivanov than Gorskii. All understood that the Japanese army was undergoing reorganization and rearmament. Ivanov pointed out that structural deficiencies in the organization of logistical support "made the Japanese

⁶⁷ Bruce W. Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861–1914* (Bloomington, 1992), 171–77.

⁶⁸ M. V. Grulev, *Zhizniia armii* (Brest-Litovsk, 1911), 185–86.

⁶⁹ RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 327, ll. 325–338ob.

army unfit for serious offensive operations.”⁷⁰ He expected financial difficulties to delay at length the more complete acquisition of modern artillery. He praised the new Arisaka rifle, but noted that Japanese marksmanship was generally poor. He also praised the youthful enthusiasm of the Japanese soldiers, while noting the difficulty of translating that enthusiasm into genuine military attainment. In general, Ivanov felt that the Japanese military leadership had become intoxicated by their easy successes in the recent war with China. His view was that the Japanese regular army had existed only 29 years, and that during this time “the Japanese had no serious combat teachers.”⁷¹ Now, the problem was that “the Japanese, after twice beating the Chinese, think that they have an army with which they can overturn the whole world.”⁷² Consequently, in Ivanov’s estimation, Japanese overconfidence represented the chief threat in the Far East. That overconfidence might breed a thirst for action that exceeded the bounds of common sense.⁷³

In stark contrast, Captain Gorskii drew no such general conclusions. He admitted that “during these maneuvers in the main there had been many rather crude mistakes and departures from tactical requirements.”⁷⁴ However, Gorskii saw little reason to generalize from the narrow experience of these maneuvers, writing “of course they must not serve as the measure for evaluating the combat qualities of the Japanese army.”⁷⁵ His circumspection stemmed from prior service as a company commander who had fought alongside the Japanese during the recent advance by coalition forces against Beijing during the Boxer uprising. This first-hand experience caused him to warn that “the Japanese actually comported themselves much better than in the maneuvers.”⁷⁶ Therefore, he cautioned against drawing overly negative conclusions from the maneuvers. For Gorskii, it would be better to exaggerate the positive qualities of the Japanese army. Indeed, for him any exaggeration “would bring less harm than any truly mistaken convictions about its insignificance and powerlessness.”⁷⁷

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, I. 87.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, I. 94.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, I. 95.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, I. 181.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, I. 181ob.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Colonel Vannovskii occupied a kind of a middle ground between Ivanov and Gorskii. The attaché never called the Japanese “an army of children” in the vein of Ivanov, but he was nevertheless critical of various shortcomings within the Japanese army that might lead to unwarranted conclusions. For him, the infantry exhibited proper order, but displayed little staying power and poor tactical preparation. The artillery lacked mobility because of inadequate horses, while the sad state of the cavalry deprived Japanese commanders of their combat eyes and ears. Vannovskii reserved his most severe criticism for the Japanese high command, which he found “weak and lacking in initiative.” Battle staffs, meanwhile, “improved very slowly and were able to operate only on the basis of carefully studied advance plans.”⁷⁸ His overall conclusion was “that against such an army a powerful cavalry detachment, armed with artillery, in fast-moving and energetic partisan-style actions will have sure and decisive success.”⁷⁹

This conclusion and the reports in general received due scrutiny within the Main Staff during the mid-months of 1902. In May, Major General Zhilinskii, quartermaster general of the Main Staff, wrote that most of the observers’ main points indicated an army in transition, with all the attendant defects. He found General Ivanov’s commentary particularly illuminating, concluding that “There is no doubt that the Japanese army in all regards is still very far from perfection and in no way can it be compared with the principal European armies, especially ours.”⁸⁰ Still, Zhilinskii cautioned that “in the current Far Eastern situation it would seem desirable for more impartial and less prejudiced ideas related to an evaluation of the combat qualities and readiness of our probable adversary.”⁸¹ Therefore, in a report of early August to General Adjutant Sakharov, chief of the Main Staff, General Zhilinskii ascribed greater credibility to Vannovskii’s reasoned judgments, while repeating the latter’s conviction about the possible efficacy of fast-moving cavalry operations against the Japanese. Zhilinskii also emphasized the merits of Captain Gorskii’s preference for exaggerating rather than diminishing the nature of the Japanese military threat.⁸²

⁷⁸ Ibid., I. 338.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., I. 204.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., I. 338ob.

General Zhilinskii's sober evaluation appears to have come too late and to have remained too inaccessible to affect attitudes of key decision makers and perhaps even the larger Russian officer corps. On 23 June 1902, General Kuropatkin forwarded excerpts from the reports of General Ivanov and Captain Gorskii to the tsar.⁸³ Vannovskii's report probably arrived too late for inclusion in the read packet, although it might be argued that in key areas his conclusions varied little from Ivanov's. More worrisome from the perspective of the Main Staff was a series of articles that appeared during April and May 1902 in *Russkii Invalid*, the Russian army daily. Their author was Cossack Captain (*Esaul*) Petr Nikolaevich Krasnov, an officer of the Life-Guard Ataman Regiment who served as a special correspondent for *Russkii Invalid*. Krasnov painted the Japanese army in such negative terms that one commentator within the Main Staff called the correspondent's observations "poorly founded, extraordinarily hasty, and in any case far from the truth."⁸⁴ Interestingly, Krasnov subsequently enjoyed the tsar's support for reporting on the Far East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia; meanwhile, a compendium of his travel-related articles received direct subsidy for publication from the War Minister.⁸⁵

The observations that drew this criticism had been published as part of a longer series that appeared under the rubric "Fourteen Days in Japan," recording Krasnov's impressions from the Japanese segment of an extended journey across Asia.⁸⁶ Krasnov began by asserting that "the Japanese looks coldly on life and death and does not fear death."⁸⁷ In the eyes of *Russkii Invalid*'s correspondent, Japanese soldiers had assimilated the externals of modern military existence, including close-order drill, cleanliness, and the maintenance

⁸³ Ibid., I, 211.

⁸⁴ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 446. This was the same P. N. Krasnov who was to become an important writer and who was to figure prominently in the Russian Civil War and in Russian émigré politics. For commentary about Krasnov as a correspondent during the Russo-Japanese War, see, A. I. Denikin, *The Career of a Tsarist Officer*, tr. Margaret Patoski (Minneapolis, 1975), 102–03. Denikin remarked that, "Krasnov's articles showed talent, but they distorted the facts."

⁸⁵ P. N. Krasnov, *Po Azii. Putevye ocherki Manchzhurii, Dal'nego Vostoka, Kitaia, Iaponii i Indii*. Izdano pri posobii Voenного Ministerstva (St. Petersburg, 1903).

⁸⁶ See especially, *Russkii Invalid*, no. 99 (5 May 1902), 2–3, no. 100 (6 May 1902), 3–4, no. 101 (8 May 1902), 3–4, no. 102 (9 May 1902), 3–4, and no. 104 (12 May 1902), 2–3.

⁸⁷ *Russkii Invalid*, no. 99, p. 3.

of equipment, but the same soldiers were inflexible in combat and poorly-conditioned for the rigors of military campaign. Krasnov recounted how exhausted Japanese soldiers during the march on Beijing in 1900 had often been carried in the baggage carts of the Russian army. He also recounted how one Japanese infantry company had been rendered *hors de combat* when it lost 90 percent of its complement during an assault on the arsenal at Tianjin. Meanwhile, a neighboring Russian infantry company had skillfully maneuvered around the Chinese strongpoint, losing only six men and subsequently continuing the attack. For Krasnov, the difference between these two examples involved no special display of bravery for the Japanese, only complacency in the face of death. Krasnov's personal impression was that "the military deed did not suit the Japanese," and that "it was thought up for them by a chauvinist government of complete militarist conviction." Further, he remarked that, "the Japanese soldier is weak and an indifferent marksman, although amenable to training and able to discharge exactly and well that which he has learned, heedless of the cost."⁸⁸

These assertions helped explain Krasnov's disdain for numerical comparisons. "The language of numbers is not my language," he wrote, while noting that the fully-mobilized Japanese army numbered 400,000 troops in 335 battalions and 104 squadrons, with 1,903 guns.⁸⁹ He referred to a photograph of Japanese infantry plodding through heavy winter snow, in which the company commander rode on the shoulders of a soldier. Krasnov sarcastically remarked that it was with such officers and soldiers that the Japanese would attempt to deploy 400,000 troops against western European powers holding an excellent position on the Asian mainland.⁹⁰

Cavalryman that he was, Krasnov's pen dripped with scorn when he described the Japanese mounted arm. After touring the Japanese cavalry school and the mess and barracks of a Japanese cavalry division, he remarked that the Japanese spent their resources in vain, "like throwing peas against a stone wall," because "they had neither the horses nor the riders to create cavalry."⁹¹ He boasted that, "to destroy all 13 regiments of Japanese cavalry would be a very easy

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., no. 104, p. 2.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 3.

task." The likely consequence in future war was that shorn of its cavalry "a deaf and blind Japanese army would become a plaything for an enterprising partisan commander."⁹² In Krasnov's view, "a detachment of 2,000 cavalry easily might tire any Japanese division," no matter the assistance from overseas allies.⁹³ Krasnov closed his cycle of articles with the facile characterization of a Frenchman who had lived for a decade in Japan: "They are a people gone astray . . . the military deed is not in their nature." To which commentary, Krasnov appended the notation, "I think that this minute they are contemplating the same thing in St. Petersburg."⁹⁴

With the benefit of more than a century's hindsight, Krasnov's leaps to improbable generalization cannot but force the historian to ponder the wisdom inherent in Captain Gorskii's emphasis on the possible negative effects of underestimating one's adversary. Moreover, the stress on the efficacy of fast-moving cavalry operations against the Japanese would seem to indicate that Colonel Vannovskii had communicated his own prejudices beyond General Ivanov to the Cossack Krasnov and the pages of a widely-read and officially-sanctioned Russian military newspaper. Meanwhile, General Kuropatkin's remarks upon departure in February 1904 for the Far East would seem to indicate that Vannovskii had found at least one additional and important convert in high places.

In light of the above discussion, it should be added that shared sentiment favoring the efficacy of mobile, partisan-style operations against infantry-heavy armies was not as quixotic as it might appear in an age of repeating rifles and quick-firing light field artillery. In light of cavalry operations in the American Civil War, Russian military theory and practice had since the early 1870s duly highlighted the importance of deep raiding and reconnaissance-in-force missions for cavalry.⁹⁵ More recently, during the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) in South Africa, mounted Boer riflemen had played havoc with the British Army's ponderous cavalry and more numerous and well-disciplined infantry. Indeed, the Russian military attaché in London, Colonel Nikolai Sergeevich Ermolov, writing as early as November 1899, outlined the reasons for early Boer success and its implications:

⁹² Ibid., p. 2.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 3.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets*, 145.

Their tactics consist of rapid, mobile maneuver, of the application of powerful and accurate fire from cover, of actions against the communications of the English, and of withdrawal in the face of the latter's bayonet onslaught. . . . Such Boer tactics are extremely disadvantageous for heavy and less mobile forces, since to keep up with the Boers, to defeat them, or to cut them off is extremely difficult for the less mobile English forces, the more so because the English cavalry is generally few in number . . . and not suited to rapid maneuver. . . . All this provides grounds to believe that the war will be protracted, bloody, and both difficult and burdensome for the English.⁹⁶

These and similar assessments flowed into the War Ministry from Russian attachés, official observers, and even covert agents. The Anglo-Boer War figured prominently in the Russian press, and the tsar himself confessed to following news of the conflict obsessively, even as he worried about the effect of pro-Boer sentiment upon the Anglophile tsarina. War Minister Kuropatkin displayed no less interest, deploying his attachés and official observers like chessmen to the theater of war, and subsequently tracking their assignments, progress, and reports.⁹⁷ However, despite the overall high level of interest, and despite the obvious applicability of Boer-like tactics against the Japanese in Manchuria, the direct influence of events in South Africa on Russian assessments and military planning for the Far East cannot be proved. None of the Russian intelligence and planning documents referred overtly to Boer *kommando*-style action. Therefore, it is safe to assert only that this precedent was relatively common knowledge in official St. Petersburg, within the higher reaches of the War Ministry, and among Russian officers who bothered to read either the popular press or professional military publications.

Perhaps in part because of the Boer precedent, the tide of underestimation and self-satisfied complacency inherent in Krasnov's articles on the Japanese proved difficult for the Main Staff to roll back. Like Krasnov, Lieutenant Colonel Adabash of the Statistical Section of the Main Staff had also visited Japan during 1902, but he had come away with markedly different impressions. Although Adabash too noted deficiencies in cavalry and artillery, he declared the rearmament of the Japanese army "complete." His overall evaluation

⁹⁶ N. G. V. Boropaeva, *et al.*, eds., *Anglo-burskaia voina 1899–1902 gg.* (Moscow, 2001), 50–1.

⁹⁷ See, for example, *ibid.*, 46, 51, 55, 86, 105, 106, 177, 188, 212–30, 234–35, 327–70, 440–41, and 468–71.

was that “the Japanese army is generally very good, its spirit outstanding.” Moreover, Adabash warned that, “there were very powerful parties in the army and navy who are convinced of early success in a war with Russia.”⁹⁸

However, Adabash’s commentary remained restricted to the Main Staff, and the open-source Russian military press shared little of his sense of alarm. During the course of 1903, *Morskoi Sbornik* [Naval Digest], the professional journal of the Russian navy, failed to publish a single article about Japan and its navy. Instead, a series of articles on the British and German navies appeared to reflect conventional Russian naval wisdom on the nature of the future threat.⁹⁹ Coverage of Japan fared only slightly better in the pages of *Voennyi Sbornik* [Military Digest], the army’s professional monthly journal. During 1902, V. Nedzvetskii, the chief foreign commentator, penned a series of 10 entries on foreign military establishments for the monthly supplementary section, “Inostrannoe voennoe obozrenie” [Foreign Military Overview]. However, the majority of these entries dealt with European armies, including two each on Austria-Hungary and Germany.¹⁰⁰ The year 1903 counted seven articles on Germany and Austria-Hungary and three articles respectively on supplying expeditionary detachments in China during 1900–01, the military situation in the Pacific, and Japan.¹⁰¹

The latter two articles, “The Military Situation in the Pacific” by Nedzvetskii and “From Japan” by a certain Sipigus, constituted only a slight improvement over Krasnov. Without bias, Nedzvetskii reported that Japanese had made considerable progress since 1894–95 in reorganizing, re-equipping, and rearming their army. Although he termed the results “substantive,” he diminished much of their impact by repeating Krasnov’s estimate that the Japanese might mobilize an army of slightly less than 400,000. Of these, only 228,000 would be

⁹⁸ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 447. After the war, General Kuropatkin faulted General Zhilinskii for “shelving” Lieutenant Colonel Adabash’s reports because they were at substantial variance with those of Colonel Vannovskii; see, RGVA, f. 400, op. 3, d. 2868, l. 16ob.

⁹⁹ For example, “Diviziia iugov germanskogo flota,” *Morskoi Sbornik*, no. 3 (March 1902), 91–100, and F. Vrangl, “Reforma v angliiskom flote,” *Morskoi Sbornik*, no. 3 (March 1902), 61–89.

¹⁰⁰ “Sistematicheskii ukazatel’ Voennogo Sbornika za 1902 god,” *Voennyi Sbornik*, no. 12 (December 1902), 10.

¹⁰¹ “Sistematicheskii ukazatel’ Voennogo Sbornika za 1903 god,” *Voennyi Sbornik*, no. 12 (December 1903), 10–11.

destined for field service. He then reminded readers that in 1894–95 the Japanese had immediately put several divisions into the field, but that the remainder had been mobilized only slowly.¹⁰²

The author of the second article, “From Japan,” was an observer of the 1902 fall maneuvers writing under a pseudonym.¹⁰³ Like Krasnov, he praised the Japanese sense of military order and discipline, especially in the field artillery, in which firing exercises were exemplary. Then, like Vannovskii and Ivanov, he indicted Japanese military modernization as superficial, with assimilation of only the externals, but without genuine military self-awareness. Indeed, Sipigus found “initiative among the troops poorly developed,” their field maneuvers stereotypical, and their cavalry and infantry horses of uniformly poor quality.¹⁰⁴ He considered the Japanese military establishment at a transitional stage of development, somewhere in the initial chapters in the history of a new army, in which the Sino-Japanese war had constituted only the first several pages.¹⁰⁵ In April 1904, shortly after the beginning of the war against Japan, another writer, D. Mel’nikov, reinforced and extended Sipigus’ remarks to assert that the Japanese had no national military art, but only that which they had borrowed from the Germans and had developed to a limited extent in 1894–95. The obvious conclusion for Mel’nikov was that “the Japanese were not only unsuited for the military deed, but even showed they were incapable of differentiating it from the perspective of general knowledge.”¹⁰⁶

Such remarks appeared to reinforce the sense of complacency and even arrogance with which many Russian officers regarded their potential Far Eastern adversaries. Colonel Evgenii Ivanovich Martynov, who commanded an infantry regiment in 1904–05, asserted that “before the war a scornful attitude towards the Japanese governed

¹⁰² V. Nedzvetskii, “Voennoe polozhenie na Tikhom okeane,” *Voennyi Sbornik*, no. 10 (October 1903), 302.

¹⁰³ Minister R. R. Rosen in Tokyo identified the two Russian officers who observed the 1902 maneuvers as Colonel Oranovskii and Captain Kamenskii, one of whom might have been “Sipigus.” See, RGVA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 327, l. 54. As an indicator that the Japanese were becoming more circumspect, Rosen also noted, “In so far as known to me, the present maneuvers have not demonstrated anything special in a military sense . . .”

¹⁰⁴ Sipigus, “Iz Iaponii,” *Voennyi Sbornik*, no. 11 (November 1903), 238.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 240–41.

¹⁰⁶ D. Mel’nikov, “Iapontsy. Opyt kharakteristiki,” *Voennyi Sbornik*, no. 4 (April 1904), 184.

in the Russian army.”¹⁰⁷ He remembered that General Nikolai Petrovich Linevich, who had commanded Russian troops in the advance on Beijing during the Boxer rebellion of 1900, habitually referred to the Japanese disparagingly as “iaposhki.” Martynov also remembered that some elements within the Russian high command viewed positive commentary in the military press about the Japanese as “a danger to the morale of the Russian army.” The natural result was that writers tended to depict the Japanese “in an unfavorable and even comedic light.” On his way to the Far East in 1904, Martynov sought a more accurate picture of his imminent adversaries from the Main Staff’s official threat book. He was unsettled by “this thin yellow volume” and its facile conclusions about the nature of Japanese large-unit operations. In fact, Martynov’s later direct combat experience revealed that only one of the volume’s fourteen assertions about these operations ever proved true.¹⁰⁸

Whatever their degree of accuracy or bias, official military threat assessments usually focused on capabilities rather than intentions for the obvious reason that intentions turned on aims and objectives dictated by higher political authority. In Japan, these aims and objectives were not accessible to outsiders, let alone to Russian military and naval attachés. Accordingly, Russian perceptions of Japanese intentions lacked the same degree of definition (even when mistaken) that accompanied the publication and circulation of threat books with their emphasis on numbers, armaments, technologies, formations, and observed military competence. Both the Sino-Japanese War and the reports of Russian attachés after 1897 attested to the fact that knowledgeable observers understood the capacity of the Japanese to land and maintain large troop contingents on the Asian mainland. The same materials also suggested that the Japanese navy and merchant marine were sufficiently well-developed to protect sea lines of communication and to support troops ashore. Subject to conjecture were over-arching issues of intent, scale, and timing.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ E. I. Martynov, *Vospominaniia o Iaponskoi voiny komandira pekhotnogo polka* (Plotsk, 1910), 4–5.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 5. For the fourteen points to which Martynov referred, see, Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh silakh inostrannykh gosudarstv. Iaponiia*, 48. Martynov’s experience in 1904–05 affirmed the correctness only of number 11, “the absence of pursuit.”

¹⁰⁹ Glavnyi Shtab, *Sbornik noveishikh svedenii o vooruzhennykh silakh inostrannykh gosudarstv.*

During the last months before the outbreak of hostilities in early 1904, a consistent misreading of indicators related to these very issues clouded Russian perceptions of war imminence. Ever since the Shimonoseki Treaty of 1895, St. Petersburg with varying degrees of success had vied with Tokyo over contending spheres of influence in both Korea and Manchuria. By late 1903, however, the Russians were locked in negotiations with the Japanese over exactly how to demarcate those spheres. In general, the tsar and his more influential ministers seemed prepared to accept a preponderant Japanese sphere of influence in southern Korea. The remaining question was how to assure Russia that the Japanese would not introduce significant ground and naval forces into northern Korea and its coastal waters. Moreover, by late 1903, at least one prominent governmental figure, War Minister Kuropatkin, was prepared simply to write off Port Arthur and the Kwantung peninsula. His concept was to retreat to a defensible hard sphere of Russian influence in central and northern Manchuria that would include a security zone for the Russian-run Chinese Eastern Railroad.¹¹⁰ Others, including the tsar and Viceroy Alekseev, were unwilling to abandon substantial Russian investments at Port Arthur and Dal'nii. While the war minister sought to gain support for his view, Special Conferences sought a formula that would prevent the Japanese from moving north of the 39th parallel in Korea "for strategic purposes." It was wrangling and foot-dragging over this formula, along with Russian failure to remove residual military formations from Manchuria, which solidified Japanese resolve by early December 1903 "to roll the iron dice."¹¹¹

Meanwhile, between March and July 1903, War Minister Kuropatkin appears to have developed a contingency strategy for waging a possible future war against Japan. He anticipated a conflict that would last a year and a half, that would demand expenditures in the range of 700–800 million rubles, and that would levy losses of 30,000–50,000 on the 300,000 Russian troops involved in the conflict. Just as in 1894–95, he expected the Japanese to land substantial ground forces

Iaponiia., 25–6. See also, RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 329, ll. 69–71ob, and d. 481, ll. 276, 278ob.–279, and RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 1723, ll. 10–11ob.

¹¹⁰ See especially, Iu. F. Subbotin, "A. N. Kuropatkin i Dal'nevostochnyi konflikt," in I. S. Rybachenok, et al., eds., *Rossia: Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie i voennyi potentsial v seredine XIX-nachale XX veka* (Moscow, 2003), 148–49.

¹¹¹ Ian Nish, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 1985), 195–204.

on the Asian mainland. In response, he would essentially trade space for time, yielding up Port Arthur to siege and withdrawing initial Russian ground force concentrations into central and even northern Manchuria. After an initial defensive phase to cover reinforcement and concentration, Kuropatkin would shift to the offensive to drive the Japanese from Manchuria and possibly also Korea.¹¹² His concept of an initial defensive phase explains his emphasis on delaying actions fought after the immediate outset of conflict by highly-mobile detachments employing partisan-style operations.

As the war minister was fashioning this strategy, it appears that his conception of the Japanese threat assumed both a public and a private face. There is evidence to indicate during inter-ministerial conferences that he diminished the threat in the Far East, possibly to forestall additional diversion of military resources from the western frontier. For example, the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich recalled that Kuropatkin reported in the summer of 1903 upon his return from a Far Eastern inspection tour that "everything is going well."¹¹³ Apparently the war minister had asserted that "the Japanese Army does not constitute a serious threat for us," and that the foe was only the product of "the fervent imagination of British agents." Kuropatkin also apparently added that Port Arthur might withstand a ten-year siege, and that the Russian fleet would show the Japanese Emperor "where crabs spend the winter."¹¹⁴ The grand duke, who had lived two years in Japan, so objected to this characterization of the Japanese military that he took his case to the tsar. When the grand duke called Japan "a nation of splendid soldiers," the tsar simply smiled and shrugged his shoulders, responding, "the Russian emperor does not have the right to oppose the opinion of recognized authority with that of his relatives."¹¹⁵ For various reasons, it appeared that the tsar shared the sense of complacency inherent in his war minister's public version of a less than consequential Japanese threat.

However, War Minister Kuropatkin's evaluation of the threat also retained a more realistic and private face. His Far Eastern tour

¹¹² Ibid., 158–62.

¹¹³ Velikii kniaz' Aleksandr Mikhailovich, *Kniga vospominanii* (Moscow, 1991), 174.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 175.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. On this exchange, see also, Iu. N. Kriazhev, *Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost' tsaria Nikolaia II v period 1904–1914 gg.* (Kurgan, 2000), 43–4.

during the summer of 1903 caused him to recommend incremental strengthening of Russian defenses against the Japanese and also permitted him first-hand to observe selected elements of the Japanese army. Kuropatkin was in Japan between 29 May and 16 June, and on 1 June, he dined with the Japanese war minister. When the conversation of the two war ministers turned to possible future war, Kuropatkin tactlessly asserted that “we very quickly . . . will reduce Japanese squadrons to insignificance.” He went on to brag, “the [Japanese] infantry without covering cavalry will be quickly worn out by our Cossacks.”¹¹⁶ However, despite his bravado, Kuropatkin’s private observations about the Japanese army appear less biased and more sobering than his later remarks in St. Petersburg. On 1 June, after reviewing the Tokyo garrison and observing brief tactical exercises, the Russian war minister recorded in his diary, “In general, the Japanese conveyed the impression of reliable troops.”¹¹⁷ Kuropatkin went on to write that the best way to fight the Japanese would be to understand that “first of all it is necessary for us to use our superiority in cavalry.”¹¹⁸ Beyond cavalry action, he also suggested a formula to govern the employment of Russian troops against the Japanese:

On the defensive one of our battalions can contend with two Japanese battalions. But on the offensive, we must count on a two-to-one advantage. The Japanese are not worse than the Turks, and in isolated situations they can create for us new Dubniaks and Plevnas, where five-six poorly-led Russians could not overcome one Turk situated in the most rudimentary entrenchment.¹¹⁹

These and other remarks indicate that Kuropatkin came away from the Far East with a sense of Japanese military power that he evidently failed to impart to the tsar and other influential governmental figures. Indeed, the war minister’s private remarks reveal a perspective on

¹¹⁶ E. Iu. Sergeev and I. V. Karpeev, eds., “Iaponskie dnevniki A. N. Kuropatkina,” *Rossiiskii Arkhiv*, no. 6 (1995), 414.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 417.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 418. Kuropatkin’s faith in cavalry superiority was not reflected in Russian plans for troop mobilization in the Far East. By the end of the first month of conflict, planners anticipated deployment of fewer than 25 Cossack squadrons along the Yalu, far fewer than the number that subsequent realities indicated might discharge combined requirements for security, reconnaissance and deep raiding. See, VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 235–36.

¹¹⁹ “Iaponskie dnevniki,” 418. Plevna and Gorni Dubniak were especially bloody battles during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, in which frontal assaults by Russian infantry often failed at great cost against prepared Turkish positions.

the Japanese military that more resembled General Vogak of the mid-1890s than Colonel Vannovskii of more recent vintage. Coincidentally, General Vogak and Lieutenant Colonel Samoilov had accompanied the war minister in his tour of Japan. War Minister Kuropatkin's remarks were also informed by past experience, in this instance the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78. Still, until the Japanese proved themselves militarily superior to the Turks, Kuropatkin simply could not conceive of a Japanese army that was the rough equivalent of a good European army. Meanwhile, the ambivalence between his public and private versions of the threat would extend into the first months of the Russo-Japanese War.¹²⁰

By the end of 1903, Kuropatkin's emphasis on a hard sphere of influence in central and northern Manchuria was of little immediate relevance in resolving deadlocked negotiations with the Japanese over Korea. Neither was the tsar's avowal that he would not permit a war to occur.¹²¹ Increasingly, the Russians confronted a dilemma with serious strategic implications. The tsar's stubbornness, coupled with his commitment to a peaceful resolution of differences with Tokyo, precluded either outright abandonment of negotiations or substantial concessions to the Japanese over northern Korea. In effect, northern Korea was mortgaged to Port Arthur, since the introduction of Japanese military and naval forces north of Chemulpo (the port city of Seoul) would automatically compromise the Kwantung peninsula and the security of the Russian Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur.¹²² Meanwhile, as the situation in the Far East grew increasingly tense by the end of December 1903, the tsar ordered Admiral Alekseev to refrain from provocation, although he might take limited measures for improving defensive readiness.¹²³ These measures included bringing Port Arthur and Vladivostok to a wartime footing, but they did not include troop mobilization in the Far Eastern and Siberian military districts. Meanwhile, a cruiser and a gunboat, the *Variag* and the *Koreets* respectively, remained at Chemulpo to safeguard Russian local interests and to keep an eye on the Japanese.

¹²⁰ See, for example, Martynov, *Vospominaniia*, 61–2, and Sobolev, *Kuropatkinskaia strategii*, 275–77, and 283–84.

¹²¹ See, for example, Velikii kniaz' Aleksandr Mikhailovich, *Kniga vospominanii*, 177, and Kriazhev, *Voenno-politicheskaia deiatel'nost'*, 46.

¹²² RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 500, ll. 225–27.

¹²³ RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 500, ll. 228–228ob, and VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 67–71.

Essentially, the impasse over Korea both tied Alekseev's hands and partially blinded him to the extent of war imminence. Since mid-1903 a steady stream of messages from the military and naval attachés in Japan informed both him and St. Petersburg that the Japanese were making serious preparations for future military operations.¹²⁴ However, conventional Russian wisdom held that these preparations were in all probability a prelude to the rapid occupation of Korea, and possibly only southern Korea. An old saw holds that the best way to hide an elephant is inside a herd of elephants. In this instance, the likelihood of an occupation of Korea became Japan's herd of elephants. With no radio communications between Port Arthur and Chemulpo, and with the telegraph in Japanese hands, Admiral Alekseev had no way of knowing in a timely manner whether Japanese intentions and concomitant naval and ground force deployments extended north of Chemulpo and the 39th parallel.¹²⁵ His last instructions from the tsar on the eve of war limited him to resisting Japanese incursions into northern Korea and in the Korean Gulf.¹²⁶ At best, these orders meant that the initiative in any future conflict had already been ceded to the Japanese.

Amidst various communications from the military and naval attachés in Japan, information on the rate at which the Japanese high command was impressing and chartering maritime transportation assets should probably have sounded a clear early warning of imminent large-scale operations. Already on 24 December 1903, Admiral Alekseev reported to the tsar that the Japanese government had chartered "a significant number of transport vessels."¹²⁷ There followed a report on 31 December from Captain 2d rank Rusin that the navy had impressed 130,000 tons' worth of civilian transports and had halted commercial shipping to Australia, the United States, and Europe. On 6 January 1904, Rusin reported that 45 transport vessels had been impressed for military service. Finally, on 18 January, Rusin reported that an additional 60 vessels had been chartered by the Japanese government.¹²⁸ The sheer number of commercial transport

¹²⁴ See, for example, RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 500, ll. 2–12, 108–109, and RGAVMF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2315, ll. 53–60ob., and d. 2823, ll. 96–96ob.

¹²⁵ RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 500, ll. 225–27.

¹²⁶ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 275.

¹²⁷ RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 500, ll. 225–27.

¹²⁸ IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, pp. 132–35, and RGAVMF, 4, 417, op. 1, d. 2325, ll. 38–9, and d. 2823, ll. 96–96ob.

vessels now in Japanese military and naval service should have been an obvious indicator that Tokyo's intentions involved more than a mere occupation of southern Korea. Still, when Admiral Alekseev pleaded for permission to increase Russian military readiness, his pleas fell on the proverbial deaf ears.

There remains only the problem of surprise, which in some ways was not so surprising. As early as 1896, then-Rear Admiral Stepan Osipovich Makarov wrote that "The Japanese are students of the English, and the latter, as examples indicate, do not shrink from hostile actions even before the declaration of war."¹²⁹ From this time until the very receipt of news about Admiral Togo's surprise torpedo attack against the Russian Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur on the night of 26–27 January 1904, the issue of sudden attack without war declaration loomed not far in the background of Russian military and naval conjecture. One of the problems was that the very nature of Port Arthur's naval facilities seemed to invite surprise. Because the inner anchorage was small and egress to the open sea so limited—the full squadron might sortie only over two changes of the tide—the only way to assure readiness for instant sortie was to anchor in the exposed open roadstead outside the entrance to Port Arthur. Shortage of funds precluded construction of a torpedo-proof floating boom behind which the squadron might safely anchor. Therefore, on 19 January 1904, when Rear Admiral Oskar Viktorovich Stark moved the squadron to the outer roadstead in anticipation of possible sortie, his vessels now lay vulnerable to torpedo attack.

It was not that Russians after Makarov had not toyed with the idea of a sudden Japanese naval onslaught, including a torpedo attack, without benefit of war declaration. During strategic naval war games held at the Nicholas Naval Academy in the winter of 1902–03, the scenario began with a night-time Japanese torpedo attack at Port Arthur. However, despite what subsequent accounts averred, the attack in the war game actually followed immediately on the heels of a formal Japanese war declaration. The point was that the attack came so soon after the declaration that the situation amounted to a surprise. Upon receiving notional news that Japan had declared war,

¹²⁹ P. N. Simanskii, comp., *Sobytiia na Dal'nem Vostoke, predshestvovshie russko-iaponskoi voine. 1891–1903 gg.*, repr. and ed. V. A. Zolotarev, *Rossiia i Iaponiia na zare XX stoletii* (Moscow, 1994), 522.

participants playing the Russian side in the war game cleverly avoided the sudden attack by immediately redeploying the Russian squadron to nearby Dal'nii Bay. When Japanese attackers reached Port Arthur, they confronted only a handful of Russian torpedo boats.¹³⁰

Although it is not clear whether Admiral Alekseev was privy to the course of the war game, his subsequent correspondence revealed a genuine concern for the possibility of an unexpected onset of hostilities. On 7 July 1903, in a personal letter to Captain 2d rank Rusin, Alekseev wrote, "At the given moment, as is evident to you from my telegrams, I have become quite concerned with the issue of the degree to which a break with Japan could be sudden, so to speak, with the possibility of confrontation without a preliminary exchange of diplomatic notes and so forth." Admiral Alekseev then requested Rusin to inform him directly and immediately of any changes of the situation in Japan that might portend an impending crisis in relations with that country. "Look at the barometer and tell me honestly what it reads," the Admiral continued, because "you know how important it is for me to be oriented in order to correctly deploy the squadron."¹³¹ Other than the continued submission of substantive reports, the archives are silent on how Rusin might have responded to this specific request.

The same sort of calculus bothered War Minister Kuropatkin. On the morning of 29 December 1903, while considering how to advise the tsar in responding to Admiral Alekseev's requests for greater latitude in preparing the defenses of Kwantung for possible hostilities, Kuropatkin sent an urgent request to the 8th Section (Military-Historical) of the Main Staff. By 2100 hours that evening, the war minister wanted answers to three questions related to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. First, had the Japanese mobilized their army before a declaration of war on China? Second, had the Japanese attacked the Chinese fleet before a formal declaration of war? And, third (and, actually a fourth), what had been the subject of negotiations between the two powers, and had the Japanese concentrated their troops before a declaration of war? Obviously, Kuropatkin was looking for clues and indicators. When the answers came later the

¹³⁰ IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, pp. 113–14, and RGAMVF, f. 417, op. 1, d. 2866, ll. 22–34, 43–4, and 75–75ob.

¹³¹ Petrov, "Iz predystorii russko-iaponskoi voiny," 70.

same day, they were probably of not much comfort. First, the 8th Section answered that three of eight Japanese divisions had been brought to wartime footing before the declaration of war. Second, during the course of negotiations (and before war declaration) in July 1894 three Japanese warships had sunk a Chinese troopship carrying 1,100 men bound for Korea. And third, while negotiations were still under way over the nature of Chinese concessions to the Japanese in Korea, the Japanese had occupied Seoul with 5,000 troops and had defeated Chinese forces at Ansan, again before war declaration.¹³² Beyond ordering his staff to redouble its planning effort for the Far East, Kuropatkin appears to have made little additional use of this information.¹³³

Kuropatkin was not alone with his premonitions. On the very morning of the day of the Japanese attack, 26 January 1904, General Adjutant Sakharov at the Main Staff addressed a note to the war minister about the distinct possibility of a sudden Japanese incursion into Korea. Further, he wrote, "in the interest of supporting that operation, they can attack our fleet in the vicinity of its current disposition, thus paralyzing the significance of our naval forces at the point, which at the given moment has decisive importance." Therefore, he suggested that it would be advisable for the Russian Pacific Squadron to sortie, so that "it might be shifted to the area of initial Japanese operations."¹³⁴ At about the same time and not far away, at the Kronshtadt naval base, Vice Admiral Makarov was busily drafting his own memorandum to Admiral Fedor Karlovich Avelan, Director of the Naval Ministry. Makarov was concerned because he had learned that the Pacific Squadron had been shifted to Port Arthur's outer roadstead. He wrote, "The stationing of vessels in the external anchorage will give the enemy the opportunity to conduct a night attack." He predicted that no amount of defensive measures could protect the squadron from an energetic torpedo attack pressed home at night by a determined enemy. The losses would be heavy, because in his view "anti-torpedo nets cannot cover a vessel's entire freeboard, and besides, many of our ships do not even have nets." Makarov concluded his missive by warning "if we

¹³² RGVIA, f. 400, op. 4, d. 500, ll. 239–40.

¹³³ Voennoe Ministerstvo, *Vsepoddanneishii otchet*, 6–7.

¹³⁴ VIK, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, I, 273–74, and IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, p. 175.

do not now shift the fleet into the interior anchorage, then we will have to do it following the first night attack, after paying dearly for the mistake.”¹³⁵

These premonitions, like many other elements within the overall picture of Russian intelligence before the war with Japan, remained—to use modern parlance—unconnected dots. On the basis of archival and scattered published materials, it is possible to conclude that the Russians possessed far better intelligence on the Japanese than has heretofore been judged the case. However, for various reasons, officials in St. Petersburg and at Port Arthur often failed to avail themselves of the materials and advantages they had at hand. In some important instances, key elements of information simply lay beyond the grasp of even the better intelligence operatives. In other instances, the operatives allowed prejudices to color their judgment and interpretation, thereby seriously distorting the conclusions that might be drawn from otherwise valuable observations. In still other instances, major figures either ignored important indicators or redefined them to suit the set of circumstances in which they wanted to believe. It is not without reason that a traditional Russian proverb holds that “None is so blind as those who will not see.”

¹³⁵ Simanskii, comp., *Sobytiia na Dal'nem Vostoke*, 522, and IKpriMGSh, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, bk. 1, pp. 192–95.

DIFFERENCES REGARDING TOGO'S SURPRISE ATTACK ON PORT ARTHUR

Aizawa Kiyoshi

In the first half of the twentieth century, Japan fought two wars—the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 and the Pacific War of 1941–1945—against Russia and America respectively, the two great powers that would go on to divide the world during the second half of the century. Moreover, in both of these conflicts Japan opened hostilities with a surprise naval attack. In challenging great powers like Russia and America, Japan considered it essential to take advantage of surprise to inflict initial physical and psychological damage because of the limits the Japanese economy imposed on war making capabilities. The initiative gained, it was hoped, would carry Japan through to victory.

Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet and Pearl Harbor attack planner Yamamoto Isoroku, opened the Pacific War with America with the following observations:

We have much to learn from the Russo-Japanese War. The lessons concerning the opening of hostilities are: 1) favorable opportunities were gained by opening the war with a sudden attack on the main enemy fleet; 2) it is regrettable, but true, although there are exceptions, that the morale of our torpedo division was not necessarily very high and its capabilities were insufficient; and 3) both the planning and implementation of the blockade operation were not sufficiently thorough. We must make efforts, based on these successes and failures, to handle the opening of the war with America much more successfully. Furthermore, we must be prepared to act decisively to secure victory on Day One of hostilities.¹

¹ National Defense College, War History Office (Boueichou Bouei Kenshusho Senshishitsu), *War History Series: The Hawaii Operation (Senshi Sousho Hawaii Sakusen)*, (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1967), p. 84. Yamamoto graduated from Naval Academy in November 1904, in the last stages of the operation on Port Arthur, and the following year he became one of the last officers to participate in the Russo-Japanese War, as crew on board the first-class cruiser *Nisshin* in the main forces of the Combined Fleet that took part in the Battle of Tsushima.

Admiral Togo Heihachiro, Commander of the Combined Fleet that attacked Port Arthur and of the subsequent blockade operation, emerged from the Russo-Japanese War as the man who led Japan to victory, particularly after the decisive victory in the Battle of Tsushima. But, as Yamamoto noted, he held serious doubts about Togo's operations at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war. This can be seen through his use of words like "regrettable," "not sufficiently thorough," "failures," and his argument that Japan needed to handle operations at the opening of the war with America "much more successfully." Yamamoto, therefore, went into the Pearl Harbor operation believing that he had to do much better than Togo despite the larger than life reputation the latter had obtain as a result of the "victory" against Russia.

In fact, even before the Russo-Japanese War, the Naval Staff had expressed doubts about Togo's fitness to command the forces that launched the surprise attack on Port Arthur.² However, ultimately, the operation was implemented under Togo's command. What then were the differences of opinion between Togo and the Naval Staff? The aim of this paper is, firstly, to outline the status of the Japanese Navy in the Far East prior to the outbreak of war, to clarify the differences in the views of Togo and the Naval Staff, and finally to consider the impact of this clash of opinions on the subsequent development of the campaign, both on land and at sea.

A Comparison of Naval Power at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War

A comparison of the total national force or power of Japan and Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century, shows that Russia's forces were clearly superior. However, a comparison limited to naval forces in the Far East when the Russo-Japanese War began in early 1904, shows Russian and Japanese Naval forces to have been quite evenly matched. Russia's Pacific Fleet consisted of 7 battleships and 4 first-class cruisers, totaling approximately 190 thousand tons, while the Japanese fleet consisted of 6 battleships and 6 first-class cruisers

² See Bruce Menning, "Miscalculating One's Enemies" in Wolff et al., eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, Vol. 2, for the Russian Navy's unflattering evaluation of Togo as commander.

(the 6:6 fleet) and totaled approximately 260 thousand tons. Moreover, when geographical conditions and logistic capabilities are taken into consideration, there is little doubt that Japan had the advantage in regional naval power. Some calculations of relative naval power, therefore, factored into the Japanese decision to open hostilities with Russia at this time.³

Japanese naval planners, however, understood that as time progressed they were going to lose their advantage against the Russians because Nicholas II kept building ships. In other words, the Japanese political and military leaders concluded that should war with Russia become unavoidable, the naval balance made it imperative that Japan open hostilities as soon as possible. The Japanese Navy was aware that the Russian policy in the Far East stated that “the only means of suppressing Japan and wielding our power in the East, is to possess a fleet superior to the Japanese Navy at all times” and that the Russian Navy was pursuing a policy of large-scale expansion for this purpose. In addition, the Japanese Navy was aware that upon completion of this expansion plan, the Russian Pacific Fleet, when combined with the Baltic Fleet, would total approximately 510 thousand tons, almost double that of the Japanese Fleet.⁴

On the Russian side, from 1902 until 1903 the Russian Navy was planning the “1905 Operation against Japan”. The reason for choosing 1905 was that by then, the expansion of the Pacific Fleet underway since 1898 under the Naval Expansion Plan would be completed, and the main Russian forces of 10 battleships and 13 cruisers would be concentrated in Port Arthur, with another 4 cruisers stationed in Vladivostok. Furthermore, this operational plan was made under the premise that “war would break out unexpectedly, that Japan would open hostilities without making a prior declaration of war” and even then would not require reinforcements to be sent from the Mediterranean or Baltic fleets. Because of Russian naval construction, the Japanese anticipated that once the expansion had been completed,

³ Naval Staff (ed.) (Kaigun Gunreibu hen), *Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8 (Gokuhi Meiji sanju nana hachi nen Kaisenshi)*, Vol. 1, Book 1, p. 20.

⁴ Ibid., p. 19. Naval Ministry Secretariat (Kaigun Daijin Kanbou), *Confidential: Record of Discussions of Participating Officials about the Russo-Japanese War (Gokuhi Nichirosen'eki Sankasha Shidankai Kiroku)*, (National Institute for Defense Studies (Bouei Kenkyusho zou), Microfilm Nichiro M37–436).

the Russian Pacific fleet would be superior to the main Japanese naval forces (the 6:6 fleet).⁵

Ultimately, the Russo-Japanese War did begin as the Russian side had anticipated without Japan “making a prior declaration of war,” however, the timing frustrated Russian hopes, by being in early 1904. Moreover, the reorganization of the Russian Pacific Fleet was behind schedule,⁶ and by the time of the outbreak of war, the Russian Fleet stationed in the Far East was, as described earlier, only just about evenly matched with the Japanese Fleet. From the Japanese point of view, this timing amounted to a golden opportunity to defeat the Russian Navy in the Far East. However, should Japan let this chance slip, it had the potential to be transformed into a crisis for the Japanese side. Should the Russian Pacific Fleet survive the Japanese surprise attack and receive reinforcements from Russian forces in Europe, there was the potential for a shift in the balance of Russian and Japanese Far Eastern naval forces which would cause a massive reversal in Japanese fortunes. Therefore, it was absolutely essential for the Japanese side to make the most of this chance to defeat the Russian Pacific fleet on its own. And, the surprise attack on Port Arthur was planned as the operation for this purpose.

The Japanese Navy's Plan of Operations

(1) *The “Confidential Naval War History”*

The primary purpose of this paper is to use the hitherto little read source, the “Confidential Naval War History,” to outline the planning process and implementation of operations against Russia by the Japanese Navy, paying specific attention to the surprise attack operation on Port Arthur. One of the most useful documents for understanding the state of preparation of the Japanese Navy leading up to the Russo-Japanese War is “Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8” (henceforth, the “Confidential Naval War History”), which the Naval Staff compiled in 150 volumes from

⁵ (Russian) Naval Staff (ed) (Roshia Kaigun Gunreibu hen), *Naval History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–5* (*Ronichi Kaisenshi*), Vol. 1, Part 1, p. 162.

⁶ Shinobu Oe, *Baltic Fleet* (*Baruchikku Kantai*), (Chuo Koron Shinsha, 1999), pp. 158–168.

1905 to 1911. But for the period in which the 'confidential' classification continued, in other words, until the Japanese Navy ceased to exist at the end of the Second World War, this naval history was not open to the public and only the four volumes which were not classified as 'confidential' were published as the "The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37-8". Therefore, serious research into the Japanese Navy's role in the Russo-Japanese War had to wait until the end of the Second World War. Moreover, to make the situation worse, due to the confusion at the end of the Second World War, just one set of the "Confidential Naval War History" was left intact. Even then, the "Confidential Naval War History" was not made public for a long period after the war and ultimately, the "Confidential Naval War History" was not used in scholarship in Japan until the mid 1980s, almost 40 years after the war had ended.⁷

Research that used the "Confidential Naval War History," however, was conducted in pre-war Britain because as Japan's ally, the British had received a copy of the "Confidential Naval War History". Based on this document, Julian S. Corbett produced research entitled "Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905". However, his research was also treated as confidential, and only top-ranking British Naval officials were able to read it. Ultimately, Corbett's book was published in 1994, 50 years after the end of the Second World War.⁸

(2) *The Naval Staff's Plan of Operations*

From the beginning of 1903, Russo-Japanese relations became increasingly tense and from the first half of 1903 onwards this convinced the Japanese Navy to gradually enter its war preparation mode. On April 29th, Navy Minister Yamamoto Gonbe ordered the commanders-in-chief of the Standing Fleet and each Naval District to "ensure that there would be nothing left unprepared should the order to action come one morning". Then, on May 7th, to prepare for the sudden outbreak of war, the Japanese Navy entered into a five-stage training exercise, the first stage of which consisted of immediately

⁷ Saburo Toyama, *Research into Russo-Japanese War (Nichiro Kaisenshi no Kenkyu)* (2 Parts), (Kyouiku Shuppan Senta, 1985).

⁸ Julian S. Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War; 1904-1905*, 2 Vols, (Annapolis: 1994).

readying the crew members of the 6:6 Fleet to ensure that “there would be no obstacle to sending them into battle”.⁹ On October 19th Minister Yamamoto selected Togo to replace Hidaka Sonosuke as Commander in Chief of the standing fleet, and at the end of the year, on December 28th, the standing fleet was recomposed into the Combined Fleet, thus placing it on a war-time footing. Then, two days later on December 30th, after a heated debate between the General Staff and the Naval Staff, it was agreed between the Army and Navy that “the war will be begun by the Navy”.¹⁰

At the beginning of January 1904, the year in which the war was to begin, the Naval Staff decided on the following “Plan of Operations against Russia”. First, regarding “seizing the opportunity at the beginning of the war,” the need for a strategic surprise attack at the beginning of the war was emphasized based on the following judgment.

The benefits of suddenly attacking a Russian Fleet divided, as it is today, between Port Arthur and Vladivostok, and as yet not fully prepared for war, need hardly be explained. Whether or not the Empire will definitely be able to complete its ultimate war aims is dependent on whether or not we seize the opportunity at the start of the war. And in order to seize the opportunity, the choice of the timing for the start of the war must be made appropriately. The decision to begin a war is, of course, one that should be made according to Imperial politics and not decided merely on strategic considerations. But once the Imperial Government decides to solve matters by means of force, it will be of the utmost importance to select the timing of the opening of hostilities appropriately and according to strategic needs.¹¹

Regarding the detailed plan of operations, the following four possibilities were considered.

Plan 1, against a Russian Fleet divided between Port Arthur and Vladivostok, which has not prepared its defenses, we go ahead and seize the opportunity.

Plan 2, against a Russian Fleet divided between Port Arthur and Vladivostok, but whose defenses and war preparations have been completed.

Plan 3, against a Russian Fleet which, having been divided to the east and west of the Korean Peninsula, has recombined, or is attempting to recombine in one place and operate as one.

⁹ Naval Staff (ed.), *Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8*, Vol. 1 Book 1, pp. 22–24.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 37.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 41–43.

Plan 4, against a Russian Fleet which has made every effort to build up rigid defenses at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, and main squadrons have not emerged, so that due to the domestic and international political situation, our forces remain unable to approach the enemy base of operations.¹²

However, of these four plans of operation, the resolute implementation of Plan 1 was recommended as follows. "The implementation of Plan 1 can only be carried out appropriate to the judgment of the political and strategic situation, and in order to gain the quickest and largest possible advantageous effect, the implementation of Plan 1 must be resolute". And in the plans for conduct of Plan 1, it stated that "in order to maintain, both domestically and abroad, the secrecy of the movements of our forces, we should use every means possible, and have the Combined Fleet (1st and 2nd Fleets) depart from Sasebo to attack the enemy fleet at Port Arthur". Further, it expressed the pessimistic view that, "in the case where we fail to seize the opportunity at the start of the war, and as a result have to rely on Plan 2, Plan 3 or Plan 4, the progression of naval operations would be delayed and therefore in the early stages of operations, the maintenance of the interests of the Empire on the Korean Peninsula would become extremely difficult, so that we may have to temporarily abandon them". In this way, the Naval Staff repeated the necessity of "seizing the opportunity," in other words, of resolutely implementing Plan 1 (the surprise attack operation on Port Arthur) and emphasized how important this was to the execution of the entire Russo-Japanese War.¹³

(3) *Commander-in-Chief Togo's Plan of Operations*

In contrast to the Naval Staff's Plan of Operations, which stressed the importance of the surprise attack offensive on Russia's main Pacific Fleet at Port Arthur at the start of the war and, in a reply to a private note dated 15 December 1903 from the Chief of the Naval Staff Ito Yosuke, Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet Togo wrote the following suggestion for a plan of operations. First, he estimated that the surprise attack on the main Russian Fleet at

¹² Ibid., pp. 43–44.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 44–48.

Port Arthur could “not easily be accomplished,” and therefore the Japanese Fleet should base themselves on the West coast of the Korean peninsula and: “regularly send out reconnaissance patrols, and now and then attempt to lure out the enemy by baiting them with reconnaissance missions”. If the enemy still did not emerge “we should send our army to Korea”, and as a warning against an enemy assault, send out a combination of “no more than one first-class cruiser and destroyers to patrol”. Then Togo speculated that “if we repeat this, the enemy should eventually emerge” and added that “although at this time our fleet may be divided for the purpose of sending out the patrol as I just described, if we are very careful, it will still be possible to gather together most of our force. It may also be possible to send the destroyers to make a raid after sun-down.” In other words, Togo’s operation plan for the Russian Fleet at Port Arthur was to repeat baiting operations to tempt the enemy to emerge, somehow lure out their fleet and pound them in a “fight to the finish” decisive battle between the main squadrons of both sides.¹⁴

However, this kind of operation plan was only intended to be used in a situation where “first, a declaration of war has been made, and then, orders are given for the fleet to take action,” and Togo added the following operation for situations that did not correspond to this:¹⁵

Once the Imperial Government decides on war, and while the enemy is not yet on full alert, we should send our destroyer squadrons to Hakko haven, find out the enemy’s movements, and instead of sending any declaration of war, have them attack the enemy’s ships lying at Port Arthur or in the Dalian Gulf. Then, the best plan to block the enemy’s escape would be to sink *Toyohashi*, by loading it with rocks and cement. However, in undertaking this plan, many of our most capable men would be killed and this is hard to bear, but it is also a source of great pride that there are those among us prepared to die in implementing this plan.

The two operations Togo added in his note went on to become the operations actually carried out, as the surprise attack operation on Port Arthur that opened the war and the subsequent Port Arthur

¹⁴ Naval Staff (ed.), *Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8*, Vol. 1, Book 2, pp. 15–17.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.

blockade operation. What remains uncertain is how much weight Togo himself placed upon these two operations, and in particular the former before the outbreak of the war.

Moreover, regarding the division of Russian cruisers at Vladivostok, Togo stated that in his operational plan "there is no special plan to deal with the large cruisers sent to threaten Hokkaido . . . We had better let the enemy do what he likes at Otaru,"¹⁶ leaving no doubt that he was giving priority to the operations involving the Russian main squadrons at Port Arthur.

The emergence of differences of opinion between Togo and the Naval Staff

The details of the Plan of Operations for the Combined Fleet in opening the war against Russia went on to be thrashed out between the Naval Staff and the Combined Fleet Headquarters in the period leading up to the outbreak of the war. During this debate, on January 31, 1904, just before the war began, Commander-in-Chief, Togo provided the Chief of the Naval Staff, Ito with the following note expressing his opinion.

To enable the 1st and 2nd destroyer squadrons to carry out the sudden raid on the enemy fleet lying outside Port Arthur according to orders, it will be necessary to send both these divisions and *Tatsuta* and *Shunjitsu-maru* to Hakko haven in advance. The timing of this will need to be at least two days before the dispatch of the main squadrons, and in order that there be no problems with this, I request that some notice is sent before the dispatch of our main forces is ordered. The blockade of Port Arthur will not be implemented at first."¹⁷

Here, it can be seen that Togo's plan for opening the war, his idea of a surprise attack on Port Arthur, had been adopted as the actual Plan of Operations. Its central idea, the advance dispatching of the destroyer squadrons to Hakko haven on the West coast of the Korean peninsula, was the signal that the Imperial navy was preparing to go to war. But there was no mention of any operation designed to blockade Port Arthur because Togo preferred to wait.

In response, having discussed matters with the Navy Minister Yamamoto, Ito sent a telegram on February 1st stating that "there

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 18–19.

is no problem with sending the 1st and 2nd destroyer squadrons, *Tatsuta* and *Kasuga-maru* in advance to Hakko haven, and the timing of this dispatch can probably be sent as requested".¹⁸ Then on the same day, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, Ijuin Goro sent the following telegram to Togo, asking him about the date planned for launching the raid.

Please inform me, by return, of your answers to the following. How many days after the launch order has been given is the attack by the 1st and 2nd destroyer squadrons on the enemy fleet lying outside Port Arthur scheduled to occur? And, if due to weather conditions, etc., it were not possible to launch the attack, which flotilla would then be sent first to attack the enemy and how many days later would that occur?¹⁹

The Naval Staff was placing priority on a surprise attack to open the war. Therefore, they asked Togo to go ahead with the resolute implementation of Plan 1, from among the possible Plans of Operation for war against Russia. The destroyers of the time were small vessels at just over 300 tons, and their movements were easily inhibited by weather conditions. Because of this limitation Togo should have had an alternate plan in case destroyer squadrons was unable to launch a surprise attack. On February 2nd, Togo sent the following telegram in response.

The attack by the 1st and 2nd destroyer squadrons on Port Arthur will occur on the evening of the second day after the launch order has been given, until dawn the following morning. Should we be unable to implement the plan at this time due to weather conditions, as soon as the weather has cleared, we would go ahead with the attack using the 1st and 2nd destroyer squadrons as planned.²⁰

In response to this, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff Ijuin quite naturally sent a further telegram to Commander-in-Chief Togo saying "inform more precisely of timing of raid."²¹ Too much of a time delay between the adoption of diplomatic measures and the execution of the surprise attack in Ijuin's mind would have a serious impact on the effect of the surprise attack.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 19–20.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 20.

²¹ Ibid.

The timing of making the last diplomatic formalities and the timing of striking the first blow on the Russian fleet are tightly connected. According to your telegram, the timing of the attack is not definite as it depends on the weather conditions, but in a case where it is not possible for the destroyer squadrons to make a raid on the 2nd evening after the orders have been given, please reply as to the definite timing of the attack, including whether or not you plan to go ahead with the offensive using battleship squadrons the following morning, etc.²²

The appropriateness of the repeated questioning of Togo by Ijuin was acknowledged in the "Confidential Naval War History", where it is noted that "to take advantage of a lack of enemy preparation, it is a good strategic plan to strike a heavy first blow first, and for this purpose, the timing of the attack should be made as definite as possible in advance and carried strictly according to the schedule of this plan".²³ However, Togo's response on February 3rd was as follows.

Exposing our fleet to the strong artillery fire of enemy coastal fortresses would strategically be our last resort. Therefore, without using the battleship squadrons if possible, I plan to make a night-attack by the destroyer squadrons to attack the enemy fleet that is under the protection of the fortresses. The possibility that the destroyer attack will be delayed due to weather conditions cannot be ruled out. Nevertheless, I suggest that we go ahead with the diplomatic formalities on the premise that if the destroyer attack cannot be carried out on the 2nd night after orders are given, it will be carried out on the 3rd night after orders are given.²⁴

The difference between the Plan of Operations of the Naval Staff and that of Togo's is clear: Deputy Chief Ijuin and the Naval Staff intended for the surprise attack on Port Arthur to be a devastating first blow and, in accordance with the "Plan of Operation against Russia", wanted to deploy the main squadrons (the battleship and cruisers) of the fleet. Togo wanted to use his destroyer squadron because he viewed the surprise attack on Port Arthur as no more than a "declaration of war," and as a result did not wish to commit his main forces. The fleet was to be preserved for the decisive sea battle once the main enemy forces had been lured out of the safe haven of the fortified port. The "Combined Fleet Tactics" that Togo showed in advance to the divisions under his command on January 9th also

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., p. 21.

²⁴ Ibid.

described “a general plan with tactics of encountering the enemy fleet at sea and having a decisive battle,”²⁵ and already included the “Tei-ji (Letter-T) maneuver” that was later to become famous in the Battle of Tsushima.²⁶

However, looking at how the Russo-Japanese War started and the actual progress of combat, with the first attack on Port Arthur that lasted from late at night on February 8 until February 9, the contradiction or dispute between the Naval Staff and Togo over the opening attack of the war appears at first to have been resolved. This was partly due to good fortune, in that the surprise attack by the destroyer squadrons went ahead according to plan late at night on the 2nd day after the order had been given on February 6th, without being adversely affected by the weather. But even more than that, it was because in addition, the following day the battleships and the rest of the main Japanese fleet, under Togo’s command, bombarded the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. Ultimately, the Combined Fleet had included the participation of the main squadrons in the attack on Port Arthur, as the Naval Staff had hoped.

In fact, contradictions between the positions of Togo and the Naval Staff over this operation had continued to exist. Togo had gone ahead with the implementation of the surprise attack on Port Arthur to open the war, according to his own Plan of Operations without changing it at all. Had the Admiral been insubordinate or was Togo a commander who understood the conditions in the theater of operations better than his superiors on the naval staff?

The Implementation of the Operation

(1) Events up to the start of the war

Anyone observing naval headquarters from February 3 until late at night on February 8 must have noted a flourish of activities. At 7pm on February 3, 1904, the news arrived unexpectedly at Naval Command in Tokyo, that the main forces of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur (comprising 6 battleships 1 first-class cruiser and 5 other cruisers) that were to be the target of the Japanese Navy’s surprise

²⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁶ Often referred to as “crossing the T.”

attack, had already left the port. In response, the next day at 8 pm, the Naval Staff ordered the Combined Fleet gathered in Sasebo to "immediately attack anyone approaching Sasebo and showing signs of hostility". But the Naval Staff's judgment was that, at this time, "not only would it be to their considerable disadvantage to begin a war immediately, they seldom take the initiative themselves in opening hostilities, so until we can obtain more definite information, avoid moving the fleet, and wait for the right opportunity." And in fact, the Russian fleet returned to port on the afternoon of February 4. Then news came in at 3.30 pm on the following day, February 5th, that "all [Russian ships] are moored outside the port". The commotion over the Port Arthur Russian Fleet leaving port just before the start of the war had been resolved without any serious incident.²⁷

Meanwhile the Imperial Government decided on February 4th on a policy of "sending orders to launch the operation to the fleet at the same time as sending our ultimatum, when we break off relations with the Russians." On the following morning February 5th, Navy Minister Yamamoto, Chief of the Naval Staff Ito, and Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff Ijuin visited the Emperor and presented him with the operation orders, saying "we consider that today presents the best opportunity for the opening of the war" and had the orders approved. In the operation orders it said "Combined Fleet Commander-in-Chief is to depart at once; first, attack the Russian fleet in the Yellow Sea". At 2 pm the same day, the Foreign Ministry sent the ultimatum to the Russian Embassy via the German Embassy. This was then sent on to Russia at 4 pm on February 6th. Thus war between Japan and Russia began at last.²⁸

(2) *Operations' policy of Togo*

Because of the decision of the Imperial Government on February 4th, Togo received the following telegram on the same day from Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff Ijuin:

It has been decided to send the orders to the fleet at the same time as carrying out the final diplomatic formalities. Therefore, changes will need to be made to the plan of the 1st and 2nd destroyer squadrons

²⁷ Naval Staff (ed.), *Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37-8*, Vol. 1, Book 1, pp. 72-77, 88.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-79, 87-88.

going ahead to Hakko haven and carrying out a sudden raid two days before the main forces are dispatched.²⁹

In response, Togo changed the original plan, in order to “have the destroyer squadrons and the fleet arrive together to the vicinity Port Arthur”, and there for the first time separate, the destroyer squadrons going on to launch the surprise attack on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. But he also decided that regarding the surprise attack, “if, due to weather conditions, the resolute implementation of the operation is not possible, it will be postponed as the situation demands”. Thus, despite the Naval Staff’s demand as expressed by Ijuin from February 1st to 3rd, “to launch the sudden raid on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur immediately after the final diplomatic procedures have been made”, in other words, for resolute implementation, Togo went on to act in accordance with his response of February 2nd “to postpone the surprise attack operation in the event that the destroyer squadrons cannot go ahead with the resolute implementation due to weather conditions”.³⁰

However, what the telegram of February 4th from Ijuin had shown was that “the fleet’s sortie” was to occur at the same time as “the final diplomatic procedures”, and that if the surprise attack that was supposed to occur immediately afterwards was “postponed” then clearly its effect would be weakened accordingly. Therefore, there is little doubt that Togo attached minimal importance to the policy of the Naval Staff as shown in the ‘Plan of Operations against Russia’, to “seize the opportunity” by means of the “resolute implementation of a first-strike to open the war.”

But to Togo this probably did not seem to be a major problem. The proposed Plan of Operations he had sent in the private note to Ito in mid-December of the previous year, focused precisely on such a case of operations against Russia after a declaration of war had been made, and Togo probably thought that it would be sufficient to carry out ‘baiting operations’ against the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. This became more apparent the day after the surprise attack on Port Arthur by the destroyers had been carried out according to plan on February 8th, from the actions on 9 February of the main squadrons of the Combined fleet under Togo’s command.

²⁹ Naval Staff (ed.), *Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8*, Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 22.

³⁰ Ibid.

(3) *Artillery Bombardment by the Main Squadrons*

At 5 pm on February 5th, the order was given at last to the Combined Fleet to launch the attack to "wipe out the Russian fleet."³¹ The following day, February 6th at 9 am, beginning with the destroyer squadrons, the Combined Fleet departed one by one from Sasebo, with the main squadrons departing at noon. Two days later, late at night on February 8th, the destroyer squadrons carried out the surprise attack on Port Arthur. However, due to a collision incident between two destroyers before the offensive began and difficulty in achieving a charge formation, it ended without having had much effect. The damage inflicted on the Russian Fleet consisted of no more than leaving 2 battleships and 1 cruiser damaged and unseaworthy.³² By 9.30 am on February 9th the Russian fleet at Port Arthur had still not recovered from the confusion created by Togo's marauding destroyers of the previous evening.³³ If Togo had followed up the night attack with an offensive early on the next morning using the main squadrons, which were already in the vicinity of Port Arthur, on the Russian main squadrons, there was a good chance that because of the confusion in Port Arthur, the Japanese navy could have inflicted serious damage on the Russian fleet.

Togo, however, did not begin the artillery bombardment of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur by the main squadrons until noon on February 9th.³⁴ By this time the Russian side had just about recovered from their state of confusion of the previous night and Togo's fleet was subjected to a fierce counter-attack of artillery fire from the Russian fleet and fortress that surround Port Arthur. Then, after about 30 minutes of bombardment, Togo broke away from this area at high speed and, without stopping, proceeded to withdraw to the Japanese base of operations in Asan Bay on the west coast of the Korean peninsula.³⁵ The battleships and the rest of the main squadrons, therefore, were included in Togo's offensive on Port Arthur to open the war, but this ended up being an operation that was not planned

³¹ Ibid., p. 61.

³² Ibid., pp. 147–165, 188–189.

³³ Toyama, Part 1, p. 449.

³⁴ Naval Staff (ed.), *Confidential: The Naval War History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8*, Vol. 1, Book 2, p. 170.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 180. Moreover, the Commander-in-Chief of the Second Fleet gave Togo a report of his opinion that another Port Arthur offensive should be made on the following morning (February 10th) but this suggestion was rejected.

to 'seize the opportunity,' as the Naval Staff had so eagerly desired in the pre-war period.

Nonetheless, Togo's plan had been adopted because just before the Combined Fleet departed Sasebo at 8am on February 6th, the commander of the combined fleet had sent a telegram to Ito describing the "planned action of the fleet" as follows.

The Combined Fleet will depart in order from here today, arrive in the vicinity of Tae-chong-do Island at 8 am on February 8th, then proceed immediately to Port Arthur, and that evening the 1st, 2nd and 3rd destroyer squadrons will seek out the enemy divisions around Port Arthur harbor, and carry out the assault. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd battleship squadrons will take a detour, and appear in front of Port Arthur harbor on the morning of February 9th, and bait the enemy with reconnaissance missions, before entering Asan Bay on the 10th.³⁶

The actions of the main squadron on the 9th consisted of exactly these "reconnaissance missions", and none other than the operation to "lure the enemy out to sea" described in Togo's proposed Plan of Operations of mid-December. Moreover, from the start Togo had never intended to "expose our fleet to a strong artillery bombardment from the enemy coastal strongholds" is clear from Togo's response to Ijuin on February 3rd. Togo's main purpose was to lure out the main forces of the Russian fleet in order to engage them in a decisive battle at sea. Therefore, after only 30 minutes of the "reconnaissance missions," Togo called off the bombardment of Port Arthur by the main squadrons, and that he then he sent it directly to Asan Bay (to arrive in port on the 10th). Consequently, it should be concluded that Togo started the Russo-Japanese war fighting according to his own ideas, plans, and commands.

The Annihilation of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur

Ultimately, the February 8th surprise attack on Port Arthur, was not a decisive blow to the Russian Pacific fleet. The surprise attack was carried out, but was not a 'success' in terms of eliminating Russian seapower in Pacific waters, the goal sought by the Naval Staff. In addition, the Combined Fleet's attempted operations to lure the

³⁶ Ibid., p. 66.

Russian fleet out from Port Arthur and even the operations to blockade Port Arthur on three occasions (in February, March and May) all ended in failure. The operation conceived by Togo of "luring the Russian fleet out to sea and pounding them" was not easily realized. The opportunity to do so finally came on August 10th in the Battle of the Yellow Sea. When the Russian fleet at Port Arthur left port, having been ordered by Nicholas II to move to Vladivostok, Togo's main squadrons of the Combined Fleet engaged them. However, here again Togo was unable to strike a decisive blow to the Russian fleet and, though damaged, most of them were able to return to Port Arthur. In other words, the threat of the Russian fleet, which the Japanese Navy had failed to neutralize in the opening attack of the war, was a threatening 'fleet in being' in mid-August of 1904. Even after that time, the main forces of the Combined Fleet had to remain in the Yellow Sea to blockade Port Arthur. Moreover, the Combined Fleet also incurred damage in the Battle of the Yellow Sea of a scale that required a return-trip home for repairs.

Meanwhile, after Admiral S.O. Makarov, Commander-in-Chief Pacific fleet, died when his ship, the *Petropavlovsk* hit a mine and sunk on April 13th, the Russians decided to create a Second Pacific fleet out of the ships in their Baltic fleet. The newly reorganized fleet, true to its name, was to be sent to the Pacific, and once it had arrived in the Far East was supposed to combine with the surviving Russian fleet at Port Arthur (renamed the First Pacific fleet). If this occurred, the naval balance between Russia and Japan in this region would shift to a Russian advantage. The pre-war anxieties of the Japanese Navy began to be rekindled. Although the reorganized Second Pacific fleet did not actually depart from the Baltic Sea until mid-October, because the Japanese Navy had still not been able to strike a decisive blow to the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, everyone in Japan was becoming increasingly impatient at the continued existence of the Russian naval threat.³⁷ So the army took matters into its own hands and at the end of May, Imperial General Headquarters formed the Third Army to dedicate army divisions to the capture of Port Arthur.

³⁷ Etsu Kuwata (ed.), *Modern Japanese War History (First Edition) The Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War (Kindai Nihon Sensoshi Nissen Nichiro Sensou)*, (Doutai Konwakai, 1995), pp. 507-508.

The mission of the Third Army was “to capture the enemy strongholds at Port Arthur as quickly as possible, and in particular to ensure that the enemy on land does not inflict any harm to the rear of the Second Army under any.”³⁸ In other words, the Third Army was formed in order to ensure the safety of the Second Army as they moved northward up the Liaodong peninsula towards the heartland of Manchuria, the site of the decisive land battles of the Russo-Japanese War. However, it was in fact the Third Army that forced the surrender of Port Arthur, although the Navy had thought they could force the surrender alone, it was the Third Army that achieved what had been exclusively the mission of the Navy, the annihilation of the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. While the goal here is not to describe in detail the siege of Port Arthur, the Third Army did succeed in its mission; it prevented the movement northward of the Russian Army and it denied the Russian Navy its vital Far Eastern base.³⁹

In the middle of November, the Third Army was ordered to “. . . occupy a position that looks down into Port Arthur harbor and deprive the enemy fleet of their combat strength”.⁴⁰ The “enemy fleet” was the remaining force of the Russian fleet that had again survived the bombardment of the Japanese Combined Fleet, in the Battle of the Yellow Sea. Moreover, there was a time restriction to this mission. The Combined Fleet informed the Army that, if, by the end of November there had been no progress in the land war at Port Arthur, the Combined Fleet would end the blockade of Port Arthur. The Combined Fleet, no matter what, had to return to Japan for repairs and refitting to make certain of their preparations in readiness for the arrival of the 2nd Pacific squadron which had already left the Baltic Sea. If the blockade ended, however, then the Russian fleet at Port Arthur would be able to move freely as a ‘fleet in being’. Even worse, the Japanese 2nd army would then be directly threatened by the Russian forces no longer obligated to defend Port Arthur. When asked for his opinion, the Commander of the Third Army, Nogi Maresuke, stated that his army sought to “. . . deprive

³⁸ Takazo Numata, *New History of the Russo-Japanese War (Nichiro Senso Shinshi)*, Heisho Shuppansha, 1924, pp. 49–50.

³⁹ Tani Toshio, *Secret History of the Russo-Japanese War (Kimitsu Nichiro Senshi)*, (Hara Shobo, 1971), p. 166.

⁴⁰ Numata, p. 170.

the enemy fleet of their combat strength by early January," which the Navy rejected as being too late. This was also the opinion of Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet Togo.⁴¹

Ultimately, on 5th December, though suffering many casualties, the Third Army succeeded in occupying Hill 203, a position that looked down into Port Arthur's harbor. Then, by heavy artillery bombardment using Hill 203 for sighting, the Russian fleet at Port Arthur was annihilated the next day, thus ending 10 months of operations against Port Arthur by the Combined Fleet. Togo's Plan of Operations, however, which had been rigidly carried out from the beginning of the war to "lure out the Russian fleet and annihilate them in a decisive battle at sea," ended up never being achieved after all.

Conclusion

Julian Corbett, who read and compiled his research notes from the "Confidential Naval War History" that had been brought to Britain, defended Togo's Plan of Operations as follows:

The [Naval] Staff, in short, appeared to be assuming that the desired degree of control could only be gained by regular offensive operations directed to the destruction of the enemy's sea forces in battle.

The Admiral [Togo] at any rate thought otherwise.

On analysis it will be seen that his view was based on the doctrine that when the geographical conditions are favorable, as they were in this case, absolute command obtained by a regular decision is not necessary for the passage of troops. It is enough to secure the necessary local control and such control can be secured defensively.⁴²

Certainly, the Navy's operations against Port Arthur were important to protect the Army's operations on the Korean and LiaoTung peninsula and, had the Combined Fleet put everything into an offensive just after the war had started and then been annihilated by the Russian fleet or artillery bombardment by the Russian strongholds, Japan may well have lost the war. But it is also true that the Port Arthur operation by the Navy, which was originally to be an operation to assist the Army on land on the Korean peninsula, ultimately

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 170–172.

⁴² Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War*, Vol. I, pp. 72–75.

could not be achieved without the large-scale inclusion of Army divisions (the Third Army). As long as the Russian fleet at Port Arthur continued to exist, they were a threat to Japan's Combined Fleet and to the operational Japanese army. Further, if the Russian Second Pacific fleet arrived in the Far East and combined its strength with the ships at Port Arthur, Japanese victory in the entire Russo-Japanese War would be in jeopardy. Japanese leaders recognized and feared this scenario even before the war began.

Seen from this point of view, there remain doubts about Corbett's high estimation of Togo's "defensive operations". It is probably possible to justify this estimation, since the Russo-Japanese War was a regional war in Manchuria and on the Korean peninsula between two countries possessing virtually the same military capabilities in that area. But in terms of total national force, or power, there was a large difference in the war-making capabilities of each country. Japanese leaders well understood that it would be to their distinct disadvantage for the conflict to turn into a war of attrition. Therefore, the decision to take a few risks and launch a surprise attack in order to inflict great damage on the enemy in the earliest stages of the war, in other words, the Policy of Operations of the Naval Staff, was also an appropriate one. And, the fact remains that there was a reasonable chance of annihilating the Russian Pacific fleet, something that might have been achieved if Togo had pressed home his early morning attack on the morning of February 9.

Yamamoto Isoroku also expressed his opinion about Togo's operations at the start of the Pacific War in contrast with Corbett's view. Regarding the war with America, which was to be the next opening of hostilities with a country of far greater military power, he summed up the lessons to be learned from the surprise attack operation on Port Arthur as follows: "We must make efforts to handle the opening of the war with America much more successfully. Furthermore, we must be prepared to act decisively to secure victory on Day One of hostilities." Yamamoto's surprise attack operation on Pearl Harbor to open the war with America, based on the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War, was exactly such an "offensive" operation, prepared to take great risks in order to "gamble for victory on Day One".

APPENDIX

CONFIDENTIAL: THE NAVAL WAR HISTORY OF
MEIJI PERIOD, YEAR 37-8*Contents*

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Chapter 4, Naval Operations against the Russian fleet in Vladivostok (Vol. 10 and 11)
- Part 2; Naval Operations (2 vols. and 3 auxiliary vols.) 5 books
Chapter 1, Operational Preparations for the Russian Reinforcement fleets (Vol. 1)
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Chapter 1, Hull, Equipment and Fitting out (Vol. 1 and 2)

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Chapter 5, Statistics (Vol. 21)

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Chapter 1, Budget and Settlement of Accounts of Emergency Military Expenditures (Vol. 1 and 2)

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- Chapter 1, Opening of War (Vol. 1)
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- Chapter 1, Diaries before the War (Vol. 1)
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Includes wide range of materials: HQ orders, official unit war diaries from Japanese fleets and naval installations, technical evaluations, translated foreign publications about the war, maps and tables.

Photo Book of naval war history in Meiji years 37–8 [1904–5]

Total: 150 books (31 books were not printed.)

BETWEEN TWO JAPANO-RUSSIAN WARS: STRATEGIC LEARNING RE-APPRAISED

Yokote Shinji

Twentieth-century Manchuria was twice the scene of Japano-Russian wars. Although the locale repeated itself, the outcomes and particulars were different. Unlike the situation in 1904–05, the conflict of 1945 did not extend to the adjacent theater of maritime operations. Moreover, between the Peace of Portsmouth in September 1905 and the renewal of large-scale operations in August 1945, the Soviets had supplanted their Imperial Russian forebears against the common Japanese adversary. The first conflict stretched some 20 months, while the second lasted only a single month. More importantly, Japan was victorious in the first war, while the Soviet Union emerged triumphant from the second.

Whatever the differences, they fail to mask a number of larger similarities that marked the circumstances surrounding the two wars. First, the initiator of hostilities in each case executed a cold-blooded surprise attack against an opponent who had occupied a third country's territory, and who subsequently found himself internationally isolated. Second, the defender, although well aware of imminent danger, remained unprepared for war and quickly suffered a defeat that led to profound social upheaval on the home front. Third, the state whose territory served as a common battlefield for foreigners remained a mere witness to the wars, with no opportunity to affect their outcomes or to alter their unpleasant consequences. Fourth, although each war drove the vanquished nation momentarily from regional politics, the victor in each case failed to extend mastery beyond the area of immediate military occupation. The regional balance of power quickly compensated for the two wars' divergent outcomes.

Thus far, the relationship between the two wars has been refracted through at least three different interpretive prisms. By implication, the military historian David Glantz sees no direct linkage between the two. Of the 1945 conflict, he writes that the Soviet "Manchurian offensive was the last campaign in a long and difficult war, quite literally a postgraduate exercise for the Soviet Army and the culmination

of a rigorous education in combat on the battlefield that had begun in western Russia in June 1941.”¹ In other words, he views the operations of 1945 wholly within the broader context of World War II and the narrower context of the Soviet Great Patriotic War. For Glantz, the war of 1904–05 evidently bore little relevance to what happened four decades later.

More recently, the historian Alexander B. Shirokorad has alleged that the two Russo-Japanese wars were merely distinct phases in the history of inherently antagonistic mutual relations. In his estimation, “the history of the interrelationship between Russia and Japan in the Far East has always been decided by the correlations of military power in this region.”² For Shirokorad, these shifting correlations made themselves felt within a larger organic whole in which relationships separated by four decades were at best indirect and indistinct.

The third and perhaps most widely circulated interpretation of the two wars’ relationship with each other originated with Joseph Stalin. In September 1945, an article appeared over the dictator’s signature in *Pravda*, the official organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He wrote:

But the Russian loss of 1904 during the Russo-Japanese War left dark memories. It lay on our country like a black spot. Our people believed and awaited the day when Japan would be beaten and the black spot removed. We, those of the older generation, awaited that day for 40 years. And that day has come.³

Thus, Stalin drew a direct line between the two wars. His blunt formulation embarrassed many Japanese, even Communists, who considered it too simple-minded for “the best pupil of Lenin.” In contrast, Lenin had declared that the loss of Port Arthur was not a defeat for the Russian people, but for the tsarist regime.⁴ Serious Japanese

¹ David Glantz, *The Soviet Strategic Offensive in Manchuria, 1945: August Storm* (London, 2003), 342.

² A. B. Shirokorad, *Russko-iaponskie voyny 1904–1905* (Minsk, 2003), 712. Based on Russian sources, this volume imparts considerable military information. As in the case of previous studies during the Soviet period, Shirokorad ignores the collaborative aspects of Russo-Japanese relations during the first half of the twentieth century.

³ Stalin in *Pravda*, 3 September 1945.

⁴ The liberal intellectual Hayashi Tatsuo has indicated that Stalin’s commentary evoked a strong response from educated Japanese at the time. See, Hayashi Tatsuo’s article in *Kyosanshugi-teki Ningen* (Tokyo, 1973), 99–103.

analysts accepted Stalin's words as justification to a war-weary Soviet populace for what might have been construed as an unpopular military campaign in the Far East. In the end, Stalin's perspective emphasized ideological and motivational factors, and his views contrasted starkly with the later military-operational emphasis in the works of Glantz and Shirokorad.

The following treatment examines linkages between the two wars, with an emphasis on studies of the first Russo-Japanese war in both countries. The purpose is both to show how the military establishments in each analyzed and digested their war experiences and to determine what kinds of conclusions they drew about themselves and each other between 1905 and 1945. This examination is based on materials either long held secret or unavailable to scholars on both sides. These materials include Julian S. Corbett's analysis of naval operations, Tani Toshio's lectures at the Japanese Military Academy, Alexander Andreevich Svechin's study of strategy at the outset of the twentieth century, and the draft volume of the official Japanese history of the war. A careful perusal of these and related works reveals and elucidates a number of intellectual links that joined "World War Zero" with World War Two. The same perusal also indicates that other links were either ignored, lost, obscured, or forgotten, with potentially important future implications.

Sharing the Experience

Before World War I overshadowed the Russo-Japanese War, both Japan and Russia generated and accumulated a substantial amount of literature on the conflict of 1904–05. A remarkable characteristic of early Japanese studies was the degree to which they incorporated insights from foreign sources. Although both former adversaries valued the accounts of foreign observers, the Japanese were especially zealous in pursuit of outside perspective.⁵ Translations from foreign military literature figured prominently in an enthusiastic Japanese study of the war's various phases and aspects. In their analysis of the war,

⁵ Of several Japanese works translated into Russian, Sakurai Tadaatsu's *Nikudan* [Human Bullets] appeared in 1909, followed by the Japanese Naval General Staff's *Meiji 37–8-nen Kaisennshi* [Naval History of the Meiji Period, Year 37–8] in 1909–1910.

the Russians also relied heavily on translations from the reports of foreign observers and commentators.⁶

The importance of foreign accounts was reflected in the twelve-volume *Rogun-no Kodo* [The Conduct of the Russian Army], published under the auspices of the Japanese General Staff. This multi-volume work relied heavily on materials translated from foreign sources, including memoirs, military observations and analyses, and journalistic reporting. Japanese authors of the *Rogun-no Kodo* consulted an impressive array of foreign observers and authors, ranging variously from the Austro-Hungarian Captain Alexander Spaits and the French Major Louis-Auguste Picard to the American Captain Carl Reichmann and the German Major Eberhard Freiherr von Tettau. Many Russian names figured prominently within the broad array of foreign authors consulted, including A. K. Baiov, N. A. Danilov (both professors at the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff), N. L. Klado, D. P. Parskii, M. A. Svechin (the older brother of Alexander Svechin), E. I. Martynov, and A. N. Kuropatkin. Japanese military specialists also relied heavily on various studies by the German General Staff.⁷

Because of an apparent scarcity of reliable and accessible Japanese materials, Japanese specialists of necessity turned to their former adversaries for detailed accounts of the war. An excellent case in point was an article by Captain Mikhail Andreevich Svechin, "Strategic Outline of the Russo-Japanese War from the Beginning of the Campaign to the Battle at Liaoyang," originally appearing during 1907 in the Russian military monthly, *Voennyi sbornik* [Military Collection] (nos. 2–4). The first volume (1908) of the *Rogun-no Kodo* made full use of this article to describe the Russian army's initial reactions to the Japanese surprise attack. Thus, the Japanese authors wrote:

According to Captain Svechin's work . . . , the initial [Russian] war plan expected the navy to prevent the Japanese army from landing on the coast between Liaodong Bay and the mouth of the Yalu River, and [Russian] troops concentrated in Manchuria to cope with the Japanese army advancing through the western part of Korea. This was the

⁶ Between 1906 and 1914, the Berezovskii press in St. Petersburg published many accounts of foreign military observers in a 32-volume series, *Russko-iaponskaia voina v nabludeniakh i suzhdeniakh inostrantsev*.

⁷ As published by Kaikosha, bibliographical references appear in the first pages of each volume; see, *Rogun-no Kodo*, 12 vols. (Tokyo, 1908–10).

reason why they were more seriously concerned with the Korean littoral than with southern Manchuria. Also according to the above mentioned work, the Russian army aimed to sabotage the Japanese army's advance through difficult mountainous terrain and by this measure to gain time for concentration [of the Russian army], deciding to defend from bases located along routes from the Korean border to the [south Manchurian branch of the Chinese Eastern] [R]ailroad.⁸

Svechin's explanation at least hypothetically helped Japanese analysts understand why the Russian army, after the Russian Pacific Squadron had lost command of the sea, had failed to concentrate along a line that might have anticipated subsequent Japanese ground force advances. Because the Russians were concerned that the Japanese army might land both on the Korean coast and also at Yingkou on the southern Manchurian littoral, the Russians could not concentrate their army at a single point to contend with both contingencies. If the Russians had deployed their troops only along the Yalu, then these deployments would have been vulnerable to simultaneous frontal and flanking attacks. Moreover, if the Japanese army had landed at Shanhaikuan, then the Russian army would have been obliged to surrender Yingkou in order to protect the Mukden-Tientsin Railroad connecting Jinzhou with Sinmin. As a result, the Russians had no choice but to deploy the majority of their forces farther than desired from anticipated initial lines of confrontation with the Japanese. Therefore, the majority of initial Russian troop concentrations lay far to the north, between Liaoyang and Tieling. These concentrations left the task of delaying the Japanese army to a small number of forward detachments deployed at the Yalu and Anshan, while the defense of Port Arthur fell to its garrison.⁹ The nature of these initial Russian dispositions and the rationale behind them provided clear explanations for the Russian army's surprisingly half-hearted resistance and the tendency to withdraw in the face of Japanese landings on the Liaodong peninsula and subsequent advances against Russian lines of communication.

However, the Japanese official history of the war told another story. Published by the Japanese General Staff in 1912, the first volume of *Meiji 37-8-nen Nichiro Senshi* [The Military History of the Meiji Period, Year 37-8] incorporated none of the insights from Captain Svechin. Instead, the official history held that the Russians,

⁸ *Rogun-no Kodo*, I, 227-28.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 229-31.

“being contemptuous of Japanese tactical capabilities,” calculated that they would be able to smash the Japanese with only a small army deployed in East Asia. The official history then explained, “after suffering an enemy attack and practically losing command of the sea, the Russians permitted the Japanese to land anywhere on the coast, and were left with no alternative but to strengthen the defenses of both the Vladivostok and Port Arthur fortresses, and to support troop concentrations for several possible operational directions.”¹⁰ Thus, the Japanese official history omitted a clear explanation of the dilemma confronting the Russian army once the Russian Pacific Squadron had lost command of the sea. Whatever the official history’s assertions, the Russian army had little initial recourse except a resort to evasive actions.

This explanatory lapse may have been a function of intended audiences. Only military officers had access to the first volume of the *Rogun-no Kodo*, featuring Svechin’s commentary. The remaining volumes remained accessible to the broader public. Meanwhile, the official history created the impression for ordinary Japanese that their gallant troops had simply overwhelmed the Russians.

Other Russian commentators made a broader and possibly more lasting impression. Perhaps more typical than Svechin’s article was the fate of Evgenii Ivanovich Martynov’s essay, *Iz pechal’nogo opyta russko-iaponskoi voiny* [From the Sad Experience of the Russo-Japanese War], and General Aleksei Nikolaevich Kuropatkin’s famous memoir, *Russko-iaponskaia voina* [The Russo-Japanese War].¹¹ The first was translated into Japanese in 1907 and the second in 1910. Indeed, Kuropatkin’s memoir was translated twice, the second time at the behest of the Japanese General Staff, which was apparently dissatisfied with the first rough translation.

Martynov’s essay, aiming at radical military reform, amounted to a scathing indictment of defects within the Russian army that were evident before and during the war. His critique catalogued a number

¹⁰ *Meiji 37–8-nen Nichiro-Senshi*, 10 vols. (Tokyo, 1912), I, 60.

¹¹ E. I. Martynov, *Iz pechal’nogo opyta russko-iaponskoi voiny* (SPB, 1906), and A. N. Kuropatkin, *Otchet General-ad’iutanta Kuropatkina* [The Account of General-Adjutant Kuropatkin], 4 vols. (SPB-Warsaw, 1906–07). The fourth volume of this set is often referred to as *Russko-iaponskaia voina* [The Russo-Japanese War], with the subtitle, *Itogi voiny* [The Results of the War], and it is this volume that most frequently appears in foreign translation. It has been reprinted as A. N. Kuropatkin, *Russko-iaponskaia voina, 1904–1905: Itogi voiny* (SPB, 2002).

of shortcomings: the lack of social support for the army; Commander-in-Chief Kuropatkin's incompetent leadership; the navy's negligible contribution to the war effort; the diminished status of officers; insufficient training for the troops; outmoded tactics inherited from the teachings of M. I. Dragomirov;¹² and an irrational army promotion system. Martynov contrasted these negatives with the virtues of the Japanese army. The Japanese army enjoyed strong social support on the basis of a "healthy imperialism," Japanese soldiers were well trained and dedicated to the nation, and Japanese tactics had always been offensively-oriented, in accordance with the requirements of contemporary war.

Likewise, Kuropatkin's memoir focused on distinct shortcomings within the Russian politico-military system that had led to defeat. These shortcomings included an adventurous diplomacy based on an underestimation of Japanese military power; poor logistical preparations as typified by the inadequate Trans-Siberian Railroad; divided and quarrelsome relations within the Russian high command; command incompetence in directing the actions of large-scale armies; and inadequate tactical training for the troops.

These explanations for Russian defeat must have tickled Japanese vanities. After all, frank self-criticism from the defeated army implicitly testified to the excellence of the Japanese army. And, the *Rogun-no Kodo* did not miss the point:

Summing up the above-mentioned characteristics of the Russian army, it is possible to say that every Russian commander and soldier displayed self-sacrificing courage, endurance, and obedience, in addition to other qualities no less characteristic of any great nation in terms of raw attributes. However, a wrong-headed military education that was unsuited to contemporary combat practice, and the inability of commanders at all levels to act arbitrarily [flexibly] on their own authority, when combined with a lack of training for high-ranking commanders and their advisers in directing large-scale armies, brought about unsuccessful results in the last war. . . . In addition to the defects mentioned

¹² Mikhail Ivanovich Dragomirov (1830–1904) was Russia's foremost tactician and trainer of troops during the three decades preceding the Russo-Japanese War. In an age of rapidly-changing military technology, he emphasized the continuing importance of will and cold steel in the attack. Dragomirov drew inspiration from Alexander Vasil'evich Suvorov (1730–1800), perhaps the greatest Russian general of all time. It was Suvorov who had originally coined the phrase, "the bullet's a fool, the bayonet's a fine lad," that was so aptly reflected in Dragomirov's stress on offensive spirit over defensive firepower during infantry assaults.

above, we could not but refer to one more point: the army's morale. Russia went to war without an understandable cause either for the nation as a whole or for the army in particular, and for this reason the leaders did not succeed in inspiring resolve.¹³

It is noteworthy that the Japanese official history echoed the same critical remarks, though in a more circumspect manner. For example, in explaining general attitudes within the Russian army regarding the Japanese, the history intoned:

Although Russia had a large army, only a small part of that army, especially reserve troops, was sent to the war in East Asia. This was mainly because Russia hoped to avoid unfavorable circumstances for dealing with domestic disturbances and neighboring frictions in Europe and Central Asia. But these dispositions apparently also stemmed from contempt for Japanese tactical abilities; they [Russian military leaders] calculated that they would be able to smash the Japanese army with this [small] portion of their army.¹⁴

With reference to the traditional Russian emphasis on the efficacy of the bayonet attack in modern battle, the official history's commentary was more nuanced:

As for training, especially in the infantry, special emphasis fell on the moral factor, as inspired by General [A. V.] Suvorov, but recently issued manuals accounted for infantry firepower. Nonetheless, General Dragomirov's conception that had guided the Russian army for several decades, and that embraced the importance of shock tactics in the attack, was deeply rooted in each commander's brain, leading to the conclusion that not firepower but the bayonet attack with closed formations would decide victory or defeat.¹⁵

In addition, the official history suggested that Russian army failures stemmed from disagreements between the two initial senior commanders, Vice Admiral Evgenii Ivanovich Alekseev and General Kuropatkin. These disagreements supposedly laid bare ambiguous command arrangements and the commanders' inability to control their armies. The clear implication was that their Japanese counterparts had displayed greater unity of purpose and competence in the conduct of tactical and operational maneuver.¹⁶

¹³ *Rogun-no Kodo*, I, 125.

¹⁴ *Meiji 37-8-nen Nichiro-Senshi*, I, 60.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 30-1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 62-3, 142-56; III, 23-32; VII, 39-40, and 42; and IX, 283-84.

These examples suggest that in key instances the varying influence and impact of foreign commentary on early Japanese studies of the Russo-Japanese war flowed from a specific military agenda. As study of the war experience wound its sometimes tortuous course, this agenda increasingly found reflection in formal guidance and policy.

Writing the Japanese Official History of the War

The Japanese General Staff had more than the Russo-Japanese war on its platter of historical studies. During 1904–07, the General Staff published an eight-volume official history of the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–95. In tandem with these volumes, staff officers were busily preparing the above-mentioned *Rogun-no Kodo* and translating the official German history of Franco-Prussian War. The latter appeared in twelve volumes during 1907–10.¹⁷ While gaining valuable experience in the field of military history, the General Staff also consciously began to establish rules for the writing of official history.

As guidance for a projected history of the Russo-Japanese War, Marshal Oyama Iwao in February 1906 issued an eight-point directive, “Meiji 37–8-nen Nichiro-Senshi Hensan Koryo” [General Principles for the Russo-Japanese War History, Year 37–8].¹⁸ According to this directive, the editorial project aimed at describing developments in the land war and preparing materials for future military studies (the Naval General Staff was to work independently on the history of the naval war). Reflecting the cautious mindset of the senior leadership, Oyama prescribed a two-stage editorial process. During the first stage, members of the editorial team were to engage in “describing exactly the true features of the war,” while during the second stage, the team’s examination section was to engage in “eliminating secrets” from the draft history in advance of publication.

The editorial team’s membership is more difficult to identify than the nature of the secrets whose disclosure the team was to guard against. During the second stage of the team’s work, it was to adhere to “Guidelines for the Examination of Drafts on the Russo-Japanese

¹⁷ *Meiji 27–8-nen Nisshin-Senshi*, 8 vols. (Tokyo, 1904–1907); and *1870–1871 Doku-Futsu-Senshi*, 10 vols. (Tokyo, 1907–1910).

¹⁸ This document is kept at Sato-bunko of the Fukushima Prefectural Library, Fukushima, Japan.

War,” a document that appeared in time to coincide with the actual task.¹⁹ This document still exists in undated mimeographed form, bound with Oyama’s directive in the Fukushima Library. Judging from the appearance of these documents, the majority were prepared in the Fourth Section of the General Staff as guidance for editorial work. The document on secrecy bears eloquent testimony to the General Staff’s concern about the possible effects of publication among potential readers. In summary, the document expressed four distinct concerns.

First, there was the issue of safeguarding important information from potential future enemies. In order to obscure Japanese army capabilities, the editorial team was instructed to blur new arrangements for mobilization and the number of days required to complete troop mobilization. Similar prohibitions extended to information about garrison war stocks, transportation capabilities, the organization of special detachments, and various special tactical methods or equipment, knowledge of which might benefit future adversaries. Lest the point be forgotten, a special provision warned that, “things which might relate to a future war even in a minor way should not be subject to detailed accounts.”

Second, the General Staff devoted significant attention to the army’s image. The instructions on secrecy enjoined the editorial team to concentrate “mainly on acts eventually accomplished” and to avoid “clashes or differences of opinion among detachments.” Likewise, “things such as cowardly acts or failures by detachments or some individual should not be written clearly.” Concrete examples to avoid included: inadequate reserves of munitions and shortages of various supplies, including food, clothing, and other materials, the lack of which might have been indicative of the army’s ill-preparedness for war. Another sore spot was insufficient speed in attacking and pursuing the enemy. The General Staff remained very sensitive about the prestige of the army.

Third, the General Staff was also sensitive not only to the diplomatic repercussions of army actions, but also to foreign perceptions of Japanese compliance with international law. Therefore, reference to actions subject to misinterpretation was to be eliminated from the official narrative,

¹⁹ “Nichiro-Senshi Shiko-shinsa-ni-kansuru Chui-sukeki-jiko.”

since such accounts, which could be misunderstood as an indication of the maltreatment of prisoners of war or indigenous people, a violation of neutrality, or an undeniable reversion to banditry by the said people, are apt to cause troubles, do damage to diplomatic relations and decrease the dignity of our army.

Fourth, the General Staff was keen to avoid hurting the navy's feelings. The last point within the document on secrecy instructed the editorial team to seek the navy's prior approval of depictions of joint ground-naval operations, however slight cooperation may have been. This point hints at the delicacy of relations between the navy and the army during and after the war.

Scrupulous instructions dictated the formulation of the army's official history down to the last detail. Accordingly, the author's group within the editorial team first submitted its drafts to the chief of the team. Next, the examination section scrutinized the drafts in light of instructions. Third, the chief of the editorial team again re-examined the drafts. And, fourth, the now thrice-verified drafts were printed and returned to the members of the editorial team for possible further corrections.²⁰ During this entire process, the narrative underwent substantial revision, often with the alteration or elimination of words, paragraphs, and even several pages. The official history on Russo-Japanese war was truly the product of a painstaking process. Unfortunately, this process introduced a number of important lacunae and distortions into the published history.

The Draft and the Official History of the War

Before comparing differences between the draft and final versions of the official history, several caveats are in order. First, the only known existing draft does not embrace the entire official history of the war. Only 23 manuscript volumes remain, covering less than half of the original draft. Second, not all changes are manifest. Although each page bears the army's inscription, *Rikugun*, and although many corrections and deletions are clearly apparent, some parts of the original text are covered by a coating on which revisions were over-written,

²⁰ "Meiji 37-8-nen Nichiro-Senshi Hensan Kitei" [Instructions for Compilation of the Russo-Japanese War, Year 37-8], as issued by Ohshima Kenichi, chief of the Fourth Section of the General Staff in February 1906.

thus completely obscuring the original. Other changes were entered on slips of paper that were pasted over the original. Still other parts of the text were cut away and simply replaced with supplementary pages. As a result, comparisons are possible only where the original texts remain readable. Third, there is no way to prove the inherent veracity of the original text over the revision, because very few documents remain to provide the basis of a cross-check for historical accuracy. However, the corrected contents of the original draft provide a reasonable basis for assuming that this draft reflected the writers' truest intent or interpretation of the subject matter at stake.

Subject to these caveats, it is possible to discern several key areas in which coverage suffered from revision or excision. Japanese war plans constitute one of these key areas. Coverage of this topic in the official history is muted: "Initially our army's general design was to wage a major war in Manchuria, where the army would repulse the main force of the enemy far to the north, while the navy's aim was, first, to destroy the Russian Pacific Squadron, and then to acquire naval supremacy in the Far East."²¹ This generalized narrative conveys little insight into actual pre-war Japanese operational assessments and calculations. In contrast, the uncorrected main draft is more to the point. It argued that, whereas the maritime province (*Primor'e*) belonged to Russia proper in the beginning, Manchuria was only a Russian sphere of influence, with the exception of the leased territories (Port Arthur and the Kwantung peninsula). However, the Russians had devoted more energy and resources to the latter than to the former. The Ussuri region, connected with Europe by rail and with the Pacific Ocean by maritime access, had neither ice-free ports such as Dalian (Dal'nii) and Port Arthur nor such fertile land as Manchuria. In contrast, Harbin, a rail, river, and road hub for the entire region, was a point of strategic and political importance. The draft concluded, "Hence there was no option but to define Harbin as our army's operational aim."

The argument next turned to the routes over which the army must march to Harbin. According to the original draft, the basic options ran through either the Ussuri region or southern Manchuria. On the basis of calculations for disembarking and transiting large formations to the heart of Manchuria, winter climate and rugged

²¹ *Meiji 37-8-nen Nichiro-Senshi*, I, 66.

terrain ruled out a Ussuri option. Other factors supported southern Manchuria as a better option for the Japanese army:

Political considerations also figured in the operational equation. On the one hand, Japan was required to force Korea into complete submission, but on the other hand [the southern Manchurian option] could not but make China observe neutrality. Moreover, Japan, having advocated China's territorial integrity [against Russian aggression before the outbreak of the war], was required to operate within the area mentioned as its declared direct aim.

Thus, according to the draft, the larger international political context supported the Manchurian option.²² The official history's vague assertions watered down the particulars, rendering the analysis virtually meaningless.

The original planning calculations also underscored two important points. The first was that the Japanese General Staff accorded due consideration to several operational directions leading to Harbin. Several paragraphs referring to plans for operations in the Ussuri region were carefully erased. The General Staff probably did not want to admit after the war that pre-war considerations had identified the Ussuri region and Harbin as objectives. In fact, these place names were not allowed to appear in the official war history. The second important point was that the General Staff evidently failed to consider the necessity of seizing Port Arthur. No reference (eliminated or not) in the original draft history was found to indicate that Port Arthur might become an initial objective for the Japanese army. This oversight was sufficiently grave to attract the attention of Julian Corbett's later commentary on Japanese planning:

Regarded as a primary object Port Arthur should be attempted at once. Regarded as a means of securing permanent command [of the sea], operations against it should follow the occupation of Korea. In either case its reduction would seriously complicate the advance into Manchuria. To seize it by a *coup de main* oversea in the face of the Russian Squadron, as France and England attempted Sevastopol, seems never to have been seriously contemplated.²³

²² Draft *Meiji 37-8-nen Nichiro-Senshi*, 10 vols. in 23 pts. incomplete (n.p., n.d), I, pt. 1, pp. 62-3. This manuscript is hereinafter cited as "Draft."

²³ Julian S. Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905*, 2 vols. (Annapolis, 1994), I, 67.

So far the most important Japanese commentary about Port Arthur during initial planning calculations is “Meiji 37–8 Himitsu Nichiro Senshi” [Meiji 37–8 Secret History of the Russo-Japanese War], compiled during the 1930s (the exact date remains uncertain) from secret documents at the disposal of the General Staff. Most of the documents referred to in this study seem to have been destroyed in 1945. According to this secret account:

Until early March, the army division of the General Staff did not have any definite information on enemy military forces at Port Arthur. Having received intelligence that the 3rd East Siberian Rifle Brigade had moved from Jinzhou [near Nanshan hill] in the direction of the Yalu River, we [the Japanese high command] could calculate that enemy forces at Port Arthur consisted of one formerly deployed infantry regiment and one incomplete, newly created brigade, and conclude that no effort was needed in this direction except monitoring them [the Russians]. However, in the middle of March, we came under pressure to accept the capture of Port Arthur as necessary because the navy alone could not destroy the enemy fleet by bombardment from the sea, and the army faced the task of taking the port by capturing the fortress with a ground assault, accompanied by the consideration that the army had to gain Dalian [Dal’ni] as a main supply hub.²⁴

Thus, original Japanese sources strongly indicate that the Russian Pacific Squadron was an initial objective for the Japanese navy, but that Port Arthur was never an important objective for the Japanese army until mid-March 1904. Failure to account initially for Port Arthur probably explains the necessity for subsequent costly ground assaults against the fortress without adequate planning and preparation. Interestingly, Japanese scholars have never asked whether there was mention of Port Arthur in the initial Japanese war plans.

Japanese landing plans comprise a second major topic on which the corrected draft of the official history sheds light. Paragraphs from the original draft note that before hostilities the Japanese army considered two main routes for the advance on Seoul. One led to the Korean capital from two southern ports, Mosampo and Gwangyang/Noryanjin, while the other began at Gensan/Wonsan, an east coast port. Japanese planners concluded:

²⁴ *Meiji 37–8 Himitsu Nichiro-Senshi*, 3 pts. and supplement in 1 vol., repr. ed. (Tokyo, 1977), pt. 2, p. 68.

Otsu [the latter], being an inappropriate place for landing in winter and to some extent dangerous, is better since the journey [from there to Seoul] would be shortened by almost 16 days, compared with the *Kou* [the first]. If maritime conditions permit, we should not exclude the option of making use of *Otsu* [the latter]. Thus, the General Staff designated the southern route as its formal choice, with the eastern route as an alternate.²⁵

The final version of the official history omitted this discussion completely, stating merely that Chemulpo and Haeju Bay were designated respectively as primary and alternate landing sites under freezing conditions. Should non-freezing conditions obtain, the choice was Chinampo.²⁶ All these locales are on the western coast of the Korean peninsula. Even Corbett did not identify designated ports on the eastern and southern coasts.²⁷

However, the identification of southern and eastern alternatives is nothing new for post-World War II Japanese scholars. As published by Inaba Masao in 1966, secret lectures read by Colonel Tani Toshio in 1925 at the Military Academy provided detailed information on various alternative landing sites. Colonel Tani delivered these lectures to a select audience of 10 promising students, and the transcript, “*Kimitsu Nichiro-Senshi*” [Confidential History of the Russo-Japanese War], remained classified until the end of World War II. According to Tani, the Japanese war plan reflected great caution in the selection of landing sites in Korea because of the overriding importance of the navy’s command of the sea. The army ascribed first priority to the occupation of Seoul, designating Mosampo and Gensan as the initial landing sites. Only after initial naval successes at both Chemulpo (Inchon) and Port Arthur, did the army turn to its third (*Hei*) and fourth (*Tei*) alternative plans, which designated Chemulpo and Chinampo as viable landing sites. In the end, the army adopted the third (Chemulpo) plan on February 10.²⁸

²⁵ Draft, I, pt. 1, pp. 64–6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Corbett, I, 50, and 80–1.

²⁸ Tani Toshio, *Kimitsu Nichiro Senshi*, ed. Inaba Masao (Tokyo, 1966), 95, 104, and 141. On the date, 10 February, see *Meiji 37-8-nen Himitsu Nichi-ro Senshi*, pt. 2, p. 27. The outline of Japanese military developments is summarized as of 10 June, 1904 in *Meiji Gunji-shi* [Military History of the Meiji Period], compiled by the Japanese War Ministry, repr. ed. (Tokyo, 1966), 1358–63.

Colonel Tani appears to have understood the nature of the original Japanese plans and their later perversion in print. In his estimation, the official history misled readers, causing them to conclude that the Japanese army had waged a war that consistently went according to plan from beginning to end. He wrote:

it is not the case at all. For example, a plan for Mukden after occupation was also a product fabricated by compilers of the war history several years after the end of the war. At the time, the operational plan concerning Korea was, though perfect in terms of security, evidently unfavorable [in strategic terms].²⁹

A third major point that emerges from a comparison of the draft and official histories involves the existence of substantial differences between the high command and army leadership in the field. According to the original draft, Marshal Oyama, commander-in-chief of Japanese armies in Manchuria, offered a negative estimate of his Russian adversaries in early August 1904. He judged that repeated defeat had severely demoralized the Russian army. Accordingly, the original manuscript twice repeated the assertion that the Russian army was powerfully demoralized, but neither assertion found its way into the official history. In addition, the official history omitted an observation from the original text that the actual strength of the Russian infantry had declined considerably during previous combat.³⁰ Worse, censors completely deleted the following two paragraphs:

On 19 August, the commander-in-chief of all forces expected that the Third Army [of General Nogi Maresuke], after capturing Port Arthur, would immediately join his forces. He had elaborated a plan for this army. However, as events betrayed his expectations, he suspended it.

The commander-in-chief of all forces offered an opinion to the high command. But, at the time the high command did not regard the battle [at Liaoyang] as the final one. In addition [in its opinion], if by any chance the Japanese army had failed there, Japan would face the task of maintaining the Korean peninsula at any cost, and for this purpose an army was needed. Moreover, Japan had to pay attention to possible changes in its diplomatic relations.³¹

After omitting these important paragraphs from the original manuscript, the official history summed up Japanese calculations as follows:

²⁹ Tani, 141.

³⁰ Draft, III, pt. 1, p. 1.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

On 27 [August], the commander-in-chief of all forces requested the high command to send the 8th Division to the Liaodong peninsula and to designate it the general reserve for the Manchurian army. In contrast, the high command, fearing the premature commitment of this limited force, hoped to keep the division available for a possible contingency. [The high command] decided to leave the 8th Division as well as the 7th Division at home, designating them as a strategic reserve. Thus, the opinion of the commander-in-chief was not accepted.

Concealed from the public eye were Oyama's genuine calculations. The original text indicates that he was determined to make Liaoyang the final battle of the war. In his estimation, the Japanese army had every reason to expect victory, since the Russian army was so ill-prepared and demoralized. In his quest for final victory, Oyama planned to reinforce his troops initially with the Third Army and later with the 8th Division. However, Yamagata Aritomo, chief of the General Staff, frustrated Oyama's plan. The high command in Tokyo was excessively defense-oriented before the Liaoyang battle, and deletion of the original paragraphs from the draft history suppressed knowledge about the high command's resulting incorrect assessment of the situation. The outcome on the battlefield told the remainder of the story: after defeating the Russian army during nine days of hard combat, Oyama lacked the forces to reap the harvest, and General Kuropatkin's army escaped the Japanese scythe. Kuropatkin withdrew to Mukden to rally his army for a new operation along the Sha-ho. Interestingly, Colonel Tani did not refer to the Liaoyang situation in his lectures.

Comparison of the draft with the published history reveals other instances in which revisionists either deleted or underplayed serious disagreements between the high command and its field commanders. For example, in early December 1904, after the Sha-ho battle, a serious divergence of opinion once again occurred between Yamagata and Oyama. Two significant concerns troubled Yamagata: a possible Russian ground reinforcement rate of one new corps per month, and the possible appearance of the Russian Baltic Fleet in Far Eastern waters by the end of January 1905. Therefore, Yamagata proposed that Oyama issue an order for Nogi's Third Army to concentrate its attack directly against the warships in Port Arthur, rather than against the fortress as a whole. The resulting economy of force operation would free additional troops and armaments for reinforcement of Oyama's Manchurian army.

Oyama was of a different mind. Although his army desperately needed augmentation, the poor condition of the south Manchurian branch of the Chinese Eastern Railroad would not permit the swift reinforcement and re-supply that Yamagata envisioned. Oyama also held that any reduction in the Third Army's strength should remain proportional to a reduction in enemy forces at Port Arthur. Hence, it was not the time to reduce Third Army's assets to benefit the Manchurian Army.³² These disagreements never appeared in the official history.

Another serious difference surfaced in January 1905, when the Japanese high command created General Kawamura Kageaki's Fifth Army, or as it was called by the Japanese official history, the Yalu River Army. Yamagata and Oyama differed over the subordination of this newly-created field force. The original paragraphs in the draft history describe their varying views as follows:

On 21 January, the chief of the General Staff notified the commander-in-chief of all forces of the content of an order given to the Yalu River Army, placing it under the commander-in-chief of the Korea-Deployed Army, with the primary mission of protecting the northwestern borders [of Korea]. Situation permitting, this order allowed the leftward movement [of the Yalu River Army] towards the enemy forces for benefit of the Manchurian Army. On the next day, 23 [sic] January, the commander-in-chief of all forces replied to the chief of the General Staff that, if the main mission of the Yalu River Army was to protect the northwestern borders of Korea, the Manchurian forces would have to await the decision of commander-in-chief of the Korea-Deployed Army on whether or not he would allow the Yalu River Army to move leftward towards the enemy forces; however, because opinions would often vary, depending on the armies' situations, and because combat would necessitate instant decision—otherwise delay would cost dearly—it would be better to place the new army under the command of the Manchurian Army.

Thereafter, the high command considered the problem of command over the Yalu River Army. In the opinion of the high command, both armies [the Korea-Deployed Army and the Manchurian army] had to exchange information swiftly and implement joint operations with dispatch: Even if disagreement between the two would generate the danger of a missed opportunity, the high command would be able to take prompt measures. Hence, the high command did not give any reply.³³

³² Ibid., VII, pt. 1, pp. 4–5. This is not evident from reading corresponding parts of the official war history. See, *Meiji 37–8-nen Nichiro-Senshi*, VII, 3–4. Tani also did not argue this point.

³³ Draft, VII, pt. 1, p. 49.

In the subsequent battle of Mukden, the Yalu River Army under Oyama's overall command played a decisive role in turning the Russians out of their positions. Although the outcome of the battle proved Oyama correct, the editors of the official history—or perhaps higher military authority—decided to eliminate the above two paragraphs from the published version.

Tani, however, was well aware of differences between headquarters and the field armies. He wrote that these differences worsened in early January 1905, after the fall of Port Arthur. When the high command began reorganizing the Third Army, Kodama Gentaro, chief of staff of the Manchurian army, maintained that only Marshal Oyama had the authority to reorganize the Third Army. Kodama's assertion sparked a heated altercation between the high command and the field command. It was within this context that Tani touched briefly on Oyama's differences with Yamagata over subordination of the Yalu River Army. Tani's treatment of the latter incident leaves the impression that it was a relatively minor dispute among a number of disagreements that surfaced during this period.³⁴

Whatever their importance, deleted materials from the published version of the official history leave a number of lacunae, although other sources compensate for some deletions. Still, the draft manuscripts lay hidden from the public eye for a long time. Before their reappearance, only a small number of privileged analysts such as Corbett and Tani penetrated the veil of secrecy that obscured unwanted or unflattering episodes within the history of Russo-Japanese War. The natural result was that the uninitiated and the outsiders, including Russian military historians, studied the war on the basis of incomplete and flawed sources.

The Japanese Army in the Eyes of Alexander Svechin

Unlike their Japanese counterparts, the writers of Russian official military history at first paid scant attention to materials from their recent adversaries. Part of the problem probably lay with inaccessibility in several senses of the word, and part of the problem surely lay with the speed of publication. The threat of a general European war loomed, and many Russian officials from the tsar on down saw

³⁴ Tani, 528–30.

an immediate need to assimilate and disseminate lessons from the recent conflict. In 1906, General Vasilii Iosifovich Gurko, son of the hero of 1877–79, assumed chairmanship of a special Military-Historical Commission, the mission of which was to assemble materials on the war, conduct a hurried analysis, and publish the results with all possible dispatch. The first volume appeared already in 1910, followed by eight more to complete the series before the outbreak of World War I. Although the history was a considerable attainment in itself, the project's rushed completion no doubt explained its reliance primarily on Russian sources, even though there was an admixture of some foreign materials. Heavy reliance on Russian sources was not unusual in itself for a Russian official history, but the emphasis set the tone for subsequent Soviet and Russian histories of the Russo-Japanese War. These various studies remain an important part of the historiography of the war, but an in-depth treatment of their attributes lies outside the scope of this chapter.³⁵

Amidst all the histories, several reasons justify emphasis on the works of Alexander Andreevich Svechin. First, over the course of a long and fruitful career in both tsarist and Soviet military service, he revisited the history of the Russo-Japanese War several times, and at least one of his studies has long been regarded as representative of better Russian scholarship on the war. Second, in contrast with the majority—if not all—of his fellow Russian and Soviet historians, the sheer span of Svechin's attention permitted him sufficient latitude along the way to incorporate new materials and changing perspectives. Finally, and even perhaps tragically, his own fate became closely intertwined with the history of Soviet-Japanese relations, a fact which suggests the relevance of his studies to Soviet policies towards Japan during the 1930s.³⁶

³⁵ The history behind the Russian official history appears in V. A. Zolotarev and Iu. F. Sokolov, *Tragediia na Dal'nem Vostoke: Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, 2 bks. (M., 2004), bk. 2, pp. 390–97.

³⁶ A brief summary of Svechin's dramatic life provides additional background for his work. He was born in 1878, and graduated from the General Staff Academy in 1903. After service in the Russo-Japanese War, he also served in World War I. His career as a distinguished military historian and analyst spanned the pre- and post-revolutionary periods of Imperial Russian and Soviet history. In February 1931, he was arrested for alleged counter-revolutionary activities, and then released a year later, perhaps because of the Japanese military incursion into Manchuria during September 1931. He then returned to his study of the Japanese army to publish his second major book on the Russo-Japanese war before his re-arrest in December

Svechin's writings did not immediately embrace the totality of the war. As a recent graduate of the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff, he had volunteered for service in the Far East, where he served in junior capacities both in the field and on staff. His prickly personality and intolerance for lapses in intellectual rigor earned both grudging respect and frequent transfers. After his return to European Russia, he penned two-book length works and a number of shorter articles. His first book (1906) on the Russo-Japanese War, *Voina v gorakh* [War in the Mountains] focused on the difficulties that the Russian army had encountered in mountainous Manchurian terrain. Coming from a "flat-land country," the Russian army in Svechin's view suffered from poor preparation for mountain warfare.³⁷ Svechin's second book (1907), *Predrassudki i boevaia deistvitel'nost'* [Prejudices and Combat Reality] was a critique of outmoded Russian tactics in light of changing technology and techniques.³⁸

Subsequently, after having worked with the Military-Historical Commission and after having read the initial proofs of the draft official Russian war history, Svechin broadened the scope of his research and writing. In 1910, on the basis of materials assembled by the Commission, he collaborated with Iu. D. Romanovskii to write a one-volume military history of the war, *Russko-iaponskaia voina* [The Russo-Japanese War]. In a rough division of labor, Svechin examined the maneuver war in Manchuria, while Romanovskii concentrated on the siege war at Port Arthur. Written soon after the war and on the basis of then-available materials, the book nonetheless remains something of a classic.

At least three aspects within Svechin's segment of the book merit attention. First, his analysis of Japanese war plans reveals what became his characteristic interpretation:

Japan set as its war aim the destruction of Russian military forces in the Far East. Japan had to secure full command of the sea. In order to gain it, Japan intended a surprise torpedo attack and a subsequent

1937. He was convicted of trumped-up charges, which he denied (while never implicating any of his colleagues), and shot in July 1938. See, A. E. Savinkin, A. G. Kavtaradze and Iu. T. Petrov, *Postizhenie voennogo iskusstva: Ideinoe nasledie A. Svechina* (M, 1999), especially 640–56 by A. G. Kavtaradze. See also, Iu. F. Dumbi, *Aleksandr Andreevich Svechin (1878–1938): Etapy zhiznennogo puti i tvorchestva* (M, 1999).

³⁷ A. A. Svechin, *Voina v gorakh* (SPB, 1906–1907), chast' 2, pp. 5–10.

³⁸ A. A. Svechin, *Predrassudki i boevaia deistvitel'nost'*, repr. ed. (M, 2003).

main fleet onslaught against the Russian Squadron in Port Arthur. It was not enough for Japan just to weaken the Russian squadron, since in a few months strong reinforcements might arrive from the Baltic Sea. Therefore, it was indispensable to crush the Port Arthur Squadron, and in order to attain this result it was vital to capture either Port Arthur or at least the heights commanding the anchorage. Thus, the conditions of the war at sea required energetic operations against Port Arthur. It would have been especially desirable to capture the fortress by assault at the very beginning of the war, when fortifications were incomplete. But landing an army in the environs of fortress was a very risky proposition . . .³⁹

Clearly, Svechin believed that the initial Japanese attack on the Russian Pacific Squadron included the aim of capturing Port Arthur from the start. The reasoning behind this assumption rested on several hypotheses. The first was that the Japanese General Staff must have comprehensively examined military objectives and concluded that Port Arthur was vital to victory. The second was that the Japanese had put aside service differences to achieve a common goal, the pursuit of which reflected a harmonious relationship between the army and the navy under unified leadership. The third was that the objective of other Japanese operations during the initial period of the war was to create favorable conditions for the attainment of the primary objective. With reference to the last hypothesis, Svechin wrote that “the operations against Port Arthur required protection from the Manchuria-based Russian army. The task of covering siege operations came to include battle against the main Russian forces in the field.”⁴⁰

In the light of Japanese materials, Svechin’s hypotheses are all questionable. In reality, relations between the Japanese army and the navy were not as smooth and well coordinated as they appeared. Generally, the army and the navy pursued separate aims. The prospect for joint operations against Port Arthur came into being only after mid-March 1904, when the General Staff, realizing the ineffectiveness of naval assault, began planning for a ground operation against the fortress. Although joint operations that included landings and naval convoy escort for the army produced gratifying results, these oper-

³⁹ A. Svechin and Iu. D. Romanovskii, *Russko-iaponskaia voina, 1904–1905 po dokumental’nym dannym truda Voenno-istoricheskoi komissii i drugim istochnikam* (Oranienbaum, 1910), 33.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

ations repeatedly witnessed rivalries and poor inter-service communications.⁴¹ Next, however perplexing Japanese military reality would have appeared to the ever-rational Svechin and Corbett, the Japanese army over the entire course of the war remained more concerned with the central part of southern Manchuria than with Port Arthur. Finally, whatever Svechin's assertions, the Japanese field armies did not land on the continent and advance to the center of Manchuria to cover the siege at Port Arthur. These were independent ground force operations directed at the primary war aim. It was for this reason that the General Staff required so much time to decide where Japanese troops should be landed on the Korean coast.

A second major aspect of Svechin's analysis that merits scrutiny is his emphasis on the boldness of the Japanese design. Svechin completely overlooked the fact that the Japanese General Staff had initially decided to adopt the safest and most secure debarkation sites for Japanese troops on the southern coast of Korea. Svechin mentions only two western harbors, Chemulpo and Chinampo, as designated landing spots, writing "they [the Japanese troops] could, of course, have disembarked at this harbor [Chinampo] one month earlier with the help of icebreakers and could have thrust into Manchuria one month earlier."⁴² No one on the Japanese General Staff would have accepted this proposition. Svechin was ignorant of the fears that the Japanese General Staff harbored in its selection of landing sites. As was the case with their Russian counterparts, the Japanese had too little reliable information about the enemy to make the kind of rational choice that hindsight encourages.

At the same time, however, Svechin correctly grasped the strategic significance of Korea to Japan's initial war plans. As he pointed out, the Japanese General Staff realized that Korea retained importance for two reasons: it was an important corridor for an advance into southern Manchuria, and it might comprise a major theater of operations should the war go bad for Japan, confronting the Japanese army with the defense of its own territory.⁴³ But, Svechin fixated on the first point in his subsequent analysis, while the Japanese General Staff fixated on the second, thanks to anxieties over a possible Russian

⁴¹ *Meiji 37-8 Himitsu Nichiro-Senshi*, pt. 2, pp. 68-9; and Tani, 141, 149-61, 166, and 171.

⁴² Svechin and Romanovskii, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, 53.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 34-5.

counter-offensive. Retention of the 7th and 8th Divisions in the home islands until after the Liaoyang battle testifies to this fact. However, Svechin alleges that the Japanese high command withheld forces from the continent, including the 8th Division, because the high command lacked full confidence in Japanese command of the sea. Little or no evidence supports this interpretation. Until July 1904, Japan was continuously sending troops to the continent, except for the 7th and 8th Divisions.⁴⁴

A third major aspect of Svechin's work amounts to a sin of omission. He failed to consider the possibility of dissonance among Japanese military leaders. In analyzing the Russian military leadership, he correctly emphasized severe disagreements between Admiral Alekseev and General Kuropatkin over priorities and the actual conduct of operations. These disagreements Svechin felt "unfavorably influenced military actions."⁴⁵ In comparison, Svechin limited the scope of similar inquiry about Japanese leaders to their obvious operational and tactical skills. Penetrating insights aside, he turned a blind eye to relations between the Japanese high command and its field armies, in particular ignoring differences between Yamagata and Oyama. It never seems to have occurred to Svechin that strained relations might have existed among the Japanese generals, just as within the Russian military leadership.

Both the draft Japanese official history and Colonel Tani's lectures indicated the existence of such disagreements within the Japanese military leadership. With no knowledge of such disagreements, Svechin posited other explanations for the conduct of Japanese leaders. For example, according to Svechin, Marshal Oyama proposed an offensive at Liaoyang for three reasons. First, he underestimated the transportation capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Second, he thought the Russian army incapable of adjusting to Manchurian conditions in order to sustain itself on local supplies alone, and third, Oyama was excessively optimistic about the imminent fall of Port Arthur.⁴⁶ Thus, in his analysis of Oyama's intentions, Svechin never entertained the possibility that the Japanese commander might have pro-

⁴⁴ Ibid., 165. On the Japanese army, see *Oe Shinobu, Nichiro-senso no Gunjishi-teki* (Tokyo, 1976), 78, and *Meiji Gunji-shi*, 1392–93. See also, Numata Takazo, *Nichiro-Rikusen Shinshi* (Tokyo, 1982), 107–08.

⁴⁵ Svechin and Romanovskii, *Russko-iaponskaia voina*, 29.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 165.

posed reinforcement of his troops before undertaking an offensive with insufficient forces.

To sum up the above arguments, a close reading of Svechin's 1910-history strongly suggests that he fashioned his analysis of major aspects of the war on the basis of a very limited knowledge of the Japanese army and its plans for war. At the very least it might be said that he ignored the possibility of disagreements among Japanese generals that let slip an excellent opportunity for victory at Liaoyang.

After many personal and professional detours during two subsequent wars and a serious excursion into the study of strategy, Svechin returned to the Russo-Japanese War in 1927–28 with a chapter in *Evoliutsiia voennogo iskusstva* [The Evolution of Military Art]. Additional experience and reflection, together with reference to studies from the German General Staff, caused him to modify his earlier views. Most prominently, he now conceded that the initial Japanese objective had been Korea, although Port Arthur became “the most important geographical objective that the Japanese intended.” In Svechin's modified perspective, the Japanese realized that they might seize the Russian Pacific Squadron's base with a ground assault against Port Arthur's fortifications. However, to secure the assaulting force's rear and to provide an intermediate base, the Japanese had to occupy Korea. Occupation of Korea also served to check any Russian advance south to protect Port Arthur. Svechin now ranked southern Manchuria as a third objective in Japanese war plans after Korea and Port Arthur.⁴⁷ There is some possibility that Svechin revisited his hierarchy of objectives in response to criticism of his 1910 work.

During the 1930s, Svechin returned once again to the Russo-Japanese War, explicitly combining its history with a study of strategy. The result was a book, *Strategiia XX veka na pervom etape* [Twentieth-Century Strategy at Its Initial Stage], that remained classified until the 1990s. In this, Svechin's last major study, he further clarified and corrected his views on Japanese war planning. First, he frankly admitted that the Japanese navy and the army had pursued independent aims during the war. Second, he concluded that the Japanese navy had aimed at crushing the Russian Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur, thereby ensuring maritime communications between Japan

⁴⁷ A. A. Svechin, *Evoliutsiia voennogo iskusstva*, repr. ed. (M, 2002), 711–12. This edition appears to be based on the 1937 edition, but this author could not compare the original 1927–28 edition with the 2002 book.

and the continent. Third, Svechin accepted the proposition that the navy had initially designated the southern coast of Korea as the locale for landings, although he incorrectly listed Pusan as a planned site. Fourth, he admitted that the Japanese army had set as its primary war aim the expulsion of the Russian army from southern Manchuria.⁴⁸

Nonetheless, Svechin clung to some of his earlier views. Presumably he had read N. A. Levitskii's military history of the war, and presumably Svechin had rejected his contemporary's ideologically informed position that Russian failure had stemmed from a combination of Japanese cunningness and Imperial Russian military incompetence.⁴⁹ With an emphasis on the analytical as opposed to the ideological, Svechin adhered to his core argument: the strategic importance of Port Arthur. In what became a swan song for his interpretation, Svechin explained why the seizure of Port Arthur was so vital to the Japanese army in order to drive the Russian army from southern Manchuria:

If the Japanese occupied Kwantung, captured Port Arthur and crushed the Russian Pacific Squadron, it would in principle be meaningless for the Russian army to remain in southern Manchuria. The war would be won. The activities of the Japanese army combined with the internal political weakness of tsarist Russia would force the Russian army to abandon Manchuria and pave the way for conclusion of a victorious peace. From this perspective it follows clearly that the strategic center of gravity lay in the capture of Port Arthur.⁵⁰

In another passage, he responded to his own question of whether the Japanese army's initial objective was the Russian field army or Port Arthur. He replied that Port Arthur had to be taken first, because the Japanese army could not advance in the direction of Mukden without initially securing its maritime communications by capturing this important fortress. Although Svechin's argument was not fully convincing, his view alleged that Japanese war plans had incorporated this rational judgment.⁵¹

⁴⁸ A. Svechin, *Strategiia XX veka na pervom etape* (M, 1937), 39–43.

⁴⁹ N. A. Levitskii, *Russko-iaponskaia voina 1904–1905 gg.*, 2nd ed. (M, 1936). See especially, 350–57.

⁵⁰ Svechin, *Strategiia XX veka na pervom etape*, 43.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 44–5.

Perhaps more important than Svechin's views about Port Arthur was his appreciation of the Russo-Japanese War within the larger context of military history. He held that the Japanese military leadership was remarkable for the way that it had discarded Moltke's continental-style strategy to fashion a new strategy for linking naval and military operations in the struggle for Port Arthur. In Svechin's judgment, Japanese military innovation had marked the end for an era of nineteenth century strategy based on European models.⁵² His argument is reminiscent of Corbett's assertion that the war displayed "some special characteristics" in that "naval and military operations were so intimately connected as to be inseparable." However, Corbett did not conclude that Japanese military leaders had developed a new strategy for the twentieth century.⁵³ Meanwhile, Corbett had held that Port Arthur was the Japanese navy's primary objective and that the architect for the plan to seize that objective had been Admiral Togo Heihachiro.

Whatever the truth in Svechin's conviction about a new strategy for the twentieth century, it is impossible to deny his assertion that the Japanese army was a formidable adversary capable of strategic creativity and tactical acumen in preparing for the joint utilization of ground and naval forces. In contrast, the Soviet army had to overcome its propensity for strategic passivity and discard "temporizing until the completion of deployment" during the initial period of war.⁵⁴ If we might assume that Svechin represented the cutting edge of Soviet studies during the 1930s on the Russo-Japanese War and the Japanese army, then at least some segments within the Soviet military leadership must have regarded his scholarship as important in preparing for a possible war against Japan. One valid conclusion the Soviets might have drawn was that the Japanese army was a formidable adversary with which to contend in the Far East. Meanwhile, the realities of ground combat at Lake Khasan in 1938 and at Khalkhin-Gol (Nomonhan) in 1939 kept warm the sense of a Japanese threat, even as the possibility of a major war once again threatened European Russia.

⁵² Ibid., 136, and 186–87.

⁵³ Corbett, II, 382.

⁵⁴ Svechin, *Strategiia XX veka na pervom etape*, 138.

In Conclusion: Within the Japanese Army

While Soviet historians such as Svechin and Novitskii kept alive the memory of 1904–05 in quest of potential lessons for the future, the military-historical legacy of the Russo-Japanese War endured a different fate in Japan. The official history traced a meandering and unproductive course, while Japanese awareness of the uses and misuses of the military past exercised far from a positive influence on military-historical studies.

After publication of the official history in 1912–1915, the Japanese General Staff seemed hard-pressed to enlist it in the service of education. Memories of 1904–05 faded with its military generation, and the European-centered world war of 1914–18 diverted attention from seemingly more insular Japanese experiences. However, by the 1920s, the General Staff devised new ways to arouse wider interest in the war of 1904–05. First, Captain Numata Takazo was ordered to write a concise history of the war. The resulting book, *Nichiro Rikusen-shinsi* [A New History of the Russo-Japanese Ground War] was published in 1923. It was both more readable and of higher quality than the official history. Because Numata utilized new information on the war with the permission of the General Staff, his book earned recognition as a semi-official history. Second, in 1926 the General Staff issued an index, *Meiji-37-8-nen Nichiro-senshi Senrei-sakuin* [An Index of Military Examples during the Russo-Japanese War]. The new book consisted of a set of indices with brief instructions. By following these instructions, readers could locate passages in either the official history or Numata's book that illustrated instructive examples from the war. This book was probably intended for either military school candidates or young officers at these institutions.

In spite of these initiatives, it was difficult for promising young officers to undertake serious studies of the Russo-Japanese war. On the one hand, the older generation within the army expected younger officers to recognize its achievements by studying the history of the war. On the other hand, the older generation disliked an unbiased and critical treatment of its brilliant feats at the hands of younger and less experienced officers. It was in this atmosphere that Colonel Tani Toshio had to deliver his lectures in secret for a small minority of specially selected young officers at the Military Academy. According to Inaba Masao's later introduction to the published version of the lectures, Tani began them with roughly the following statement:

The explanations that follow sometimes contain a frank evaluation and criticism of revered figures, among them engineers of the Meiji restoration, high government officials, and my military superiors, both living and dead. I request, or more accurately, demand that you confine this study to this classroom. I will not distribute any records here. But you are permitted to take notes on the lectures.⁵⁵

Tani's teaching time was limited. In March 1927, he returned to regimental command. His brief teaching tenure, together with the prevailing atmosphere within the army, almost precluded young talented students from studying the Russo-Japanese war. Two circumstantial factors compounded the situation. First, Soviet Russia diminished in military stature, posing almost no threat to Japan until the mid-1930s. Second, a growing interest in the study of World War I in Europe increasingly captured the attention of a younger generation of Japanese officers, pushing aside studies of an older and seemingly less relevant war.

Ishiwara Kanji, the most talented Japanese military strategist during the interwar period, was a good example of this trend. He began his military-historical studies with the Russo-Japanese War. However, after spending two years in Germany during the 1920s, he turned his back on 1904–05, instead concentrating on European military history, especially the wars of Frederick the Great and Napoleon. Perhaps he sensed that serious analysis of the Russo-Japanese War had fallen victim to myth and oversimplification. In 1929, he would write that he was of the conviction that the Japanese victory in 1905 was due to luck, rather than to the distinguished abilities of the army.⁵⁶

Thus, Japanese studies on the Russo-Japanese war stood in stark contrast with their Russian counterparts. In the latter instance there was at least an implicit—if not explicit—impulse to link the past war with a possible coming war. In the former instance, many influences simply discouraged the search for transcendental relationships. The Japanese reality was such that no one sought to prepare for future war on the basis of the last one. This situation almost certainly had some effect on that which transpired in August 1945.

⁵⁵ Tani, 2, in the preface by Inaba Masao.

⁵⁶ Ishiwara Kanji, *Saishu Sensoron, Sensoshi Taikan* [On the Final War and a General Outline History of War] (Tokyo, 1993), 123.

MILITARY OBSERVERS, EUROCENTRISM, AND WORLD WAR ZERO

David Jones

On the night of 8/9 February 1904, Japan attacked Russia's Pacific Squadron in the Port Arthur roadstead to end speculation on the likelihood of war in the Far East. Thus opened the century's first conflict between European-style conscript armies equipped with the latest military technologies. As such, the war naturally attracted the attention of the world's professional soldiers, who sought its implications for their own possible future wars. Despite later suggestions to the contrary, this conflict was closely observed and carefully analyzed both by Europe's civilian pundits and general staff professionals.¹ As with the major conflicts after 1850, both groups drew on first-hand accounts of war correspondents, who represented a range of the world's newspapers, and on the reports of the official officer-attaché observers assigned by various general staffs to the warring armies.²

It is often forgotten that these attachés were also diplomatic agents whose reports had political and strategic repercussions beyond the purely military. For this reason historians must judge the perceptions of these observers within the context of an international system that faced radical socio-political changes and military-technological advances which called into question the utility of war as a means of pursuing state policy externally, and shifts in the traditional status of powers within the system itself. Apart from the growing significance of the

¹ For example, B. H. Liddell Hart noted Britain's refusal to adopt sufficient machine-guns despite the Boer War's demonstration of the potentialities of fire-power, and added that other armies also "learnt nothing from the Boer War. The Germans, but not the French, learnt a little from the Russo-Japanese War that followed. Tactics were remote from reality." See, B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Ghost of Napoleon* (London, 1933), 176–77. Jacob Kipp agreed, remarking that "foreign military establishments had a tendency to dismiss the Manchurian campaign as irrelevant to military affairs—it was after all a colonial war in which one side had proven to be utterly incompetent." See, Jacob W. Kipp, et al., *Historical Analysis of the Use of Mobile Forces by Russia and the USSR* (College Station, 1985), 49.

² For publications until the 1930s on this war, see, V. Luchinin, *Russko-iaponskaia voina, 1904–1905 gg. Bibliograficheskii ukazatel'* (M., 1939).

United States as a new factor in international calculations, the sudden rise of Japan “appeared as an exceptional phenomenon”³ which underscored the transitional nature of the times. Within this context, the attachés’ reports of 1904–1905 were indicative not only of past traditions, but also of current debates and future tendencies.

The International System

Since 1648, the rules, laws and conventions governing all aspects of inter-state relations had reflected the evolving practices of Europe’s Great Powers. The international system rested on the assumptions that “Europe was regarded as the most important of all the continents,” and that “Great Powers were greater than the Small Powers.”⁴ Furthermore, as D. C. Watt puts it, both the European system of states and their particular systems of government were in large part “the product of five hundred years of internecine war.”⁵ Within the system, Britain, France, Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia, and most recently Italy, were Great, as opposed to Small Powers, because “they possessed a more extended range of interests, wider responsibilities, and, above all, more money and more guns.” The significance of the Small Powers was meanwhile ranked in a shifting calculus, according to the issues of day, in accord with their military forces and strategic positions, economic importance and, first and foremost, impact on the Balance of Power.⁶

This collection of separate, armed and competitive nation-states, combined with a rising tide of aggressive, exclusive and sometimes racist nationalisms, produced a system best described as “international

³ Harold Nicolson, *The Evolution of Diplomatic Method* (London, 1954), 73.

⁴ Ibid. For the rise of this system, see, for example, Ludwig Dehio, *The Precarious Balance: Four Centuries of the European Struggle*, tr. Charles Fullman (New York, 1965), and Kalevi J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order, 1648–1989* (Cambridge, UK, 1991).

⁵ Donald C. Watt, *Too Serious a Business: European Armed Forces and the Approach to the Second World War* (New York, 1975), 18–19. He adds that these states’ survival had depended on “the efficiency with which they waged war, and because of their organization as war-waging bodies,” while their “power positions” *vis-à-vis* each other “rested in fact fairly and squarely on the size, efficacy and efficiency of their armed forces.”

⁶ Nicolson, *Evolution*, 73–4.

anarchy.”⁷ Yet Watt perceives that despite this, Europe was united by a “transnational society”⁸ that “existed primarily at the elite level . . . as a political system, as a set of economic relationships precariously balanced between nationalist competition and supranationalist combination, and as a set of social, societal and cultural relationships.” In other words, the European state system functioned because “of the acceptance by the ruling, decision-making elites of common political concerns, hopes of assistance, fears of war,” as well as “a set of rules and conventions, whose strength approximated to that of customary law and whose transgression was immediately recognisable,” along with the more formal state-to-state obligations codified in a series of treaties.⁹

One sign of such unity was the evolution of institutions of international co-operation at both the political and the economic level. Equally important, Watt points out that socially and politically, Europe’s ruling elites “enjoyed a double set of relationships, to each other within the political, institutional and social framework of their particular nation-state, and to each other within the political and economic systems . . . and the social and cultural relationships which taken together made Europe a transnational society.”¹⁰ Among these elites the most “transnational” members were undoubtedly the diplomats. Each Power, regardless of its size and status, had its own professional foreign service. All were more or less identical in organization

⁷ On the concept of “international anarchy” see, for example, David W. Ziegler, *War, Peace and International Politics*, 5th ed. (Glenview, IL, 1989), 123–27.

⁸ Watt borrows this term from the French sociologist Raymond Aron, who writes: “A transnational society reveals itself by commercial exchange, migration of persons, common beliefs, organizations that cross frontiers and, lastly, ceremonies or competitions open to the members of all these units. A transnational society flourishes in proportion to the freedom of exchange, migration or communication, the strength of common beliefs, the number of non-national organizations, and the solemnity of collective ceremonies.” See, Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (Garden City, 1964), 105.

⁹ Donald C. Watt, “European Military Leadership and the Breakdown of Europe, 1919–1939,” in Adrien Preston, ed., *General Staffs and Diplomacy before the Second World War* (London, 1978), 15.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* As Watt explains, Europe’s “nobility and *haute bourgeoisie* intermingled socially, took their pleasure and leisure together and more than occasionally intermarried.” There also were the international labor, academic, scientific, social and sports associations, plus the Olympic movement, all of which “shared if not the reality at least the assumption that there was a European culture and heritage from classical Greece onwards of which they were all the inheritors.”

and their bureaucrats possessed "similar standards of education, similar experience, and a similar aim."¹¹

Taken together they formed the "diplomatic corps," described by Harold Nicolson as a "professional freemasonry" which "desired the same sort of world . . . tended to develop a corporate identity independent of their national identity . . ., had often known each other for years, and they all believed, whatever their governments might believe, that the purpose of diplomacy was the preservation of peace." Such diplomats, he recalled, had "complete confidence in each other's probity and discretion, . . . a common standard of professional conduct, and desired above all else to prevent a general conflagration." These qualities were obviously invaluable in times of crisis, while the presence of experienced, long-term ambassadors accredited to a capital, in which foreign office chancelleries were staffed by similar diplomatic veterans, promoted the numerous "continuous and confidential" negotiations that maintained the Concert of Europe until its collapse in the summer of 1914.¹²

At the other end of the transnational social spectrum were the national military and naval leaderships. Since they were "dedicated to the defence of the nation and nothing beyond this," in Watt's view they represent "in ethos and attitude the most schismatic" of all the elite groups. Historically, the military was vital in maintaining both the political systems of the "traditionalist deferential societies" of their own nation-state, as well as the whole state system "without which transnational relationships between the leadership groups of the individual states could not have been possible." Even so, he insists that the military elite was "not, as such, part of the transnational society in its economic, social or cultural dimensions," and that this alienation "was enhanced by the universal or near-universal conviction that a government divides itself into civil and military spheres, the one headed by the chief political adviser to the head of state, the other by his chief military adviser," be he a war minister and/or a chief of staff.¹³

¹¹ Nicolson, *Evolution*, 75–6.

¹² Ibid. For a more detailed description of the world of the diplomat see, Kalevi J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), 174–209.

¹³ Watt, "European Military Leadership," 15–16. He does admit that "by virtue of their membership of the aristocracy in their own countries," they might cross a

In fact, Watt exaggerates the extent of this military-civil divide at both the state and transnational levels. Before 1904, the French and Swiss Republics aside, all Great and Small Powers were headed by monarchs who, as rulers, bridged the civil-military divide. For they served as the state's chief civil magistrate, as its commander-in-chief, and often as head of its official church. As transnational naval and military figures, these kings and emperors served as honorary admirals in their fellow sovereign's fleets and ceremonial chiefs of regiments in each others' armies.¹⁴ Equally important here, these monarchs were interrelated thanks to centuries of dynastic marriages and, in both their military and civil personas, they were central to Europe's transnational social scene. Not only were court balls, royal visits, weddings, funerals and coronations the highlights of the social season, but they frequently were diplomatic occasions as well.¹⁵

In fact, their personal diplomatic roles also retained real significance. In cases such as that of Prussia-Germany and Russia, the arrangement became formalized when rulers began assigning personal "military plenipotentiaries" or *Fligeladjutants*, the forerunners of military attachés, to each others' suites in the last years of the Napoleonic Wars, and such appointments continued until the rupture of July–August 1914.¹⁶ These officers demonstrate the extent to which Europe's

frontier and, "because dynastic connections had grown unusually complex," like Prince Louis of Battenberg, end by serving in the forces of a nation other than that of their birth.

¹⁴ On 6/19 June 1914, for example, the King of Saxony named Russia's Nicholas II honorary chief of the 2nd Saxon Artillery Regiment; K. F. Shatillo, ed., *Dnevnik imperatora Nikolaia II* (M, 1991), 468. Again, Germany's Wilhelm II, who held a similar post with Russia's Vyborg Regiment, reportedly wore its uniform during state visits to that country and on one occasion, actually commanded it in the annual summer maneuvers at Tsarskoe Selo; A. A. Ignat'ev, *Piat' desiat let v stroiu*, 2 vols. (M, 1959), I, 224n. We should add that in republics, presidents often fulfill the same dual functions of civil executive and military commander-in-chief.

¹⁵ The histories of and the inter-relationships between Europe's ruling houses are conveniently provided in Jiri Louda and Michael Maclagan, *Lines of Succession: Heraldry of the Royal Families of Europe* (New York, 2002). Their social roles are indicated by events listed in the various court calendars; see, for example, Russia's *Pridvornyi kalendar' na 1900 god* (SPB, 1899), and described in numerous memoirs such as Sir George Buchanan's *My Mission to Russia*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1923), and in W. H.-H. Waters' "Secret and Confidential": *The Experiences of a Military Attaché* (London, 1926).

¹⁶ Russians tie their use of this system to Alexander I's naming A. I. Chernyshev as his *Fligeladjutant* to Napoleon's court in Paris. There the enterprising colonel suborned an official in the Ministry of War and upon departure in February 1812, Chernyshev carried with him valuable reports on Napoleon's preparations for the invasion of 1812. See, Ignat'ev, *Piat' desiat let*, I, 217–18; Adam Zamoyski, *Moscow*

aristocracy remained a transnational institution in which soldier-nobles retained concepts of traditional honor and loyalty to the sovereign's person and dynasty (rather than to the new nation states) that were rooted in Europe's feudal and early modern past. Writing "as an officer and a cavalier," the Prussian king's plenipotentiary of the 1860s recalled that the "military confidant of the two sovereigns had the task of representing the immutable laws of honour and almost sacred friendship even when *raison d'état* was in conflict with them."¹⁷

In sum, then, Europe's nation-states and transnational society had melded monarchical-aristocratic traditions with more modern nationalist forms to form what has been called a "club" into which the entry of outsiders was at best, difficult.¹⁸ Even the American republic was still excluded by the "Eurocentric" prejudices of its member states and elites. Despite its European heritage, its expanding navy, growing economic power and its historic diplomatic interaction with Europe, the United States "remained isolated behind her oceans and her Doctrine" until 1897.¹⁹ When this bumpkin-like second cousin made embarrassing gaffs in diplomatic etiquette, as in the case of President Grover Cleveland's aggressive threats over the Anglo-Venezuelan boundary dispute, these were treated by the British press with a gentle derision rather than the bitter outrage roused by Kaiser Willy's Kruger Telegram of 1895.²⁰ Again, Japan's surprise strike

1812: *Napoleon's Fatal March* (New York, 2004), 106–07, points out the scandal only became public after Napoleon had, diplomatically, permitted the colonel's departure for St. Petersburg. In 1813 similar aides-de-camp were exchanged between the courts of Russia, Austria and the Polish Kingdom.

¹⁷ Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640–1945* (Oxford, 1955), 261–66, quote on 263. Also see, Alfred Vagts, *A History of Militarism: Civilian and Military*, rev. ed. (New York, 1959), 180. On these representatives at the time of the Japanese War, see, Gustav Graf von Lambsdorff, *Die Militärbevollmächtigten Kaiser Wilhelms II. am Zarenhofe, 1804–1914* (Berlin, 1937), 221–48, in which the reports for 1904–1905 cast a useful light on the Russian home-front. In light of such attitudes, there was nothing exceptional in the career of Louis of Batterburg, in numerous German-Balts serving the tsar, and other examples of such personal allegiance.

¹⁸ A. E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States, 1895–1903* (London, 1960), 193.

¹⁹ Nicolson, *Evolution*, 73.

²⁰ When the American Secretary of State issued Britain a 90-day ultimatum, one English *St. James Gazette* commented: "Isn't it awful? But it might be still more awful if only we knew what the blessed Monroe Doctrine was, or what on earth the United States has got to do with a quarrel between Great Britain and another independent state." Quoted in Alexander de Conde, *A History of American Foreign Policy*

against the Russian ships in Port Arthur, 36 hours before any formal declaration of war, provoked “an academic discussion” among Europeans and Americans rather than the universal condemnation which any European Power, Great or Small, would have earned by similar behavior.²¹

As for Asia and Africa, before 1900 Europeans regarded these as being at best areas suitable for commercial, missionary and imperial expansion, and at worst, as the homes of decadent (e.g., China) or brutish (Africa’s blacks) populaces destined for historical oblivion. Given the influence of Social-Darwinism, nationalist prejudices could poison relations even between “club” members; therefore, it is hardly surprising that non-European peoples were sometimes judged still more harshly.²² In some quarters, for example, Japan’s unexpected victory over China in 1895 had sparked growing fears of a growing “Yellow Peril” to Western Civilization (read European dominance), a concept given the imprimatur of Germany’s Kaiser Wilhelm II.²³

Such exaggerations aside, the denial of full membership in the club to the “Anglo-Saxon” Americans meant that the Asiatic Japanese could hardly expect a warmer welcome. True, by 1900 Tokyo, like Washington, maintained embassies in the major European capitals and superficially, at least, was a typical junior member of an expanding international system.²⁴ For, by the 1890s the Far East had become

(New York, 1963), 332. On the uproar caused by William II’s telegram of support to President Kruger of the Transvaal, see, William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890–1902*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1960), 234–49.

²¹ John Albert White, *The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War* (Princeton, 1964), 128–49. For a more contemporary view, see Colonel Charles Ross, *An Outline of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904, 1905* (London, 1912), 79–88.

²² One writer in the popular genre of “future literature” had declared in 1881 that “Nature” has ordained that “the Black Man and the Yellow must forever remain inferior” to the White Man, and so “seem to sink out of Humanity and appear nearer and nearer to the brutes.” See, William Delisle Hay, *Three Hundred Years Hence* (1881), 235–36, quoted in I. F. Clarke, *Voices Propheying War, 1763–1984* (London, 1966), 63. In Hay’s vision, the White Man’s aerial armadas would subject China and Japan to “a rain of death to every breathing thing, a rain that exterminates the hopeless race. . . .” For a brief review of European racism in this era, see, Louis L. Snyder, *The Idea of Racism* (Princeton, 1962), especially chapters 5 and 7.

²³ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, 448.

²⁴ Japan had first established full diplomatic relations with the United States by the Treaty of Edo in 1858, and with the European Powers shortly thereafter. However, it was only in the 1870s that, in the words of a memorial of the Meiji Emperor’s councilors, “the foolish groupings: ‘foreigners, dogs, goats and barbarians’” was abandoned, “the court usages imitated from China” were reformed, and

a major focus of rivalry between Europe's Great Powers, a rivalry complicated by Japan's defeat of China and the terms of the subsequent peace. But these events only ensured that Japan was recognized as a Small Power and treated accordingly.²⁵ As British diplomat Harold Nicolson once observed, such states "were assessed according to their effect upon the relations between the Great Powers," usually with no thought that "their interests, their opinions, still less their votes" might affect policies agreed to by the Concert of Europe. Furthermore, the Great Powers were jointly responsible for "the conduct of the Small Powers," and their right to intervene generally accepted.²⁶ Russia, Germany and France therefore did not hesitate to assert their prerogatives by stripping upstart Japan of many of her gains, Port Arthur included.

Even so, that Tokyo was now a factor in regional strategic calculations and stability was evidenced by Japan's part in repressing China's Boxers in 1900, and the alliance formed with Great Britain in 1902. While such initiatives fully accorded with Japan's new status, as a Small Power she could hardly hope to defeat a Great Power, even notoriously inefficient Russia.²⁷ As one British observer recorded upon arrival in Liaoyang, the "*moral* of the [Russian] army was excellent, and the general tone most optimistic, [with] the general feeling even amongst foreign officers that the campaign would be a mere

foreign representatives were "bidden to court in manner prescribed by rules current among nations." Quotes from Upton Close, *Challenge: Behind the Face of Japan* (New York, 1934), 72–3.

²⁵ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, 167–94; Arthur Nussbaum, *A Concise History of the Law of Nations* (New York, 1962), 196, claims, incorrectly, that with the Peace of Shimonoseki of 1895, Japan "rose to the rank of a Great Power, alone among the non-Christian countries." Japan's Small Power status is indicated by the fact that she long remained subject to her own "unequal treaties" with the Western Powers. If the legal "extraterritorial" rights of foreigners were abolished during 1894–1899, Japan only acquired full control of her own tariffs in 1911; see, Edwin O. Reischauer, *Japan: Past and Present*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1967), 136.

²⁶ Nicolson, *Evolution*, 74.

²⁷ In commenting on communications between Mukden and Liaoyang, for instance, the British observer General Waters later commented: "It was known to me that the Russians were not good organizers, but I had expected something better than this." See, Waters, "*Secret and Confidential*," 260. In his earlier and confidential *Reports on the Campaign in Manchuria* (London, 1905), 75, he ascribed such problems "chiefly owing to defects in national character, which are not likely to be eradicated." For another more general view of Russian incompetence and corruption at this time, see, Colonel F. A. Wellesley, *With the Russians in War and Peace: Recollections of a Military Attaché* (London, 1905), 317–24.

promenade for Russia.”²⁸ However, his counterpart in Tokyo, General Ian Hamilton, reached the opposite conclusion, worrying that,

the last poor shreds of my military reputation have been staked upon a forecast that the Japanese army will beat the Russian army wherever they meet them on terms even approaching equality. Further, I have fairly let myself in for the opinion that the Japanese army, battalion for battalion, surpasses any European army, excepting only the British army at its best.²⁹

The Military Attachés

The development of the regular military attaché system shared similar roots and paralleled that of the plenipotentiary emissaries just mentioned. But a military attaché filled a very different position within Europe’s transnational society of 1900, since he served the state rather than the monarch alone, and because attachés were simultaneously members of the narrow nationalist military establishment *and* of the international diplomatic fraternity. Both types of military representatives had formal roots going back at least to the mid-1700s, but from the first, the attaché, stationed at an embassy in a foreign capital, was responsible for intelligence collection. The use of officers in this role had developed rapidly during the Napoleonic Wars, thanks to the activities of officials like Napoleon’s “general

²⁸ Major J. M. Home (2nd P. W. O. Gurkas), “Historical Narrative from the Outbreak of War to 15th August 1904,” in War Office, General Staff, *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers Attached to the Japanese and Russian Field Forces*, 3 vols. in 5 (London 1908), III, Report No. 1, p. 6. His colleague, General Waters, later recalled that the chief of the French Mission also believed that “Japan could easily be beaten; might indeed be invaded” (“*Secret and Confidential*,” 261), and added (273) that the “Russians had always underrated their enemy.” Meanwhile in Port Arthur, Russian journalist E. K. Nojine expressed the general opinion when he said that, “Japan would never succeed if she tried a fall with Russia, for that Colossus would crush her. . . . Japan would be annihilated.” See, E. K. Nojine, *The Truth about Port Arthur*, tr. A. B. Lindsay (London, 1908), 225. Again, Colonel Charles Ross also condemned the Russians’ “magnificent but extreme optimism, based on trivialities,” which “was doomed to collapse.” See, Ross, *Outline of the Russo-Japanese War*, 124. Interestingly enough, in 1866 many European military pundits were equally optimistic about Austria’s chances over Prussia; see, Lev M. Shneerson, *Austro-prusskaia voina 1866 g. i diplomatiia velikikh evropeiskikh derzhav (Iz istorii “german-skogo voprosa”)* (Minsk, 1962), 202–04.

²⁹ Sir Ian Hamilton, *A Staff Officer’s Scrap-Book during the Russo-Japanese War*, 2 vols. in 1 (London, 1912), 5.

diplomats,”³⁰ and the accreditation of military officers to embassies abroad became still more common after 1815. They were then called “military agents” by the Russians, “military secretaries of the embassy” by the British, “chargés of military affairs” by the Prussians, and “military attachés” by the French.³¹

If this last term became universal, the attaché’s purpose was nicely defined in 1800, when a senior Prussian officer suggested “we ought to attach to our legations in Petersburg, Vienna, Paris, London, etc., officers who are destined to the higher command in the army and who during their stay at these courts may make it their business to study the character of those who might be put in the future at the head of hostile or allied armies. Only in this way shall we prepare in the appropriate fashion for war.”³² By the 1830s a number of embassies of Great, and even some of Small European Powers, had accredited officer-attachés. A clear distinction between military and civilian responsibilities often only came with time,³³ but in general

³⁰ Vagts, *History of Militarism*, 180. For a fuller account, see Alfred Vagts, *The Military Attaché* (Princeton, 1967), and on France, Armand Beauvais, *Attachés militaires, attachés navales et attachés de l’air* (Paris, 1937).

³¹ *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia*, 2nd ed., 1 vol. incomplete (M, 1990), I, 265. While this last term eventually became standard, the most thoroughly studied example of this institution is that of Gordon A. Craig, “Military Diplomats in the German and Prussian Service: The Military Attachés,” *Political Science Quarterly*, LXIV (1949), 65–94, and his *Politics of the Prussian Army*, 257–73; Hans Otto Meisner, *Militarattachés und Militärbevollmächtigten in Preussen und im Deutschen Reich* (Berlin, 1957), and Gerhard Ritter, *Die deutschen Militär-Attachés und das Auswärtige Amt* (Heidelberg, 1959). For a comparison between British and German attachés, see, L. Hilbert, “The Role of Military and Naval Attachés in the British and German Service with Particular Reference to those in Berlin and London and their Effect on Anglo-German Relations, 1871–1914,” Unpublished doctoral thesis, Cambridge University, 1954.

³² Quoted in Vagts, *History of Militarism*, 179–80.

³³ In Russia, for instance, the Foreign Ministry regularized the collection of intelligence by diplomatic personnel with the creation of its statistical section in 1820. But the Ministry of War only began providing officers for this purpose during the 1830s, and such attachés became “a more regular and stable institution with the army organization” only at the end of the Crimean War. By 1856 Russia maintained attachés in London, Paris, Turin (later Rome), Berlin, Vienna, and Constantinople. Washington was added in 1868, and subsequently various Balkan states and Tokyo as well. In 1863 a Consultative Committee, renamed the Military Scientific Committee in 1867, took charge of collecting and analyzing the reports received; see, Gudrun Persson, “Russian Military Attachés and the Wars of the 1860s,” in David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye and Bruce W. Menning, eds., *Reforming the Tsar’s Army: Military Innovation in Imperial Russia from Peter the Great to the Revolution* (Cambridge, UK, 2004), 153–55, and Lt. Gen. G. A. Leer, ed., *Entsiklopediia voen-nykh i morskikh nauk*, 8 vols. (SPB, 1883–97), I, 71–2.

attachés were responsible for exchanging military information with the host state, for keeping their own governments abreast of the military developments in that state, and for serving as specialist military advisers to their respective ambassadors. By the 1860s, the inclusion of such permanent military-diplomatic agents at embassies and legations was receiving formal recognition in international law and thereafter, their numbers grew rapidly from 30 in Europe in 1870 to some 300 in 1914.³⁴

Apart from the officers stationed in foreign capitals in peacetime, the Napoleonic era saw a continuation of the age-old practice of attaching soldier-representatives to allied armies in wartime. One prominent example was the British General Sir Robert Wilson, who accompanied Russia's field armies during 1807 and in 1812–1813.³⁵ Thereafter such appointments remained a “traditional way of studying the special features of conflicts in practice”³⁶ as the Powers increasingly dispatched observers, either singly or in larger missions, to accompany allied or other combatant armies on the battlefield. There, the officer-observers were expected to study operations and report home on any “lessons learned,” but were strongly discouraged from following Wilson's example of meddling actively in the host countries' internal politics.³⁷ Still other officers were occasionally attached as advisors to foreign armies undergoing reform, as in the case of the future Chief of the Prussian Staff Helmuth von Moltke, who provided later officers with a model for emulation through his reporting.³⁸

³⁴ *Sovetskaia voennaia entsiklopediia*, I, 265; Andre Corvisier and John Childs, eds., *A Dictionary of Military History*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1994), 51–2.

³⁵ On Wilson's career, see his *Narrative of Events during the Invasion of Russia* (London, 1860). His activities are briefly highlighted in Alan Palmer, *Alexander I: Tsar of War and Peace* (London, 1974), 146, 241–42.

³⁶ Persson, 155.

³⁷ For example, the Prussian Chief of Staff defined the task of that state's first attachés, appointed in 1816, charging them with acquiring “accurate knowledge of states from the purely military point of view,” but stressing that their activity must be “absolutely unpolitical,” that “they must avoid any meddling in politics and must, above all, observe the utmost caution and circumspection in their behavior.” Quoted in Craig, *Politics of the Prussian Army*, 257–58.

³⁸ Although not formally an attaché, von Moltke had traveled to Constantinople in 1835. There he followed the embassy's suggestion that he join other young Prussian officers who were reforming the recently defeated Ottoman Army. Remaining in the Porte's service until 1839, he provided detailed reports on the Ottoman Empire and Asia Minor, and used his travels as the occasion to author an important study of the Russo-Turkish War of 1828–29. See, William O'Conner Morris, *Moltke: A Biographical and Critical Study* (New York, 1971), 12–18. Moltke's own writings

Meanwhile, other attachés proper were developing peacetime intelligence techniques. Denied information on Austrian deployments during the Crimean War, for instance, Prussia's attaché in Vienna "resorted to the standard processes of military intelligence" and "worked out an accurate picture of the Austrian order of battle from study of the daily press supplemented by salon gossip and the reports of professional agents."³⁹ For, as Jay Luvaas once observed, it is difficult today, in an era "of super-spies, the Central Intelligence Agency, and rigid security restrictions . . . to conceive the elementary nature of military intelligence in the 1860's," or that its collection was then the task of "gentlemen."⁴⁰ So despite disputes over the attachés' inclusion of political observations in their reports, or about the procedural channels through which they reported,⁴¹ the regular military attachés quickly became accepted members, both socially and legally, of an embassy's staff. And as such, they increasingly shared the ethos of the diplomatic corps rather than the military-aristocratic ethic of the *Fligeladjutant*.

In other words, and despite the fact that intelligence gathering remained a primary mission,⁴² the military attachés became part of

of this period include *Briefe über Zustände und Vergebenheiten in der Türkei aus den Jahren 1835 bis 1839* (Berlin, 1891), and *Campagnes des Russes dans la Turquie d'Europe en 1828 et 1829*, tr. A Demmler (Paris, 1854).

³⁹ Craig, *Politics of the Prussian Army*, 258–60. The attaché in question was Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen. His successors before the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 used similar methods, as did both Prussia's Parisian attachés and France's Baron Stoffel in Berlin before the war of 1870. Unfortunately for the French, Stoffel's reports were ignored. Hohenlohe's work was paralleled by that of the Russian attaché, Baron F. F. Tornau; see Persson, 158–59.

⁴⁰ Jay Luvaas, *The Military Legacy of the Civil War: The European Inheritance* (Chicago, 1959), 9. Although an attaché's work occasionally meant running paid agents, for the most part it required an analysis of open sources, and keeping one's ear to the ground during his social rounds. As Luvaas (9) points out, at this time the British Army's Inspector General of Fortifications "corresponded frankly with his counterparts in Belgium, Russia and the United States," and had no hesitation in requesting the latest details of American defensive works. For the work of the military and naval attachés of the various powers in the decade before World War I, see, Ernest R. May, ed., *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment before the Two World Wars* (Princeton, 1984), Chapters 1–8.

⁴¹ See, for example, Craig, *Politics of the Prussian Army*, 260–61.

⁴² This intelligence function is clearer still from the role assigned to American attachés. Although European embassies in Washington had attachés, the United States only obtained its own on a regular basis four years after the formation of an army intelligence agency in 1885. This "Military Information Division" selected and coordinated the work of the first American attachés, but these latter have "functioned ever since, although sometimes with hardly more than a flicker, overtly to

the transnational society, with its own codes of behavior, while simultaneously serving a nation-state rather than a dynasty. Since by the 1880s their task required technical expertise, attachés were now usually drawn not from the guards or other elite units around the throne, but from graduates of secondary or specialist (e.g., artillery or engineering) military schools. These branches, of course, traditionally were filled by young officers of bourgeois, non-aristocratic or non-gentry origins. But regardless of service arm, in an era of military “professionalism” many young attachés also hoped for inclusion in their army’s general staff.⁴³ Equally important, by serving for long periods abroad, these officers also acquired contacts and even friendships with their fellows from other armies, who often had similar interests and aspirations.

For all these reasons, many attachés came to resemble their diplomatic colleagues in both behavior and even attitude. Furthermore, they also resembled the emerging professionals in other civilian professions (e.g., engineers or medical doctors) who monitored developments in their *metier* elsewhere, and so were members of what Russians call “a military intelligentsia.” As such, they were caught up in the transnational “professional” debates on future war that enveloped Europe’s military establishments in the 1890s, and which grew in intensity in the wake of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902.⁴⁴

gather and forward to the War Department military information” on the countries in which they were resident; see, Allison Ind, *A History of Modern Espionage* (London, 1965), 75–6.

⁴³ There is a vast literature on Europe’s armies and the changing nature of their officer corps before 1914. Typical studies are E. S. Turner, *Gallant Gentlemen: A Portrait of the British Officer, 1600–1956* (London, 1956), and Keith Simpson, “The Officers,” in Ian F. W. Beckett and Keith Simpson, eds., *A Nation in Arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War* (Manchester, 1985), 63–96, on Britain; Pierre Chalmin, *L’Officier français de 1815 à 1870* (Paris, 1957), and Douglas Porch, *The March to the Marne* (London, 1981), on France; Karl Demeter, *The German Officer Corps in Society and State, 1650–1945*, tr. A. Malcolm (London, 1965), and Martin Kitchen, *The German Officer Corps, 1890–1914* (Oxford, 1968), on Prussia-Germany; Istvan Deak, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (Oxford, 1990), on Austria; John Gooch, *Army, State and Society in Italy, 1870–1915* (London, 1989), and John Whittam, *The Politics of the Italian Army* (London, 1977), on Italy; and the sources listed David R. Jones, “Imperial Russia’s Forces at War,” in Allan R. Millett and Williamson Murray, eds., *Military Effectiveness*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1987), I, 249–328.

⁴⁴ The nature of these debates is evident from the response of the eminent British military writer Colonel G. F. R. Henderson to the German attachés’ reports from South Africa, in his essay “Foreign Critics,” in his *The Science of War: A Collection of Essays and Lectures, 1892–1903*, ed. N. Malcolm (London, 1905), 365–81.

Meanwhile, the practice of non-combatant states assigning observers, either in the persons of regular peacetime attachés or of others especially selected for the purpose, had also expanded after 1850. Thus France permitted a Prussian observer to join its troops in Mexico in 1863, and another its forces fighting Algerian rebels in 1864.⁴⁵ In 1859, attaché-observers accompanied the warring armies in the northern Italian campaign, where the Russians present included the famous military theorist M. I. Dragomirov. He also accompanied the Prussians in 1866,⁴⁶ on which occasion the Austrians sought to ban observers altogether. The French did likewise in 1870, but the Prussians were more welcoming to observers attached to both their general headquarters and those of their field armies,⁴⁷ and in 1871 the Prussians hosted the American General William T. Sherman on his tour of Europe to study the recent conflict.⁴⁸ An American military mission had also toured Europe during the Crimean War,⁴⁹ and the United States hosted return visitors from Britain, France, Prussia and Switzerland during its own Civil War.⁵⁰ Military attachés again accompanied the combatant armies during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878,⁵¹

⁴⁵ Together, their reports helped shape Prussia's "appraisals of French artillery effectiveness, fire discipline, and cavalry tactics." See, Craig, *Politics of the Prussian Army*, 259.

⁴⁶ Dragomirov's "lessons learned" are reflected in his first major tactical text; see his *Kurs taktiki dlia gg. ofitserov uchebnago pekhotnago battaliona*, 2nd ed. (SPB, 1867).

⁴⁷ For example, the Russians sent 11 officers and eight medical doctors; see Persson, 155–156, and L. M. Shneerson, *Franko-prusskaia voina i Rossiia. Iz istorii russko-prusskikh i russko-frantsuskikh otnoshenii v 1867–1871 gg.* (Minsk, 1976), 112–13.

⁴⁸ John F. Marszalek, *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order* (New York, 1993), 362–63.

⁴⁹ Major Richard Delafield, *Report on the Art of War in Europe in 1854, 1855, and 1856* (Washington, DC, 1860).

⁵⁰ Luvaas, *Military Legacy*, 9. Although Russia sent no formal observers, reports were sent back by officers serving unofficially with both the Union and Confederate armies; Persson, 156, 159–63.

⁵¹ On this occasion, Alexander II had invited the French, German and Austrian attachés to accompany him to the front, but initially ignored Colonel F. A. Wellesley, their British colleague. The latter's unflattering dispatches on the Russian mobilization, revealed by a British politician in London, had annoyed senior Russian commanders and had led to a diplomatic flap that reveals much about the status of attachés and respect owed them as representatives of their governments and sovereigns; see, Wellesley, *With the Russians*, 169–194. The United States, meanwhile, sent an observer, Lieutenant Francis V. Greene, who later published his valuable *Report on the Russian Army and Its Campaigns in Turkey in 1877–1878* (New York, 1879). This war was well-covered in the press by war correspondents as well; see, Rupert Furneaux, *The Breakfast War* (New York, 1958).

observed smaller conflicts elsewhere, and reappeared on the South-African battlefields of the Anglo-Boer War.⁵²

Many states now were sending large, carefully organized observer-missions, rather than single attachés, to a theater of war. Apart from regular military attachés, these included engineering, artillery and medical specialists, as well as regular infantry and cavalry officers. By 1900, these latter, too, were considered professionals for whom practical experience was a teacher without equal. But more importantly, and apart from practical lessons in their own specialties, this duty offered all observers a chance to broaden their viewpoints through transnational contacts.⁵³ It was these emerging traditions of the battlefield attachés that found their fullest expression in the Russo-Japanese War before being overwhelmed by the nationalist hysteria that accompanied the blood-bath of 1914–1918.

Given their mixed diplomatic-military character, these observers represented more than the narrow interests of their respective war ministries. Observers were also unofficial delegates of the broader international society, who were fully conscious of their status, who expected to be treated in accord with accepted diplomatic protocol and, equally important, who expected their fellow observers to act likewise. As members of the transnational elite, their interests included matters other than the mere technical aspects of battle, and they reported on such issues as the use of “humane” bullets⁵⁴ and the

⁵² Among the Russian attachés in South Africa was Ia. G. Zhilinskii, who in 1904 served as chief of staff to Viceroy Admiral E. I. Alekseev in Port Arthur and Harbin, and who commanded the ill-fated Northwest Front in 1914. Given Russia's sympathy for the Boer cause, there were numerous Russian soldiers fighting as volunteers against the British; see, Christopher Moody's introduction to Sophia Izedinova, *A Few Months with the Boers: The War Reminiscences of a Russian Nursing Sister* (Johannesburg, 1977), i–iii.

⁵³ For example, A. A. Ignat'ev, who hosted the observers in Manchuria in 1904, recognized the value of this experience for his own later career as an attaché; “Relations with the military agents,” he recalled, “gave me the possibility to study the mores and customs of the representatives of foreign armies,” not by attending fashionable, diplomatic salons or maneuvers that often were “mere picnics,” but in war where all their actions had special significance. See, Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let v stroiu*, I, 218. His career is briefly sketched in Boris Raymond and David R. Jones, *The Russian Diaspora, 1917–1941* (Lanham, MD, 2000), 118–20.

⁵⁴ On the Japanese bullet see, for example, “Report of Capt. Peyton C. March, General Staff, Observer with the Japanese Army,” United States War Department, General Staff, *Reports of Military Observers attached to the Armies in Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War*, 5 vols. in 4 (Washington, DC, 1906–07), I, 9, and Lt. Gen. Neyt, *Notes concernant la Guerre russo-japonaise de 1904–1905* (Liege, 1905), 5.

combatants' compliance with the "customs of war."⁵⁵ While a full review is impossible here, diligent students of their dispatches will gain valuable insights into a spectrum of topics ranging from the climate in the Manchurian theater⁵⁶ through the details of the weapons and of medical-sanitation services,⁵⁷ to profiles of leading commanders and the impact of the conflict on the civilian populace.⁵⁸

As Theodore Ropp recognized, these observers included "some of the world's ablest soldiers." For example, those assigned to the Japanese First Army included six officers who later held senior commands in World War I.⁵⁹ Similarly, those assigned to the Russian Manchurian Army included head of the German military mission and later army commander Colonel von Lauenstein and a later French general, Commandant Cheminon.⁶⁰ As they gathered, old friendships were renewed and new ones forged. Colonel von Lauenstein and British Colonel W. H.-H. Waters, for instance, both spoke Russian, had become close when both had served as peacetime attachés in St. Petersburg, and could depend on a network of former Russian friends and acquaintances in fulfilling their missions. Waters had also served as attaché in Berlin and was "a former acquaintance" of General Felix Silvestre, head of the French Mission. As well, during the campaign of 1904, Waters made friends with the American observer, Captain Carl Reichmann, who earlier had been an attaché in the Boer War.⁶¹ Similarly, at the First Japanese Army headquarters, the German Max Hoffmann became close to the American Peyton March, who gave him English lessons.⁶²

⁵⁵ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 51.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁵⁷ Apart from the comments in individual attaché reports, see the American Louis Seaman's *The Real Triumph of Japan—The Conquest of the Silent Foe* (London, 1906).

⁵⁸ See, for example, "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler, General Staff, Observer with the Russian Army," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 158–61; Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 75, and Hamilton, *Staff Officer's Scrap-Book*, 307–08.

⁵⁹ Theodore Ropp, *War in the Modern World*, rev. ed. (New York, 1962), 202. These attachés were John J. Pershing, Peyton C. March and Enoch H. Crowder of the United States, Max Hoffmann of Germany, Ian Hamilton of Great Britain, and Enrico Caviglia of Italy. On the attachés present, also see Max Hoffmann, *Der Krieg der versäumten Gelegenheiten* (Munich, 1924), 15–16. After 1905, Caviglia served as Rome's attaché in Tokyo until 1911.

⁶⁰ Ignat'ev, *Piat' desiat let*, I, 220–23.

⁶¹ On Waters' close friendships with Lauenstein and Reichmann, see "Secret and Confidential," 68, 164, 263, 270, and on his cooler relations with Silvestre, *ibid.*, 261, 263, 270.

⁶² Hoffmann, *Der Krieg*, 16.

At the same time the observers were, of course, military “guests” of the host armies who “were not invited, but were merely permitted to follow the operations,” and “whose presence was tolerated, but had not been sought after.” These “gentlemen” therefore were subject to certain restrictions, and had only “a right to learn just so much as the Russians [or Japanese] chose to tell them.”⁶³ Furthermore, their view of events on both sides was often worm’s-eye in nature. This was especially the case with a junior officer, “who does not remain attached to higher headquarters, but has to hustle with the troops in the front.”⁶⁴ Such observers would fill out their personal accounts with data gathered by conversations with other attachés and officers of their host army, as well as from official statements and lectures provided by the latter, and even from reports in the press.⁶⁵ For these reasons, reports “often differ widely concerning matters of fact . . . , showing how even eye-witnesses present in different parts of the same battle field, disagree.”⁶⁶

In these respects the experiences of the attachés with both armies were similar. Yet initially, the position and conditions of service of those with the Japanese differed widely from those assigned to the Manchurian Army. In the first case the Japanese, whatever the immediate friction caused by inexperience in dealing with the sudden influx of both foreign correspondents and officers,⁶⁷ needed only to

⁶³ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 44, 74; Waters, “*Secret and Confidential*,” 261.

⁶⁴ “Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann, Seventeenth Infantry, Observer with the Russian Army,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 179.

⁶⁵ For example, a Japanese officer presented a lecture on the Yalu battle to observers with the First Army, while Hamilton’s report on the Russian assault on the Motienling was based on press reports; see, Reports No. 1 and No. 17 in *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers*, I, 15–17, and 161 respectively.

⁶⁶ Waters points out, for example, that “there was great diversity of opinion as to the number of guns in action in the Japanese center at Vafango on June 15th. One view was that there were seven batteries (42 guns) there, while others declared the number was 18.” See, Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 12–13.

⁶⁷ Veteran reporter Douglas Story, *The Campaign with Kuropatkin* (London, 1904), 44, maintained that “the war plans of the Japanese had no place for attachés or correspondents” while, in *Scribner’s Magazine*, John Fox remarked: “In simple kindness the Japs might have said, ‘Over here we do not recognize the ancient, Occidental, God-given right of the newspaper to divulge the private purposes of anybody.’” Quoted in Rupert Furneaux, *News of War* (London, 1964), 197. Frustrated by the “stifling censorship” that reigned in Tokyo, novelist Jack London, representing the Hearst newspaper group, reportedly struck one Japanese official; see Philip Knightley, *The First Casualty. From the Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Myth Maker* (New York: 1975), 61.

follow the accepted diplomatic rules and protocols of Europe's Great Powers. The attachés gathering in Tokyo duly reported to their respective embassies, impatiently awaited assignments from the Ministry of War and, like the correspondents, quickly grew frustrated. As reporter Douglas Story recalled, there also were "plenty" of correspondents, "forty in a single hotel." But of news, he wrote, "there was not a vestige. The Japanese were silent as sphinxes, patient as the pyramids, impenetrable as the Sahara."⁶⁸

This was equally the case for the official observers, and both groups dealt with Japan's Ministry of War through Major General Fukushima Yasumasa, himself a former attaché and now Chief of the Second Section of the Japanese General Staff. An amused yet admiring British General Ian Hamilton recorded that "his entire duty just now is to baffle and thwart in every possible way all the foreigners who have dealings with him; whilst, to enable him the more effectively to execute his disagreeable duty, he is officially described as their mentor and assistant." Although "many of the military attachés and correspondents still regard him as a sort of information bureau, and quite their best friend and stand-by in Tokyo," Hamilton explains, "he has not told one single man one single fact worth one single halfpenny to any foreign government or journal."⁶⁹ But with some impatient reporters (like Story) leaving to join the Russians,⁷⁰ the Japanese quickly attempted to mollify both the press and attachés with numerous official banquets, including a lavish champagne dinner hosted by the navy at its base in the Elliot Islands off Port Arthur.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Story, *The Campaign with Kuropatkin*, 41.

⁶⁹ Hamilton, *Staff Officer's Scrap-Book*, 24.

⁷⁰ Story, *The Campaign with Kuropatkin*, 44; Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 62, writes: "Eventually most of the correspondents packed up and returned home, defeated by the censorship, until finally only [the Italian Luigi] Barzini and two news agency men remained. But while the agency men had to stay at Japanese headquarters Barzini was free to roam" the battlefield. But as numerous accounts of other reporters with the Japanese testify, Barzini was exceptional only in terms of the value of his detailed, 313-page *Guerra russo-giapponese. La battaglia di Mukden* (Milan, 1906, 1907), which was translated into German and Russian and, which Knightley says, was still being used in Japan's staff schools in the 1970s.

⁷¹ Hamilton, *Staff Officer's Scrap-Book*, 22, noted that banquets "to properly accredited foreigners are frequent; too frequent, indeed, for the taste of quiet folk." On the navy's champagne dinner, see the illustration and caption in H. W. Wilson, *Japan's Fight for Freedom: The Story of the War between Russia and Japan*, 3 vols. (London, 1904-1905), II, pt. 21, p. 499.

In large part, of course, this news blackout reflected the secrecy surrounding preparations for landings on the mainland in early May.⁷² Then, the attaché-observers, who had waited as members of their respective legations, received appointments from the War Ministry to the various armies. Thereafter the Japanese also loosened restrictions on correspondents as well as observers to an extent that left the foreigners at least as free as their counterparts with the Russian armies, and perhaps more so.⁷³ The result was a series of detailed attaché reports on the Japanese advance from the Yalu to Mukden, and the extensive reporters' accounts of the siege at Port Arthur, which are cited by all later historians.⁷⁴

Since these foreign observers worked in groups attached to the separate Japanese armies, and retained links with their embassies in nearby Tokyo, they had no need of expressing their corporate identity by forming themselves into a single, unified military-diplomatic community. Matters were quite different for the 27 foreign attachés

⁷² Although Story, *The Campaign with Kuropatkin*, 44, admitted that the Japanese treatment of reporters risked "no interruptions from the indiscretions of spectators," he nonetheless departed in frustration to join the Russians instead; Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 62, also admits that the Japanese treatment of reporters reflected "their feeling that some of the correspondents were spies" since "some of the journalists with whom the Japanese had previously come into contact, especially those representing *The Times* of London," had also worked for "various government departments."

⁷³ This certainly was the case in terms of the attachés' reporting. Those attached to the Japanese forces were permitted to send regular dispatches, once the landings were completed. Their colleagues with the Russians were free to roam throughout the Manchurian Army, with only fixed fortifications being exempted, but the attachés only composed their full reports after their departures. As the Russian circular to the observers put it: "A military agent sees all that interests him, and makes notes of it, but he does not write the history of a campaign until it has been brought to a conclusion." Quoted by Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 44.

⁷⁴ In both cases, "the way in which Japan has handled the question of the censorship," so as to keep the enemy guessing as to the real size of the Japanese armies, won plaudits from an American observer. "There can be no doubt," he wrote, "that the standard set in this war . . . will be represented to all the great powers by their attachés . . . in such a way as to make some similar method a necessity in all future wars." See, "Report of Capt. Peyton C. March," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 55. The correspondent for the *London Daily Telegraph*, Bennet Burleigh, gives the texts of the various Japanese regulations imposed in *Empires of the East, or Japan and Russia at War, 1904-5* (London, 1905), 76-82. For reporters' accounts of the Port Arthur battles, see, in particular, E. Ashmead-Bartlett, *Port Arthur: The Siege and Capitulation* (London: 1906); David H. James, *The Siege of Port Arthur: Records of an Eye-Witness* (London, 1905); B. W. Norregaard, *The Great Siege: The Investment and Fall of Port Arthur* (London, 1906); and W. Richmond, *The Siege and Fall of Port Arthur* (London, 1905).

joining General A. N. Kuropatkin's headquarters in Mukden. Whatever its private irritation, the Russian command was fully accustomed to dealing with such attachés, as British General Waters put it, for the most part they were "treated *en prince*."⁷⁵ On arriving in Manchuria, they were welcomed by Viceroy E. I. Alekseev in Harbin, and, after the cancellation of a flying visit to Port Arthur, forwarded to Kuropatkin's headquarters in Mukden.⁷⁶ There they were met by the youthful Count A. A. Ignat'ev, "a very distinguished graduate of the General Staff Academy, who spoke French perfectly, German somewhat, and English slightly."⁷⁷ He assigned the arrivals to quarters in rail cars or in small rooms in a railway administration building, arranged for their messing in a restaurant car on a nearby rail spur, acted as their censor, issued their credentials, advised them in other matters, and generally acted "as the intermediary between them and the commander in chief."⁷⁸

Consequently, there was little cause for immediate friction between the Russians and the attachés, who shared their hosts' frustrations while awaiting active campaigning. But being isolated from their embassies in far-off St. Petersburg, these observers had to deal directly with their hosts, without the immediate intervention and support of their respective diplomat superiors.⁷⁹ Left adrift, and in close cooperation with the Russians, they immediately created their own autonomous, corporate diplomatic community which, despite their individual

⁷⁵ Waters, "Secret and Confidential," 260.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 260–61; Freiherr von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate mit Russlands Heeren in der Mandschurei*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1908), I, 58–59.

⁷⁷ "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 101; also, von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 57. Significantly, Ignat'ev had been with the intelligence section of Kuropatkin's staff before being assigned to greet and house the arriving guests. For this purpose the chief of staff handed him 100,000 rubles from the field treasury and warned him to "be economical." See, Ignat'ev, *Piat' desiat let*, I, 217.

⁷⁸ Not only were the attachés lodged and fed "as guests of the Crown" but, like their Russian military colleagues, they were assigned an orderly, a mount and the use of a two-wheel cart. In time they also had a Cossack or mounted-infantryman who acted as an escort to smooth their way within the Manchurian Army and to provide added security against local bandits; "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 101–04; von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 60–1.

⁷⁹ This isolation was in part a result of Russian restrictions on letters and telegrams sent from the theater of war; see, for example, Waters, "Secret and Confidential," 261, and *Reports from the Campaign*, 43. For censorship in the war's latter period, see the comments of Austrian attaché Alexander Spaits, *Mit Kosaken durch die Mandschurei. Erlebnisse im russisch-japanischen Kriege* (Vienna, 1906), 165–76.

nationalist rivalries, fully reflected the transnational society of the day. In so doing, the attachés imposed their own sense of the appropriate protocol in a manner that was perhaps unique in the history of such attaché-observers.

In accord with diplomatic practice, the Russians recognized General Sir Montague Gerard, the senior officer by rank present, as *doyen* of the attaché community.⁸⁰ Because Gerard was a representative of the British Army in India, Ignat'ev recalls that, the general's "position with our army was especially delicate since England was then a military ally of Japan."⁸¹ Now as the senior observer, Gerard was "responsible for seeing all the other agents complied with the rules of diplomatic etiquette, [which] made his position still more difficult." But, Ignat'ev continues, "it was not for nothing that Gerard was a representative of the British Empire," and an Englishman "who believed himself to be the master of the world." Consequently, he

easily accommodated himself to all circumstances and always preserved his traditional composure, which approached imperturbability; he was assiduously "reasonable," and he wisely listened more than he spoke. Gerard never asked me for anything or complained of anything.⁸²

Apart from his two English companions, Gerard's little multinational "diplomatic community" included representatives from Europe's other traditional Great Powers (France, Germany, Austro-Hungary) and the newcomer, Italy, along with delegates from such smaller European states as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Romania, Bulgaria, Spain, and neutral Switzerland, as well as the trans-Atlantic United States and

⁸⁰ Ignat'ev describes him as "a dry, gray gentleman" who loved horses, who claimed to have killed 70 "royal" tigers, and who reportedly had won his assignment in return for organizing a tiger hunt during Nicholas II's visit to India as tsarevich in 1891; Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let*, I, 218; see, also, von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 55. In fact, the hunt had been a factor in this cavalry officer's serving as military attaché to St. Petersburg in 1892, as was his fondness for "society" and fluency in French and Russian; Waters, "Secret and Confidential," 40–1.

⁸¹ In this regard his position was helped by the Russian Manchurian command's efforts to avoid antagonizing the British. In Port Arthur, for instance, the censor struck down anti-English comments in E. K. Nojine's articles and told him that "Admiral Makharoff is opposed to attacking the English in the press until the war is over; he does not doubt how things will end, but till that time he wishes to be polite; and in Petersburg they are of the same opinion." See, Nojine, *Truth About Port Arthur*, 226.

⁸² Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let*, I, 218; for a photograph of Gerard, see, von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 55–6, who also provides photographs of Gerard (75), von Lauenstein and Silvestre (77), among others.

Argentina.⁸³ This group's real center of social activity was the smoky bar at the buffet at the Liaoyang railroad station. There the observers mixed more freely with each other, as well as with Russian officers and civilians, and kept track of news and rumors.⁸⁴ Given their diverse national mix, the degree of corporate comradeship that the attachés developed is remarkable. The German Eberhard von Tettau recalled that his mission had "especially friendly relations" even with their traditional opponents, "their French comrades."⁸⁵

Given Gerard's reputation as a short-tempered man who was willing to "counter any instructions of which he did not approve," his success as *doyen* is perhaps surprising. Although he apparently left the reporting of matters of military value to his subordinates,⁸⁶ before his death by pneumonia in 1905, Gerard had successfully enforced strict diplomatic protocol upon his multinational colleagues, members of his own mission included.⁸⁷ For instance, Ignat'ev recalled that Gerard ordered the premature departure of his own colleague, Major J. M. Home, who had arrived in Manchuria direct from India via China. Later Waters simply remarked that Home's "health broke down, and he was obliged to return to England."⁸⁸ The young Ignat'ev, however, tells a different tale. Maintaining that he himself was untroubled by the major's brash, "hail-fellow-well-met" openness, Ignat'ev insists that Gerard was outraged by Home's flouting of diplomatic etiquette. The British general therefore had him withdrawn, leaving the "dry, quiet Waters" to bear the brunt of reporting.⁸⁹

⁸³ Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let*, I, 219–225; also see von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 61.

⁸⁴ See, von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 59–62; von Tettau (I, 104–05) adds that in time they also acquired, as a group, their own "house of foreign officers," a sixteen-room residence to serve as their *Buen retiro* during the war.

⁸⁵ von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 61.

⁸⁶ Although it is clear that Gerard officially forwarded the mission's despatches to the War Office [See Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 50], the published reports contain nothing actually penned by him.

⁸⁷ Waters, "Secret and Confidential," 47, 287; von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 56.

⁸⁸ Waters, "Secret and Confidential," 261

⁸⁹ Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let*, I, 219. Otherwise, Gerard's regime extended to such minutiae as the placement of seats at the attachés' mess tables. In terms of precedence, Ignat'ev recalled, he found himself dining daily with Gerard and the chiefs of the German and Austro-Hungarian missions, an arrangement that hindered his own relationship with General Silvestre, the chief of mission of Russia's ally France. The latter's relations with Russian officials were further complicated by another factor that set him apart from the other attachés. He owed his appointment in Manchuria to his post as chief of the military cabinet of the French president. In other words, he was regarded as holding what Ignat'ev called a "semi-court" or official state position, which in turn was "tied to all the political intrigues of the

Other missions had their problems as well. Apart from Lauenstein's irritation with his "fussy" colleague Major Freiherr von Tettau, the Germans had to deal with the embarrassment created by Wilhelm II's personal delegate to his Vyborg Infantry Regiment. This German colonel reportedly remained with the headquarters of the regiment's corps, in order "to 'familiarize' himself with the work of its staff." He then was discovered examining classified documents and expelled from the army, presumably with the full approval of the larger observer community.⁹⁰ But overall, the only issues that disturbed the attachés' relations with their Russian hosts concerned the occasional attempts of some foreigners to use the Chinese mails, and a few censorship breaches. These latter were minor, however, and only provoked a formal circular from the Russian command.⁹¹

Despite the strength and diversity of the European elite's transnational social environment, both the isolated nature of the attachés' daily lives, and the social and nationalist undercurrents stirring beneath the surface, made gossip and muted conflicts inevitable. Some sense of the backbiting within this exclusive community is evident from the case of Swiss Colonel Audeoud. Waters later recalled that his complaint "that he had not been supplied with a certain toilet article, . . . gave rise to a false rumor that he was a hotel proprietor by trade."⁹² Such doubts about his professional respectability aside, this gentleman was already unpopular. He was, Waters recalled, "a harsh, persistent critic" who, despite his professorship at the Swiss War Academy, was regarded by his fellows as being quite "out of his element." The last straw came when he remarked to a group of Russian and foreign officers, who were watching a train loaded with field-pieces: "What is the use . . . of giving the Russians more guns? They do not know how to use those which they have!" The observer community then unanimously approved a formal demand for his recall.⁹³

Third Republic," an institution commanding somewhat less than complete respect among Russia's military leadership. As a result, Ignat'ev maintains that Silvestre's effectiveness as an attaché was constrained by the fact of his political position, which meant he had to be treated with greater circumspection than the other observers; *ibid.*, I, 219–20, 226. Silvestre naturally ignores this problem in his *Considerations sur la campagne de Mandchouïe (1904–1905)* (Nancy, 1910).

⁹⁰ Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let*, I, 223–24.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, I, 227; Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 43–4; "Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 173–74.

⁹² Waters, "Secret and Confidential," 263.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 262; Ignat'ev, *Piat'desiat let*, I, 235–36.

Ignat'ev recorded that as a group, it was the Americans who remained outsiders and who "stood apart from the rest" of Gerard's self-defined diplomatic community. "No one," he complained, "could distinguish their ranks from their semi-sporting style, 'khaki-colored' jackets; no one could understand why these semi-civilians had arrived among us and stubbornly refused to understand any other language apart from English." He concluded this unflattering portrait by charging that after each Russian retreat, "one of the Americans would desert us and go over to the Japanese," behavior that he said outraged the other observers.⁹⁴ This last comment, of course, is pure slander, possibly motivated by Ignat'ev's later conversion to the Soviet regime.⁹⁵ As Waters' friendship with Reichmann⁹⁶ indicates, individual Americans could win acceptance. Even so, Ignat'ev's overall assessment undoubtedly reflects the Europeans' suspicions if not disdain for these newcomers in their midst who did not follow, or did not know how to follow, the accepted etiquette.

That this was some basis for Ignat'ev's criticism is suggested by the reports of American observers Walter S. Schuyler and Carl Reichmann. Perhaps due to the recent creation of their army's attaché system, both felt the need to educate their seniors of the qualities necessary for future observers, among which, Reichmann insisted, "a thorough knowledge of the language of the army to which he is attached occupies first place." He believed that this was so important that no one should be accredited "to a foreign army who does not speak its language," and that in the future the United States should accept only those foreign officers who speak English. For those who can "not readily communicate their wishes are apt to become discontented . . . and may give trouble."⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Ignat'ev, *Piat' desiat let*, I, 222.

⁹⁵ A basis for this charge may exist in a story recorded by Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 50. He tells of one Reuters correspondent who, annoyed at Russian restrictions on his use of the telegraph, deliberately fell into Japanese hands at Liaoyang. Then, having fired off a dispatch critical of the Russians, he found his new hosts were no less restrictive. He returned to the Russians, who allowed him to work as before, a decision the English attaché called "an instance of rather far-fetched generosity."

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 74, 131. In "Secret and Confidential," 270, Waters described Reichmann as "a splendid fellow in every sense of the word" who "was, very properly, gathered up into the American General Staff on its formation."

⁹⁷ With this facility, Reichmann judged an attaché's "usefulness is 100 per cent," which the need of communicating in "a third language" reduced to "not more than

Schuyler agreed that in general, one could not “overestimate the importance of previous preparation in the languages, for study of it in campaign conditions takes much time valuable for other purposes.” He suggested that most other nation’s attachés had been “selected on account of their knowledge of Russian as well as their general excellence in modern languages,” and observed that least half of the 24 other attachés were fluent in Russian, while others read or spoke it with difficulty. But Schuyler, unlike Reichmann, recommended that any future attaché to a Russian army should “speak French fluently,” and have “the gift of conversation above all accomplishments.” He added that, “the man who could talk constantly about no matter what and take part in all conversation, whether important or not, was always persona grata.”⁹⁸

Linguistic abilities aside, both Schuyler and Reichmann made recommendations concerning the financial resources and personal kit required by attachés. Yet more interesting in light of America’s emerging world role are their comments on the etiquette required of attachés. These comments provide further evidence of the powerful conventions underlying Gerard’s regime and implicitly help explain Ignat’ev’s remarks. Reichmann felt it necessary to remind his superiors that abroad, “it is the custom for the newly arrived officer to make the first call” and, within 24 hours of arriving, to “call or leave his card on every foreign attaché that has preceded him.” Although this “prompt call is semiofficial and semisocial,” he warned, it “is *de rigueur*, and should not be shirked.”⁹⁹

Again, both these observers stressed the importance of dress codes. In this regard, Schuyler pointed out that although Kuropatkin himself “did not encourage, or did not require, the wearing of other

75 per cent.” But if the observer was restricted to his own language, and this was not that of the host army, “he is very helpless indeed, dependent upon the friendly assistance of other attachés, and his usefulness is not more than 10 per cent.” See, “Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 175–76.

⁹⁸ Schuyler justified this by the observation that most Russian officers spoke either French or German, or both. And since these last also were used for most discussions within the observer community, in which “it is essential that one should take part in the current conversations, as otherwise he loses a great many things to which he would otherwise have his attention attracted.” He stressed that continental armies had a considerable advantage over the Americans “in that they have a large number of individuals constantly in touch with the other nations, and consequently always in good practice as to their languages.” See, “Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 102.

⁹⁹ “Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 175.

than field dress," most foreign officers had brought their dress uniforms, "and following the customs of their own countries" wore these "on ceremonial occasions and also on Sundays." Such occasions included Kuropatkin's ceremonial reviews of newly arrived regiments, as well as the religious feast days of the regiments themselves, both of which occasions usually involved formal dinners which provided properly attired attachés with opportunities to make valuable contacts.¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, Reichmann stressed that in most armies, officers never "appear in public without their swords, and the foreign attaché should conform to the custom. For, without a sword was to be "not fully dressed for the occasion and may be considered a lack of formality amounting to a slight."¹⁰¹

Clearly, then, the experience of the American observers with the Russians had more than merely military significance. But, how ever valuable the diplomatic-social "lessons learned," the Americans were as eager as other members of Liaoyang's corporate attaché community to see real action. After all, their opposites with the Japanese had joined the Japanese armies in early May and had already witnessed the battles of the Yalu and Nanshan. If Kuropatkin's army had as yet to concentrate fully at Liaoyang, his forward units were in contact with the Japanese. The Russians therefore asked their guests for their preferred postings. Having invited the senior attachés of France, Germany, Austria, England, and Spain to remain with Kuropatkin's headquarters,¹⁰² the Russians issued the remaining observers with their papers and sent them off to join various corps headquarters. There, other staff officers assumed Ignat'ev's task of settling them in and, at the individual corps commander's pleasure, distributing them among the component divisions. Not surprisingly, the observers' conditions of service were no longer as uniform as at Liaoyang and many, finding themselves left to their own devices, soon sought transfers to more welcoming venues.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 104.

¹⁰¹ "Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 175. He added (176) that the attaché "wears his saber (and pistol)" in the field as well.

¹⁰² Although Schuyler diplomatically explained that the "omission in this of the United States was no doubt due to the fact that I had expressed a desire to see the cavalry," this seems further evidence that the republic had yet to win full membership in the European club; "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 106.

¹⁰³ "Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 174–75.

Attachés and the War

By early June 1904, then, these soldier representatives of Europe's transnational society and its member states were finally fully "embedded" within the armies of both combatants, and at last had the opportunity to confront the realities of modern battle. In assessing their subsequent reports a number of points must be borne in mind. To begin with, in this conflict their self-identity as members of a transnational professional elite was reinforced by their sense that they represented Europe and its "civilized" mores within a more or less alien environment. If the Americans were to some extent outsiders within Eurocentric perspective,¹⁰⁴ the Japanese were still newer arrivals to the international system. Worse still, they were the first non-European nation to challenge a Great Power, which, not surprisingly brought a new round of warnings about the specter of the "Yellow Peril."¹⁰⁵

Japan's victories reinforced such fears. If most attachés did not take this extreme view of a possible future, some did. Waters was surprised, for instance, when the French attaché Cheminon admitted

¹⁰⁴ This, however, often makes their reports somewhat idiosyncratic, and hence more interesting. No European attaché, for example, echoed the prescient judgment of the American W. V. Judson who, like the Polish banker I. S. Bloch, argued that a major war would prove as disastrous for the victor as vanquished. "When, under present conditions," Judson wrote, "two countries reasonably well prepared make war, the result is apt to be so near a draw that even victory is unprofitable. This is a splendid fact," he added, "as it makes for peace, and may eventually lead to partial disarmament by international convention." Quoted in Ropp, *War in the Modern World*, 221.

¹⁰⁵ Major P. A. Silburn of Natal, for instance, warned that despite "the sympathy which the love of justice and fair play has aroused among the Anglo-Saxon race for the Japanese in their war with Russia, it must not be forgotten that it may be the means of reviving in Asiatic minds a hope of universal domination." He believed that for the past 2,400 years, "the Western nations have succeeded in directing the progress of the world, and, happily for mankind today, Orientalism was checked" in every major battle "between the Eastern and Western races." If the latter had lost, "the religious doctrines of Mahomet and Buddha would have been preached and followed . . . , slavery and polygamy would have been common institutions, and it is left for the imagination to depict the position of the nations at the present time." Consequently, if "as may be reasonably expected, the issue of the struggle between Russia and Japan is consummated by the union of the yellow races, half of the world comes under the Occidentalised Jap," then "the East [will] change places with the West by force of arms, Christianity will not even exist as it does in the Balkans, and the rapid decline of civilisation must result." See, P. A. Silburn, *The Colonies and Imperial Defence* (London, 1909), 260–61. A note (159) says this chapter was written during 1904–1905.

that Russia's defeats "affect me greatly" not because of the alliance with Russia, but because "the rise of Japan constituted a danger for all white races, which should unite to stem the tide of Asiatic victory."¹⁰⁶ Signs of a similar and implicit prejudice also seem apparent in the frequent comments by observers suggesting that racial affinity alone meant that the Japanese intelligence service could count on using the Manchurian-Chinese locals as spies.¹⁰⁷ Such remarks are reminiscent of similar suspicions expressed about the Polish Jews by the Russian Supreme Headquarters and its supporters in 1915.¹⁰⁸ If the Japanese, given their longer experience in the region, may have had an easier time dealing with the locals, the latter probably regarded both sides as unwanted intruders.¹⁰⁹

There was another side to this racist coin. How ever dangerous the "Yellow Peril," some hailed Japan as a "wise nation" that was "not be content to train its whole manhood in arms, and organize and discipline itself," but which trained "its leaders, statesmen as well as admirals and generals in this *business* of war with extreme thoroughness and care."¹¹⁰ As such, Japan provided an argument for compulsory service to British proponents of readiness, the observer General Hamilton included. "This Japanese army shows conscription at its best," he recorded after arriving in Tokyo, in that it represented

a comparatively small number, picked out of several hundreds of thousands for physical fitness and aptitude at certain necessary trades. The army is the cream of the nation. How different from us!

¹⁰⁶ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 106.

¹⁰⁷ See, for example, Story, *The Campaign with Kuropatkin*, 173–81, and Richard Ullrich, *Die Feuerprobe der russischen Armee. Tagebuchblätter aus dem Hauptquartiere des 17. Armeekorps niedergeschrieben im Kriege 1904/1905* (Berlin, 1910), 240–43. Needless to say, it was easier for the Japanese to pass as Chinese among the Russians than vice versa, but Schuyler reported the occasional Russian arrest of Chinese spies as well; see, "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 159–61. For more on Chinese spies, see David Wolff, "Intelligence Intermediaries" in John W. Steinberg, et al. eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, 2005), 305–30.

¹⁰⁸ On the problems of the Polish Jews in 1915, see, George Katkov, *Russia 1917: The February Revolution* (London, 1967), 55–62.

¹⁰⁹ On views of Chinese attitudes, see, Home, "Historical Narrative," *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers*, III, Report No. 1, p. 6; Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 75; and Hamilton, *Staff Officer's Scrap-Book*, 307–08. An American attaché made particular note of the ambiguous attitude of the Chinese, see, "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 159–60.

¹¹⁰ Ross, *Outline of the Russo-Japanese War*, 288.

Later, after a clash between second-line Japanese troops and Russian cavalry at Anju, Hamilton drove his point home: "It would be difficult to find a stronger argument in favour of some kind of universal training." The "old civilized nations," he warned, are trying "to shut their eyes to the necessity of holding up high military standards amongst their citizens."¹¹¹

Then, secondly, we must remember that in 1904 a conflict still "could only become a major war" if it involved a Great European Power, and that all still accepted that it was "in the chancelleries of Europe alone that the final issue of general peace or war would be decided."¹¹² If Russian involvement gave this conflict significance, its non-European context meant that, *ipso facto*, it could not serve as a dependable model of a future clash of the Great Powers on the traditional battlefields of Old Europe. "Owing to special conditions, concerned with the ethnography of the nations involved," wrote one Austrian analyst, "and the geographical and climatic peculiarities of the theatres of war, the most recent wars [e.g., Boer and Manchurian] possess characteristics which only allow one up to a certain point to draw inferences and deductions from their study."¹¹³ In this same

¹¹¹ Hamilton, *Staff Officer's Scrap-Book*, 6–8, 90. An eminent German tactical writer fully shared Hamilton's worries, and feared civilization's impact on the troops "morale" or military spirit. "The steadily improving standards of living," he wrote, "tend to increase the instinct of self-preservation and to diminish the spirit of self-sacrifice . . .," while since "the fast manner of living at the present day tends to undermine the nervous system, the fanaticism and religious and national enthusiasm of a bygone age is lacking, and finally the physical powers of the human species are also partly diminishing." See, William Balck, *Tactics*, 4th ed. (Fort Leavenworth, 1911), 194. "Our days," he had written at the time of the war, "little favor the spiritual and physical qualities. The State should therefore take every care, that with all the progress of modern civilization, however desirable it be, our nation does not under its attendant evil influences, lose those qualities that formally distinguished the German race. The destiny of civilized nations, throughout the various periods of the history of civilization points undeniably to the fact, time after time, that nations standing ever so high in point of civilization but having neglected the cultivation of those qualities which the profession of arms can alone assure, have deplorably failed to withstand the onset of barbarians far beneath them in point of civilization, but immeasurably above them in moral and physical attributes." See, Supplement No. 73 of *Internationale Revue über die gesamten Armeen und Flotten* (April 1906), translated as "Some German Ideas of the Experiences of the Russo-Japanese War," in Chief of Staff, India, *Lessons of Russo-Japanese War* (Simla, 1906), 115.

¹¹² Nicolson, *Evolution*, 73

¹¹³ Capt. Otto Ferjentsih, Austrian Army, in his second prize essay of 1906, tr. in Chief of Staff, India, *Lessons of Russo-Japanese War*, 144; The first prize winner, Capt. Ignac Rodic of the General Staff, made this same point when he insisted

vein the British War Office's first official summary of observer reports cautioned that "the tactics employed were necessitated by the peculiar circumstances of the campaign and cannot be taken as of general application."¹¹⁴

These considerations help explain the conflict's limited impact on the concept of future war alleged by critics of European military thought before 1914. So too do repeated warnings that despite the "fairly comprehensive literature" that included "the reports published by combatants and war correspondents, as well as the works which have appeared on the war, up to the present time, give us very meagre *data* to work upon."¹¹⁵ Even so, for many "the war in Manchuria marks an epoch in the history of tactics; and for that reason, if for no other, it should be carefully studied."¹¹⁶ In this respect the observers' reports provided a major primary source for Europe's general staffs as official histories appeared and the conflict quickly took its place in the syllabi of the major war colleges.¹¹⁷ For in technical military

that "other points must be borne in mind before we can usefully investigate the matter [of tactical lessons]. First of all we must take into consideration the difference in the degree of civilization of the contending powers and in their methods of generalship, then the peculiar conditions obtaining in the theatre of war, and above all the radical difference in the national characteristics of the Russians and Japanese." Ibid., 136. More explicit still are the comments of a leading British commentator. "Neither the experiences in South Africa nor those in Manchuria seriously influenced the views of the leading cavalry experts," wrote Colonel Frederic N. Maude, "for the conditions of both cases were entirely abnormal." For no West European nation could afford the complete mobilization carried through by the Boers while "in Manchuria, the theatre of operations was so far roadless, and the motives of both combatants so distinct from any conceivable as a basis for European strategy," that the fighting there took on an unique character; F. N. Maude, "Cavalry," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th ed. (London, 1911-1926), V, 569.

¹¹⁴ Great Britain, War Office, General Staff, *Some Tactical Notes on the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 1906), 5.

¹¹⁵ Capt. Ignac Rodic in Chief of Staff, India, *Lessons of the Russo-Japanese War*, 136. Major-General Baron Hugo von Freytag-Loringhoven in his preface to the 2nd edition of his *The Power of Personality in War* (London, 1911), noted that the "events of that conflict have not yet become known with sufficient clearness." See, T. R. Phillips, *Roots of Strategy* (Harrisburg, 1955), 182. In fairness to Rodic, Freytag-Loringhoven added (136) that "still no chance should be wasted of arriving at some definite conclusion with regard to new methods of waging war."

¹¹⁶ Major Neill Malcolm, "Tactics," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th ed., XXVI, 351.

¹¹⁷ For example, see Arden Bucholz, *Hans Delbruck and the German Military Establishment: War Images in Conflict* (Iowa City, 1985), 57-8. He points out that the third and final year's curriculum at the German War Academy was devoted to the Franco-Prussian and Russo-Japanese Wars. In connection with a study of the tactics and strategy of the latter, the themes for long essays included: "How did the racial character of the Japanese bear up under the pressure of war against superior numbers?"

terms, few disagreed with General Waters that the “war has been fruitful in lessons, and some theories have been confirmed, while others have been dispelled.”¹¹⁸

For most observers Russia’s performance was a matter of considerable interest. Yet within this general consensus, various observers had varied and differing national perspectives. As formal allies of Russia, for example, the French were vitally concerned with the performance of the army which they expected to support them in any future conflict with the German Empire. For quite opposite reasons, both the Germans and Austrians, as well as other possible future opponents of Russia (e.g., the Swedes and Romanians), had a similar concern. In addition, it is often forgotten that British officers also regarded Russia as a possible future enemy, but more out of their traditional concern for the security of India than as allies of Japan.¹¹⁹

As noted, two of the British attachés with the Russians represented the latter’s expected future enemy, the Indian Army, while in his 1905 reports the third, Waters, paid considerable attention to a possible confrontation in that theater.¹²⁰ Worse still, at this time British fears of a war with Russia rose dramatically, thanks to the Dogger Bank Incident.¹²¹ But another aspect of this conflict was also of “great

¹¹⁸ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 129.

¹¹⁹ On the worries of the British military over a Russian advance on India at this time and the war gaming inspired by Lord Kitchener and the Indian Army’s rejection of the London-based War Office’s less alarmist view of the threat, see, Sir William Robertson, *From Private to Field-Marshal* (London, 1921), 133–34, and on the reduction of tensions brought by the Entente, see, 138–39.

¹²⁰ Waters stressed that the Indian Army should “be capable of doing more than merely holding its own against the forces which Russia can throw against it.” For, he held that the Indian Army’s advantages in training, tactics or leadership will “avail us but little, unless we know how the numbers necessary for a great struggle are to be placed in the field in time.” Otherwise, he warned, “we continue to run a very great risk, but if these wants can be supplied at a proper moment we ought, judging by the events of the present war, to be able to ensure peace upon our own terms.” See, Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 129, 132.

¹²¹ In the wake of a nervous Second Pacific Squadron’s opening fire on English fishing boats, Sir Henry Wilson of Britain’s General Staff wrote in his diary on 28 October 1904: “We are balancing between peace and war, with a slight inclination towards war, because it seems Russia rather wants war. We are to-night in the most serious position we have been in since the Napoleonic Wars, because signs are not wanting that France is inclining towards Russia.” See, Maj. Gen. Sir C. E. Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Bart, G.C.B., D.S.O.: His Life and Diaries*, 2 vols. (New York, 1927), I, 59.

interest" to British analysts. This is the fact that it was "amphibious" in "that it was fought between an island Power possessing interests on continental territory, and a land Power, with a vast army in communication by land with that territory." Therefore, wrote one general, the "lessons from the point of view of amphibious strategy are invaluable."¹²² If the naval aspects *per se* were not within the purview of the military attachés,¹²³ the first two published British reports assessed the successful landing of units of the First Japanese Army at Chemulpo and Chinampo, and subsequent dispatches did likewise for the Second and Fourth Armies.¹²⁴ And, in retrospect, the British army gave the Japanese the highest grades in this regard.¹²⁵

¹²² Brig. Gen. G. G. Aston, *Letters on Amphibious Wars* (London, 1911), 211–212. Gen. L. E. Kiggell, in his new edition of Sir E. B. Hamley, *The Operations of War Explained and Illustrated* (London, 1907, 1909), 351, also insisted that the war belonged "to a class which has well been called 'amphibious,'" while a third writer pointedly described the war as the struggle between a "small island nation, with an army and navy admirably organised and equipped for the task in hand, lay ready to strike a great continental Power, which had vast potential resources, but which was unready and unorganised and which would require many months to bring equal forces into play." See, Major H. Rowan-Robinson, *The Campaign of Liao-Yang* (London, 1914), 19. Indeed, General James Grierson saw this war as proof that even an island power now required a large land army, which conclusion won the approval of most of his fellow soldiers; D. S. MacDiamid, *The Life of Lieutenant General Sir James M. Grierson* (London, 1923), 133.

¹²³ In this regard the unfortunate Major Home is an exception in providing more extended musings on the strategic impact of sea power on the course of the campaign. He pointed out that the issue of "sea power was intimately connected with Port Arthur," home base of most of the Russian fleet; that "should the Japanese lose command of the sea the whole of their land operations are bound to fail," as they would be unable to keep their armies supplied; and that Russia's fleet "was reduced to a state of inferiority" due to Japan's success in putting major units *hors de combat* at the beginning of the war. This last made a successful breakout impossible, the port's defense a necessity, and the costly siege inevitable. He believed that thereafter, "the necessity of holding Port Arthur proved fatal to Russian strategy" both because of Russian prestige, and because of the fact that the "Viceroy, being a sailor, could only think of the fleet, and everything was subordinated to the idea of relieving it." If the siege did tie down numerous Japanese troops needed on the main front, Home argued that they still retained sufficient forces to repulse the relief attempt forced on an unwilling Kuropatkin, and that Russian morale suffered accordingly. As a result, "in the end, though the Russians concentrated a superior force, they were defeated by inferior numbers." He commented on the inactivity of the Russian squadron as well; Major J. M. Home, "General Deductions," *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers*, III, Report No. 8, pp. 213–14.

¹²⁴ *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers*, I, Reports No. 1, pp. 1–5; No. 2, pp. 6–7; No. 8, pp. 61–65; and No. 12, pp. 106–109.

¹²⁵ For example, Brig. Gen. G. G. Aston wrote: "... the time factor, and the relative facility of movement of armies by land and sea, are constantly brought into prominence, and the co-ordination of the work of fleets and armies by Japan to

In terms of tactics, the “lessons learned” in 1904–1905 have been studied at length elsewhere and space allows only the most general comments here.¹²⁶ We should note, however, that these lessons embraced a spectrum of topics. All observers remarked on the general significance of firepower in the offensive and defensive, along with the requisite types of infantry formations, and the extension of both frontages and the duration of battles. Others also examined more specialized themes such as the influence of new means of communications,¹²⁷ the proper roles for artillery¹²⁸ and cavalry,¹²⁹ and so on. “From the tactical point of view,” wrote German expert Wilhelm Balck, “the campaign in the Far East promises to be even more instructive than the Boer war.”¹³⁰ If most of the resulting conclusions

attain a common object provides the most wonderful example of such work in history.” See, Aston, *Letters on Amphibious Wars*, 212. Another writer notes: “The war in Manchuria also illustrates the interdependence between maritime and land operations in the case of a campaign where the army of one side has to be transported across the sea to carry out its mission, and where the other side at the same time possesses formidable naval forces.” See, Rowan-Robinson, *Campaign of Liao-Yang*, vii.

¹²⁶ Apart from the works mentioned in other notes, for more on the tactical “lessons learned” see, for example, Jay Luvaas, “European Military Thought and Doctrine, 1870–1914,” in Michael Howard, ed., *The Theory and Practice of War: Essays Presented to Captain B. H. Liddell Hart* (London, 1965), 69–93; John A. English, *On Infantry* (New York, 1981), 4–12; and Jack Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision-Making and the Disasters of 1914* (Ithaca, 1984), *passim*.

¹²⁷ See, for example, the comments of von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 221; and of Colonel W. H.-H. Waters, “General Report on the Experiences of the Russo-Japanese War,” *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers*, III, Report No. 7, pp. 138–40.

¹²⁸ Major Home’s eulogy to this arm was not exceptional: “The great impression made on my mind by all I saw is that artillery is now the decisive arm and that all other arms are auxiliary to it. The importance of artillery cannot be too strongly insisted upon, for, all other things being equal, the side which has the best artillery will always win.” See, Home, “General Deductions,” *The Russo-Japanese War: Reports from British Officers*, III, Report No. 8, pp. 209, 215.

¹²⁹ This arm received, at best, mixed reviews. One German simply remarked that “cavalry reconnaissance was carried out badly on both sides; it appears to have been somewhat better on the Russian side than on the Japanese,” and suggested that the latter might have profited from greater energy; Ullrich, *Die Feuerprobe*, 243. Hamilton was especially caustic and quoted a Japanese colonel who, after an action in early September 1904, remarked that since the cavalry remained idle, they “were employed to go back to the river and cook food for their companions of the infantry.” See, Hamilton, *Staff Officer’s Scrap-Book*, 306.

¹³⁰ Comments of Major Balck, 19th German Infantry, in *Militär Wochenblatt*, nos. 123, 125, 127, 128, and 132 (1905), on “General Lessons from the War,” tr. in Chief of Staff, India, *Lessons of Russo-Japanese War*, 12. Similarly, Austrian Capt. Otto Ferjentsih noted that it was, after all, “the first in which modern tactics were employed to any considerable extent,” and therefore offered “welcome material for study.” See, Capt. Otto Ferjentsih, in *ibid.*, 144.

seem illusory in light of the war of 1914–1918, they all still had a certain logic in terms of the prewar debates that raged within European military circles. Because of this, observers' reports from Manchuria could usually be found to support both sides of any issue in the tactical arguments first sparked by the use of smokeless powder, quick-firing field guns and repeating small arms, the machine-gun included, during the Anglo-Boer War.

A case in point is the much debated issue of the use during 1904–1905 of the entrenchments or fortifications that would dominate the Western Front during World War I. The British War Office's summary of these reports noted: "Never in the history of war have entrenchments been employed on so large a scale as during this campaign."¹³¹ Indeed, this feature was prominent in the reports of most attachés.¹³² But if for some this clearly confirmed I. S. Bloch's vision of future battlefields,¹³³ others remained unconvinced. The German observer von Tettau, for example, warned that the "war of positions" had a crippling affect on the will to adopt a determined course of action,¹³⁴ and General Silvestre concluded that the Manchurian battles had been drawn out only because the Russians fought from fortified defensive works. But he argued that both sides would take the offensive in a future German-French war, and expected that once contact was achieved, European battles would be decided by one day's hard fighting.¹³⁵ Such reports clearly allowed other analysts to condemn the extent to which "the cult of positions, for it almost amounted to a cult, was carried out by the Russians," even on the offensive, and to argue "that the antidote to entrenchment is manoeuvre, and it was certainly demonstrated in this war by the Japanese" and their enveloping attacks.¹³⁶

¹³¹ War Office, *Some Tactical Notes on the Russo-Japanese War*, 25.

¹³² For example, an American observer wrote: "Great reliance was placed on field intrenchments, and their use was very general. Once in the presence of an enemy the intrenching tool seemed next in importance to the rifle and ammunition. The rule on both sides seemed to be to always cover their positions with intrenchments as soon as taken up, even when held only for a short time." See, "Report of Capt. John F. Morrison, 20th Infantry, (now Major Thirteenth Infantry), Observer with the Japanese Army," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 81.

¹³³ Bloch had predicted that "everybody will be entrenched in the next war. It will be a great war of entrenchments. The spade will be as indispensable to a soldier as his rifle." See, I. S. Bloch, *Is War Now Impossible?* (London, 1899), xxvii.

¹³⁴ von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 231.

¹³⁵ Silvestre, *Considerations*, 100.

¹³⁶ F. R. Sedgwick, *The Russo-Japanese War: A Sketch* (London, 1909), 185–86; If there had been near unanimity on the need for adding spades to the infantryman's

Since the Japanese had modeled their army on the Prussian-German tactical system, which had dominated Europe after 1870, the Germans saw the conflict as a test of that system against their likely Russian opponent, while they simultaneously analyzed the extent to which the system had been rendered obsolete by increases in modern firepower.¹³⁷ Despite initial warnings about over-hasty conclusions, by November 1905 General von Caemmerer, a self-proclaimed “ardent adherent of the German tactical regulations,” declared that despite “dissentient voices,” the “whole course of the East Asiatic war has most admirably confirmed the doctrines of the German Service Regulations . . . in the realm of Tactics.”¹³⁸ Others, Balck included, quickly followed suit and by 1906 had concluded that, given Japanese successes, despite heavy casualties, the “principles of our regulations have again stood the test of warfare in the Far East. The main feature of the modern attack is a steady advance combined with powerful fire.”¹³⁹

The arguments in other European armies followed similar patterns. For the French, according to General Francois de Negrier,¹⁴⁰ nothing

kit in 1905, this also dissipated. In 1911, another British expert declared that an “army determined to attack needs no entrenching gear, at least not on its men. Its fire is its best protection.” He saw trenches being necessary in Manchuria only “because the whole weapon of attack, viz. that combination of the three arms which we call an army, was not properly balanced in its parts at those particular moments so as to enable it to maintain its forward impulse.” In particular, the fire of the Japanese artillery has been “too slow, or was locally outclassed by the artillery fire of its adversary.” See, F. N. Maude, “Strategy,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th ed., XXV, 995.

¹³⁷ Hoffmann, *Der Krieg*, 15, insisted that since the Japanese utilized German principles of troop leadership and training, these were successfully tested in the Manchurian campaign. Others, non-Germans included, agreed. Thus, British General Hamilton noted: “The fact that the Japanese military forces have been strictly modelled on the Prussian organisation helps to explain some of their characteristics.” See, Hamilton, *Staff Officer’s Scrap-Book*, 232. For more on the German army’s satisfaction, see, B. I. Gudmundsson, *Stormtroop Tactics: Innovation in the German Army, 1914–1918* (New York, 1989), 21, 26.

¹³⁸ Lt. Gen. Rudolf von Caemmerer, “Comments on the Battle of Mukden,” *Militär Wochenblatt*, no. 147 (30 Nov. 1905), reprinted in *Battle of Mukden*, tr. K. v. Donat (London, 1906), 55–56.

¹³⁹ Comments of Major Balck, on “General Lessons from the War,” in Chief of Staff, India, *Lessons of the Russo-Japanese War*, 12. The British Major N. Malcolm noted that the Japanese, influenced by their German teachers, always attacked, sought envelopment and fought “practically without reserves;” “Tactics,” 351. More generally, see, Michael Howard, “Men Against Fire: The Doctrine of the Offensive in 1914,” in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton, 1986), 510–22.

¹⁴⁰ De Negrier detailed his experiences and conclusions in his *Lessons of the Russo-Japanese War*, tr. E. Louis Spiers (London, 1906).

in the Manchurian experience required a revision of their manuals. Again, General Hippolyte Langlois insisted that the conflict had again established the “certain immutable principles of war.” These were, he said:

1. The preponderating influence of the moral factor; 2. The superiority of the offensive over the defensive; 3. The unity of effort is an essential to success. Half measures only lead to failure.¹⁴¹

Only in the United States, where there were fewer professional axes to grind, and in Britain, where the Boer War’s memory remained fresh, were the war’s tactical lessons not immediately distorted by preexisting doctrinal strictures.¹⁴² And even in Britain the influence of military conservatives, combined with financial stringency, hobbled efforts to acquire sufficient machine-guns¹⁴³ while cavalry, despite its failure as a “shock” arm in Manchuria, received new lances and swords.¹⁴⁴

Thereafter the majority of Europe’s soldiers increasingly embraced visions of “short wars” won by an offensive spirit, the will to victory and morale. Thus Ian Hamilton, one of the most perceptive English observers of 1904–1905, called for compulsory military service and

¹⁴¹ Quoted from the *Revue Militaire Generale*, in Sedgewick, *The Russo-Japanese War: A Sketch*, 192. The French debates are outlined in Douglas Porch, “The French Army and the Spirit of the Offensive, 1900–14,” in Brian Bond and Ian Roy, eds., *War and Society: A Yearbook in Military History* (London, 1975), 117–43.

¹⁴² On developing English concepts of modern war, see Edward M. Spiers, “The Regular Army in 1914,” in Beckett and Simpson, eds., *A Nation in Arms*, 47–9; Timothy Travers, *The Killing Ground: The British Army, the Western Front and the Emergence of Modern Warfare, 1900–1918* (London, 1990); and, fictionally, the first 18 stories in Maj. Gen. Sir Ernest Swinton (“Ole-Luk-Oie”), *The Green Curve Omnibus* (London, 1942).

¹⁴³ On the slow expansion of machine-gun establishments, see John Ellis, *The Social History of the Machine Gun* (New York, 1975), 65–71; and Dominick Graham, “Sans Doctrine: British Army Tactics in the First World War,” in Timothy Travers and Christon Archer, eds., *Men at War: Politics, Technology and Innovation in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, 1982), 73–4.

¹⁴⁴ For contemporary discussions of the poor showing of cavalry in Manchuria, see Graf Wrangel, *Die Reiterei im ostasiatischen Feldzuge. Lehren und kritische Betrachtungen* (Vienna, 1907), and George T. Denison, *A History of Cavalry from the Earliest Times with Lessons for the Future* (London, 1913), xi–xv, who also outlines the debate between advocates of “shock” versus those of mounted infantry. These are recounted in greater detail in Brian Bond, “Doctrine and Training in the British Cavalry, 1870–1914,” in Howard, ed., *Theory and Practice*, 95–125; Philip Warner, *The British Cavalry* (London, 1984), 163–72, and the Marquess of Anglesey, *A History of British Cavalry, 1816–1919*, 8 vols. (London, 1986–97), IV, 388–423. On the new sword, officially adopted in 1908, see Col. H. C. B. Rogers, *Weapons of the British Soldier* (London, 1960), 232–34.

demanded “an army formed, trained, inspired by the idea of the attack” rather than the “worship of material forces.”¹⁴⁵ If this conclusion was questionable, Hamilton’s general plea had the backing of his fellow observers. For General Waters, “there is one lesson that is of supreme interest to us, namely, the grave risk incurred by inadequate preparation.”¹⁴⁶

In this regard most observers also agreed on awarding Japan high marks, and in failing Russia. For Waters the latter’s basic error was that “she did not believe that Japan would venture to fight her.”¹⁴⁷ This over-confidence explained why Russia’s “military intelligence and reconnaissance duties were badly performed prior to and during 1904.”¹⁴⁸ Thus, when “war broke out, the General Staff at St. Petersburg was badly informed as to the quality and strength of the forces which Japan could place in the field, and maintain there.”¹⁴⁹ All in all, another British commentator concluded, it is “difficult to find a more striking example of the disasters which attend the fleets and armies of a country, in which an aggressive foreign policy has been allowed to proceed unchecked, although far ahead of the strategical preparations for its continuity after the failure of diplomatic measures.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ General Ian Hamilton, *Compulsory Service* (London, 1910), 21–2, 148. Like others impressed by the Japanese willingness to suffer heavy losses in pushing home the attack, Hamilton argued that “[a]ll that exaggerated reliance placed upon chassepots and mitrailleuses by France before ’70; all that trash written by M. Bloch before 1904 about zones of fire across which no living being could pass, heralded nothing but disaster. War is essentially the triumph of one will over the weaker will.”

¹⁴⁶ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 129. Also, the comments in “Report of Capt. Carl Reichmann,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 276–78.

¹⁴⁷ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 131.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 75; von Tettau, *Achtzehn Monate*, I, 270, remarked that the Russians’ contempt for their enemy harmed their strategy in the war’s early stages, and that their fear of the Japanese similarly affected it in the war’s later stages.

¹⁴⁹ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 74–5. He added that these “facts speak little for the work done by the Russian Great General Staff in time of peace, when it had years in which to ascertain the truth.” Ten years later Rowan-Robinson reiterated that “the information at the disposal of the staff with regard to the organization, the designs, and the methods of the enemy were lamentably incomplete,” while on the Japanese side, “the task of their intelligence department had been admirably performed.” He added that in Manchuria, the Russian military also “had been misled by the reports of sailors, who had expressed confidence that they would be able to retain command of the sea and that such a land campaign as actually developed would therefore be virtually impossible.” See, Rowan-Robinson, *Campaign of Liao-Yang*, viii.

¹⁵⁰ Aston, *Letters on Amphibious Wars*, 239.

In Waters' view, things did not improve significantly after hostilities commenced. Condemning the Russians' strategy, if such it can be called, as "bad,"¹⁵¹ he reported that their tactics were equally bad, that their "supply and transport system left much to be desired; the shooting was poor, and the officers, staff and regimental alike, displayed a lack of zeal and initiative."¹⁵² Most agreed and added that Russia's operational and strategic problems resulted from a command divided between Viceroy Alekseev and Commander-in-Chief Kuropatkin, and from the fact that the initiative was left to Japan.¹⁵³ As one analyst put it, there were "no traces of any co-ordination of the operations of the Russian fleet and army work from any central body like the Japanese Imperial Headquarters." Doubting that the Russians had any plan for naval operations, he added: "Had the Russian fleet been in a state of readiness, there was no apparent reason why offensive action should not have been undertaken against the Japanese fleet and transports from the first." Instead, Japan was left to seize "the initiative both by land and sea," an initiative "the Russians never regained . . . , and [so] were obliged to conform to the plans of their enemy."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 39. Waters charged that once "the sound and easy scheme" of concentrating on Mukden, adopted in January 1904, was abandoned, "a series of disjointed operations [was] undertaken. No real plan of campaign was adopted in its place until the decision to fight at Liaoyang, *if attacked*, was reached on August 3rd, six months after the outbreak of hostilities."

¹⁵² Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 131. Rowan-Robinson, *Campaign of Liao-Yang*, viii, stressed the same defects. German experts were particularly impressed by Russia's logistical problems in the field and adopted peacetime staff rides and exercises aimed at avoiding similar breakdowns; Hermann von Francois, *Verwaltungs-Generalstabsreisen* (Berlin, 1910), 7–30. For a more favorable view of the Japanese supply system, see, "Report of Captain John F. Morrison," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 68–79.

¹⁵³ See, for example, "Report of Lt. Col. Walter S. Schuyler," *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 161–63. Rowan-Robinson, *Campaign of Liao-Yang*, vii, remarks that the campaign "further illustrates the perils which are likely to be incurred by a Government which entrusts a soldier with a difficult task, and which then interferes with him as regards the mode in which he proposes to carry out the duty."

¹⁵⁴ Aston, *Letters on Amphibious Wars*, 238–39. Rowan-Robinson also noted that once Japan had secured command of the sea "by a deft and sudden stroke," and that the Russians fought "under exceptional difficulties" and "had to conduct a campaign . . . [in] which the army in the field was linked by only a single line of railway about 4000 miles long." See, Rowan-Robinson, *Campaign of Liao-Yang*, viii. Meanwhile, a leading German officer had offered a similar analysis as early as 21 February 1904; see, Heinrich Otto Meisner, ed., *Denkwürdigkeiten des General-Feldmarschalls Alfred Grafen von Waldersee*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1923–25), III, 230, 236–37.

Waters admitted that he, “like some other foolish individuals, . . . egregiously under-estimated the fighting capacity of Japanese soldiers.”¹⁵⁵ By the war’s end, however, the attachés were unanimous that the common soldiers on both sides had fought with equal bravery and determination,¹⁵⁶ but the attachés were especially favorably impressed by the preparations and performance of Japan. The nation “was ready for the war,” Waters wrote, “she knew Russia’s resources, and . . . there was a general level of excellence throughout the Japanese Army both in training and leadership . . . which gave uninterrupted success to their arms even when in inferior numbers.”¹⁵⁷ That observers attached to the Japanese generally agreed is clear from the comments of Hamilton and others cited above.¹⁵⁸ Yet some, most notably Max Hoffmann and some Americans, saw a certain lack of imagination in Japan’s application of their German teachers’ system. “The Japanese in their army have shown us . . . little that can be truly called original,” wrote one American. Not only was their army formed on foreign models, but their “tactics can be found in books open to us all.” He therefore credited their successes to “system and training. Everything is systematized, every detail is worked out in time of peace, every man’s work is laid out for him.” It was not a system that produced what Americans called “‘grand-stand plays’ and ‘newspaper heroes,’” but one which “approaches an exact science.”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 74.

¹⁵⁶ See, for example, “Report of Capt. John F. Morrison,” *Reports of Military Observers*, 1, 98; War Office, *Some Tactical Notes on the Russo-Japanese War*, 5; von Freytag-Loringhoven in Phillips, ed., *Roots of Strategy*, 191, 206.

¹⁵⁷ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 131.

¹⁵⁸ “In the island kingdom statesman, diplomat, soldier, and sailor had worked together as a well-trained team to develop the maximum of offensive power,” wrote Major F. B. Maurice in one influential history of 1910. Unlike Russia, he concluded, “Japan had been victorious because she had learnt from her German tutors that war is the business, not merely of the soldier or the sailor, but of the nation as a whole.” See, F. B. Maurice, “The Russo-Japanese War,” *The Cambridge Modern History*, 13 vols. (Cambridge, UK, 1902–11), XII (*The Latest Age*), 601.

¹⁵⁹ “Report of Capt. John F. Morrison,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 98–99. Hoffmann, *Der Krieg*, 15, reports that a senior Japanese staff officer told him the Japanese Army was still using the German Drill Regulations of 1888, and were awaiting a new German update. Again, veteran war correspondent Story basically agreed with Morrison. Describing a map-board laid out in the general staff office in the War Ministry, he commented: “War is a business in Japan—cold, deliberate, scientific. To the men of responsibility the soldiers at the Front . . . are but pieces on the draught-board in Tokio.” See, Story, *The Campaign with Kuropatkin*, 44.

This approach, wrote Waters, seemed evident in the fact that Japan “did not, so far as I saw, produce any great strategist, or tactician” who could equal Admiral Togo’s feats at sea.¹⁶⁰ If the latter was a commander of genius, whose “blockade of Port Arthur may take rank with the blockade of Brest” in the Napoleonic Wars, his fleet alone could not secure victory.¹⁶¹ But in Waters’ view, a lack of generals of equal caliber partly explained why the Japanese “could not or would not take advantage of” the “frequent opportunities” offered by Russia’s lack of preparation. If they had done so, he argued in early 1905, “they would have occupied Mukden, and much else besides, many months ago without serious difficulty.” Instead, and despite the Russian army’s handicaps, the Japanese system proved successful “only up to a point which fell short of what was aimed at,” a decisive victory.¹⁶² Meanwhile, Russian reinforcements continuously arrived to swell Kuropatkin’s army, so that at Liaoyang, he at last had concentrated forces larger than his opponent Oyama, and, as one military theorist observed, “strategy can rarely expect to do more.”¹⁶³

Both there, and later on the Sha-ho, Japan seemed about to achieve the desired decisive victories when “the stubborn bravery of the Russian Army . . . exhausted her troops for the time being, or else made her leaders suspect a tactical trap. Otherwise it is inconceivable that the Japanese should not have pushed their successes, and routed or captured Kuropatkin’s army, or the greater portion of it.”¹⁶⁴ In explaining this seeming unwillingness to press their retreating foe, some observers suggested the Japanese command’s caution on these occasions was a natural consequence of its “scientific” approach to war. “Brilliant and startling movements producing great

¹⁶⁰ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 131.

¹⁶¹ Maurice, “The Russo-Japanese War,” 601.

¹⁶² Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 131.

¹⁶³ Maurice, “The Russo-Japanese War,” 601.

¹⁶⁴ Waters, *Reports on the Campaign*, 131. An American observer even regarded the Sha-ho as a Russian strategic success. “The effect of this battle was clearly shown upon all the Japanese generals with whom I came in contact,” he wrote. “They seemed to realize for the first time, or at least showed openly for the first time, that they realized the magnitude of the conflict upon which they had entered.” But since Russian losses gave the Japanese numerical superiority, “it did not seem as if they could be stopped. However, the unexpected happened, and I left the Japanese praying that the Russians would attack them in their intrenched positions.” See, “Report of Capt. Peyton C. March,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 50.

victories, such as have occasionally made interesting history,” wrote American attaché John F. Morrison, “are not produced by this style of war, and equally, I do believe, will it prevent the opponent from succeeding in such movements. It is safe and conservative, but not spectacular.”¹⁶⁵

Conclusions

As the above discussion illustrates, the role of the foreign observers in Manchuria had more than mere military significance. Diplomatically, their presence was recognition of Japan’s claims to membership in the modern state system. For both the Japanese and Americans, the experience also marked a stage in their education in the niceties of etiquette expected by the club of the Great Powers, whose ranks the United States was at last openly entering, as demonstrated by Theodore Roosevelt’s brokering of the Treaty of Portsmouth.¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile, the attaché community established under General Gerard at Mukden presents a near unique example of military attachés acting as an autonomous diplomatic community.

While the military lessons finally learned from their reports were of dubious value in 1914, there is no doubt that the reports provided much grist for the mills of Europe’s general staffs.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, the problem is not that these reports were not exhaustively studied, or that Europe’s militaries could not foresee the possible consequences of a prolonged war for the existing state system and transnational society.¹⁶⁸ Rather, these problems were understood all too well, and

¹⁶⁵ “Report of Capt. John F. Morrison,” *Reports of Military Observers*, I, 99.

¹⁶⁶ On American diplomacy, the war, and peace negotiations, see, White, *Diplomacy*; Norman Saul, “The Kittery Peace,” in John W. Steinberg, *et al.*, eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 485–507; Eugene P. Trani, *The Treaty of Portsmouth. An Adventure in Diplomacy* (Lexington, 1969); and L. N. Kutakov, *Portsmutskii mirnyi dogovor, 1905–1945 (Iz istorii otnoshenii Yaponii s Rossiei i SSSR, 1905–1945 gg.)* (M, 1961).

¹⁶⁷ An indication of the value accorded the attachés’ works is the publication of 32 volumes of translated reports in the Russian series *Russko-iaponskaia voina v nabliudeniakh i suzhdeniakh inostrantsev* (SPB, 1906–1914). The Japanese also published 12 volumes as *Rogun no Kodo* (Tokyo, 1908–10). On the Japanese translations, see Yokote Shinji’s essay in this volume.

¹⁶⁸ For a post-1918 admission of German failures to make proper use of the experiences of 1904–1905, see, Gen. Friedrich von Bernhardi, *The War of the Future: In the Light of the Lessons of the World War*, tr. F. A. Holt (London, 1920), 34–8.

thanks to reports from Manchuria, the European militaries had to recognize the possibility of a tactical stalemate on the battlefield.¹⁶⁹ As a result, they desperately sought ways to circumvent this possibility, and to convince both their political masters and national populations that they could do so by waging short offensive wars.

The alternative, of course, was to admit that war was no longer a practical means of pursuing policy (a debate that had to await the nuclear era). Yet, this conclusion was unacceptable both in terms of military professional careers and the traditions, as well as the politics, practices and structures, of the existing state system and its transnational elite. For this reason, the Manchurian observers' comments were often twisted to support concepts of offensive mobility and firepower which, combined with élan and an aggressive "spirit,"¹⁷⁰ would permit successful strategic envelopments and the decisive battles needed to guarantee a short conflict. The only question remaining is the extent to which the generals had deluded themselves as well as their masters and publics. European military calculations and increased American military-diplomatic sophistication aside, the war's main consequence was to signal a readjustment of power in the international system. According to the English commentator W. H. Wilson, Japan's victory on the Yalu "was the first clear proof that there is no reason why the Asiatic should not match, or even master, the European in the arts of war," as well as "visible and tangible evidence that the Oriental was not racially handicapped in the conflict for power."¹⁷¹ By the war's end, Japan had secured its place as the major regional Power and had demonstrated the potential for achieving Great Power status, a fact to which the Manchurian observers

¹⁶⁹ Alfred Vagts, for example, charged that because they regarded the Russo-Japanese War's duration as "normal," they paid little attention to the possible manpower, material, political or financial implications of drawn-out war in Europe; Vagts, *History of Militarism*, 351–55. But as Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (New York, 1999), 97, points out with regard to Germany, and John Terraine, *Douglas Haig: The Educated Soldier* (London, 1990), 40–1, to England, Europe's general staffs were far from blind to these issues.

¹⁷⁰ For example, Michael Howard argues that the "real lesson of the Russo-Japanese War was widely seen as being that the truly important element in modern warfare was not technology but *morale*." And as already noted, the concern was "the morale, not of the army alone, but of the nation from which it was drawn. This was a matter on which the military leaders of the industrialized nations of western Europe were beginning to feel great doubts. . . ." See, Howard, "Men Against Fire," 519.

¹⁷¹ Wilson, *Japan's Fight for Freedom*, II, no. 21, p. 480.

bore witness. For, while Russia was left embarrassed rather than demoted, Britain's General Hamilton was correct in his prediction of early April 1904: "Unless I very much mistake," he wrote, "this small nation, Eastern to the backbone, is about to testify by the mouth of her cannon that the six Great Powers are not all the world but only a part of it."¹⁷²

¹⁷² Hamilton, *Staff Officer's Scrap-Book*, 10. Again, six years later, another British military writer noted that the "importance of this success could hardly be overestimated. . . . Though Japan owed her victory to the blunder of a subordinate [Russian] general, the moral effect of the success on her troops was as great as if their prowess alone had won the day." See, Maurice, "The Russo-Japanese War," 584. Although Russia's defeats seemingly reduced the threat to India, Viscount Kitchener, British commander-in-chief there, argued for strengthening India's defenses since "he believed Japan's victory had awakened a martial spirit in the Oriental mind and he also suspected Afghanistan of arming heavily and having designs on India." In addition, he foresaw the day Britain would confront Germany and, thanks to blundering politicians, the two nations would fight a three-year war, the benefits of which would ultimately be reaped by Japan and the United States; see, George H. Cassar, *Kitchener: Architect of Victory* (London, 1977), 156.

APPROACHING TOTAL WAR: IVAN BLOCH'S DISTURBING VISION

Tohmatsu Haruo

As the battle for the fortress at Port Arthur was reaching its final stages, a translation of a book was published in Tokyo. The book entitled *Burohhoshi gencho, Kūji no senso to keizai* [Original work by Mr. Bloch, War and Economy in Modern Times], preface by Marquis Ito Hirobumi, foreword by Count Inoue Kaoru, translated and edited by Minyusha, was published on 10 December 1904 by Tokutomi Soho's Minyusha Publishing House and, at 400 pages, it fetched one yen and fifty sen a copy.¹

There is nothing to indicate that this book received any special attention at the time as a large and multifarious body of military/economic literature had been published during the course of the Russo-Japanese War. While it is not clear how it came to be translated and published, readers at the time did not necessarily grasp the full meaning or significance of this book. Nonetheless, it was an abridged translation of the great work of Ivan Stanislavovich Bloch (1836–1902), *The War of the Future*.

Often the Russo-Japanese War is described as a quasi-“total war,” a prelude to the Great War that would occur 10 years later.² However, the phrase “total war,” while containing powerful overtones of bitter modern warfare, has a tendency to be overused. Can it be said that the majority of wars up until the end of the 18th century were what Karl von Clausewitz has called “limited wars,” that the phenomenon of “absolute wars” spread from the end of the Napoleonic Wars onwards, that the Russo-Japanese War became the archetype for “total war,” the true horror of which was revealed in the First World War? Have all the wars from the second half of the 20th

¹ The most well-preserved copy of the book can be seen in Meiji Period Library, Waseda University Central Library Holdings, Tokyo, Japan.

² See the foreword by Ian Nish in *Gunjishi gakkai* [The Military History Society of Japan] ed., *Nichiro senso (2): tatakaino shoso to isan* [The Russo-Japanese War (2): Aspects and legacies of the war] (Tokyo, 2005).

century until the present been “total wars,” or something else? What, after all, is the definition of a “total war”?³

This paper seeks to define “total war” as follows: (a) A war that is not decided in a short space of time, or by a few decisive battles, and that instead becomes a prolonged war of attrition. (b) A war that requires the use of additional military and financial resources produced in the course of the conflict. Therefore, as the conflict persists, the scale and capacity of a nation’s industrial and financial base becomes a determining factor in victory or defeat. (c) A war that is decided not exclusively on the battlefield. High levels of industrial mobilization and political propaganda occur, heightening the level and significance of the belligerents’ political, social, and economic mobilization. Alternatively, (b) and (c) can be summarized as the formation of a “home front”. (d) A war that does not end until both parties lose the will or one or both parties loses the ability, to continue to fight.

If the above definition is applied, while Bloch does not use the term “total war”, the vision of the future he describes in *The War of the Future* is, as will be argued later, none other than that of “total war”.⁴ Using Bloch’s *The War of the Future*, this paper will investigate in what ways the Russo-Japanese War was and was not a “total war”. This paper also seeks to locate the Russo-Japanese War in terms of the development of the concept of “total war” at the beginning of the 20th century.

Ivan Bloch and The War of the Future

Ivan Bloch was born into an influential Jewish Russian family in Poland in 1836, and later converted from Judaism to Calvinism.⁵ Bloch emerged at the forefront of the railroad business and banking

³ Regarding the problems in defining “total war” see, Roger Chickering, “Total War: The Use and Abuse of a Concept,” in Manfred F. Boenmeke, Roger Chickering and Stig Forster eds., *Anticipating Total War: The German and American Experiences, 1871–1914* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 13–28.

⁴ In fact, it has been suggested that Friedrich Engels predicted “total war” before Bloch did so. See Daniel Pick, *War Machine: The Rationalization of Slaughter in the Modern Age* (New Haven, 1993) and H. P. Willmott, *When Man Lost Faith in Reason: Reflections on War and Society in the Twentieth Century* (London, 2002), p. 47.

⁵ Bloch’s Polish name was Jan Bliokh, while he was known as Jean de Bloch in France. Bloch’s biographical details are drawn mainly from *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 16 volumes (Jerusalem, 1972), Vol. 4, p. 1094.

industries in Poland and Russia, particularly in Ukraine during the period of rapid Russian industrialization in the second half of the 19th century. His wealth bought him hidden influence within the economic world of Imperial Russia and by the end of the 19th Century he was defined in one source as “the Russian Harriman”.⁶

Bloch founded the famous South-West Railway Company and included in his business administration team the young Sergei I. Witte, who would later become Minister of Finance and, more important to the history of the Russo-Japanese War, would be the head of Russia’s negotiating team at the Portsmouth Peace Conference. Witte’s criticism of Russia’s Far Eastern Policy as being excessively dependent on military force and his emphasis on the importance of economic expansion abroad by means of free trade may have been due to the influence of Bloch.⁷

Nonetheless, Bloch was a dedicated scholar and, aside from his business activities, was a prolific author, publishing several books in Russian in the course of his life. The majority of these were specialist books about railway technology or banking, but he spent 8 years researching and writing his great work on war, which he published in 1897 in St. Petersburg. This was his 4000 page *The War of the Future: Its Technological, Economic and Political Aspects* (*Buduschaia voina v tekhnicheskoi, ekonomicheskoi i politicheskoi otnosheniakh*).

During the 1890s, the confrontation between the Franco-Russian Alliance and the Triple Alliance was becoming increasingly apparent; Bloch’s writing of *The War of the Future* was partly motivated by mounting anxieties about the defense of Warsaw in Russian Poland, which bordered directly on the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany. In writing this work, Bloch obtained the cooperation of the Russian military authority of Warsaw district.⁸

⁶ See the following for an outline of Russia’s grand strategy and railroad construction and Bloch’s significance in this context: Jacob W. Kipp, “Strategic Railroads and the Dilemmas of Modernization,” in David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye and Bruce W. Menning eds., *Reforming the Tsar’s Army: Military Innovation in Imperial Russia from Peter the Great to the Revolution* (Washington D.C., 2004), pp. 102–3.

⁷ Regarding the relationship of Bloch and Witte, see David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan* (Dekalb, 2001), pp. 66–7, 72–3. However, on a personal level Witte did not hold Bloch in warm regard: see *The Memoirs of Count Witte* (Garden City, N.Y., 1921), pp. 20–1.

⁸ Bruce W. Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861–1914* (Bloomington, 1992), pp. 129–30.

Upon publication, *The War of the Future* received a mixed response among the Russian Army's strategy specialists.⁹ A minority of fervent supporters existed, but the mainstream of the top echelons of the Russian Military were critical of Bloch's assertions. Although a key figure in the Russian financial world, Bloch was no military expert, and the meddling of a mere industrialist in military strategy was met with considerable opposition from Russia's military elites.¹⁰

However, this great work had a considerable impact beyond Russia, in Europe and North America at the end of the 19th Century, and was swiftly translated into French, German, and Polish. In addition, a final abridged volume (Volume six) was soon translated into French, German and English and, it was this volume that was translated into Japanese in the midst of the Russo-Japanese War. Moreover the publication of related works in America suggests that it was widely distributed across North America as well as Europe.¹¹ Thus, at least Volume six of *The War of the Future* was widely read by concerned parties in turn-of-the-century Europe and America.

While military leaders, industrialists, and politicians read, considered, and largely ignored Bloch's work, it also imparted some influence on the civilian anti-war and peace movements that were growing at the time. Bloch, fearing the consequences of a major European conflict, supported the cause of peace and invested his personal assets to build a Peace Museum in Lucerne, Switzerland and in his later years toured Western Europe as a renowned leader of the Peace Movement.

The First Hague Peace Conference of 1899 was the initiative of Russia's Tsar Nicholas II, who may well have been responding to his impressions of Bloch's *The War of the Future*. Perhaps out of fear of the potential lethal power of the modern battlefield, but more likely as result of the ever rising cost of technically sophisticated weapons, the Tsar approached several nations with the idea of introducing formal limits to the war making capabilities of the Great

⁹ Walter Pintner, "Russian Military Thought: The Western Model and the Shadow of Suvorov," Peter Paret ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 365–6. Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets*, p. 130.

¹⁰ Carl Van Dyke, *Russian Imperial Military Doctrine and Education* (New York, 1990), pp. 113–5.

¹¹ For example, it is possible to see that Bloch was "the man of the moment" from a widely read American pamphlet of the time: Edwin D. Mead, *Jean de Bloch and "The Future of War"* (Boston, 1903).

Powers. At the Hague Peace Conference, therefore, the first comprehensive rules of land and naval warfare were established, and ironically the Russo-Japanese War was to be the first full-blown war to which these rules were applied.

In his latter years, apart from his lecture tours around Europe, Bloch also attempted to analyze the Boer War, as it progressed.¹² However, Bloch did not live to see the Russo-Japanese War or the Great War, as he died in his home in Warsaw aged 65, just after the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in January 1902.

Bloch's Vision of a Future War

In as much as *The War of the Future* forecast the future, it was a book of admonition. Since the Franco-Prussian War the Great Powers had been obsessed with military build up, despite Nicholas' peace efforts and secret diplomacy that by the beginning of the twentieth century had culminated in the creation of the Entente and the Triple Alliance. Clearly, the Concert of Europe was showing signs of fragility. In parallel with these developments, the 30 years since the Franco-Prussian War had seen the application of rapidly developing scientific technology to weapons-building, improvements in transport, increased economic interdependence of nations as a result of growing trade, as well as the rise of nationalism and the increased influence of public opinion due to the development of various forms of representative democracies across Europe. In these conditions, Bloch argued that should war break out between the developed industrial great powers, it would be bitter, prolonged and on a scale hitherto unthinkable. This kind of war would not bring any political solution to the dispute in question, and none of the great powers would be able to endure the massive human and material drain on resources. The essence of Bloch's argument was that each nation should devote all its efforts to avoiding war at all costs.

Bloch, however, did not present his argument as an emotional call to pacifism, but substantiated it with meticulous scientific research, making abundant use of statistical data. He used recent wars as case

¹² T. H. E. Travers, "Technology, Tactics, and Morale: Jean de Bloch, the Boer War, and British Military Theory," *Journal of Modern History*, 51 (June, 1979), pp. 264–86.

studies, such as the Napoleonic Wars, Crimean War, the American Civil War, the War of Italian Unification, the Franco-Prussian War and the Russo-Turkish War. The maps, graphs, conceptual diagrams and statistical maps explaining the changes to aspects of warfare that Bloch anticipated as a result of rapid developments in military technology, and explaining the likely influence of the conduct of war under these conditions on international trade and economy, totaled 104 pages, even in the abridged version that was translated into Japanese, among other languages.¹³

Below are several key parts of Bloch's dark vision.

Development of Weaponry and the Difficulty of a Frontal Attack

In the 1870–71 Franco-Prussian War, troops were transported by railroad, primitive machine guns and heavy artillery saw action, but essentially the conflict was a war of maneuver.¹⁴ The Prussian and North German Confederation Armies had the leadership of Helmut von Moltke and exercising superior mobility, succeeded in encircling, isolating, and forcing the French Army to capitulate at Sedan, stunning Europe not only with its overwhelming operational success but also with the capture of Napoleon III. With conflict lasting just 7 months, the Franco-Prussian War is studied to this day as a classic war of short, decisive battles, a “limited war.”

Thirty years later, rapid advancements in military technology had resulted in the development of effective breech loading, magazine-fed rifles and machine guns, and correspondingly, the range, rate of fire, and accuracy of these weapons had greatly improved the capa-

¹³ It was even described as “the first product of modern Operational Research,” see, Azar Gat, *The Development of Military Thought: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 1992), p. 110.

¹⁴ The following consists of a summary of the war of the future that Bloch predicted, from a military, economic and political perspective based on a reprint of the English abridged version of *The War of the Future* and a pamphlet summarizing the 6 volumes, which was published at the time. See: I. S. Bloch *Is War Now Impossible? Being an Abridgement of the War of the Future in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations* (Aldershot, U.K., 1991. hereinafter, *Is War Now Impossible?*). The pamphlet is based on interviews with Bloch by the journalist W. T. Stead: Chronicled by W. T. Stead, “Has War Become Impossible? A Conversation with M. Bloch, the Author of *The Future of War*,” *Review of Reviews* (May, 1899. hereinafter, “A Conversation with M. Bloch”). Brian Bond, *The Pursuit of Victory: from Napoleon to Saddam Hussein* (Oxford, 1996) also gives a compact but good summary of Bloch's main arguments on war.

bilities of soldiers in combat. Moreover, the creation of smokeless powder enabled a clearer range of fire for types of gunnery and thus the level of lethality of both small and heavy arms had transformed the battlefield into a killing ground unfathomable in the Franco-Prussian war. Bloch understood the significance of the technically sophisticated weapons and emphasized the power of the magazine rifle as an important development in the history of nations and warfare. Because of these improvements in weaponry, Bloch anticipated the following kind of battlefield of the future.

Any advance in force, even in the loosest of formations, is absolutely out of the question on a front that is swept by the enemy's fire. Flank movements may be attempted, but the increased power that a magazine rifle gives to the defense will render it impossible for such movements to have the success that they formerly had. A small company can hold its own against a superior attacking force long enough to permit the bringing up of reinforcements. To attack any position successfully, it is estimated that the attacking force ought to outnumber the assailants at least by 8 to 1. It is calculated that 100 men in a trench would be able to put out of action 336 out of 400 soldiers who attacked them, while they were crossing a fire-zone only 300 yards wide. Certainly, everybody will be entrenched in the next war. It will be a great war of entrenchments. The spade will be as indispensable to a soldier as his rifle.¹⁵

Thus Bloch envisioned armies creating battlefields dominated by defensive emplacements. In addition, also due to the developments in weaponry, a region between the two opposing armies would form a dense line of fire and any infantry who entered into this killing zone would be annihilated. Bloch called this area the "fire-zone." Any frontal attack on the fire-zone would amount to an act of suicide, so that the two opposing armies would instead dig trenches facing each other, and continue with flank movements in an attempt to encircle their opponent, resulting in the formation of an extremely long front. However, since a frontal attack on the enemy position would be impossible, ultimately a military stalemate would be reached and the warring nations would struggle to scrape together the funds necessary to continue the prolonged war.

¹⁵ Stead, "Conversation with M. Bloch," pp. 16-7.

Increased Financial Burden of a Prolonged War of Attrition

Having predicted that war would reach such a state of deadlock, Bloch next focused on the resultant financial burden of war.

The next war will be a long war. The Franco-German war lasted seven months, but there is no hope of any similar war being terminated so rapidly. Of course, this is assuming that war is to be terminated by fighting. In reality the war of the future, if ever it takes place, will not be ended by fighting; it will be ended by famine.¹⁶

Bloch predicted that warring societies would suffer from the spread of hunger as agricultural production declined due to the mobilization of the workforce into the military. In addition, extreme material shortages of all types would occur due to the collapse of international trade. He predicted that the abrupt drop in standards of living would be felt most keenly among the citizens of developed nations who were used to high standards of living.¹⁷ “In short, I regard the economic factor as a dominant and decisive element in the next war. You cannot fight unless you can eat, and at the present moment you cannot feed your people and wage a great war.”¹⁸ Even more significantly, Bloch recognized that the next war would be a prolonged conflict, one that military leadership was not prepared to fight since officers did not receive specialized training in economics and its impact on the ability of armies to wage war.¹⁹

Political Instability Leading to Revolution

In addition to Bloch's prediction of massive economic dislocation, he also envisioned the next war producing dire political consequences for belligerent nations. From the time of the French revolution the nations of Europe had begun the gradual shift from patrimonial, absolute monarchs to the modern idea of nation-states. Their armies therefore had transformed from the King's standing, to national armies based on universal military conscription. National armies based on conscription resulted in the mass mobilization of European societies and produced armies of sizes unimaginable in the pre-revolutionary era.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁹ Bloch, *Is War Now Impossible?* p. 348.

Bloch stated: "I am speaking of the population that is behind the armies, which far outnumbers the armies and which is apt to control the policy of which the armies are but the executive instrument."²⁰ Under the nation-state system, military matters could no longer be managed by a handful of military specialists, indeed matters of national security had become the business of every citizen.

In a prolonged war of attrition, states with a weak social or economic base would not be able to absorb the extreme financial burden and human loss of the battlefield. Such conditions according to Bloch would cause domestic discontent that could culminate in everything from political instability to the revolutionary overthrow of old regimes. As a conservative pacifist, Bloch ended the abridged version of his work with the following warning:

Thus side by side with the growth of military burdens rise waves of popular discontent threatening a social revolution. Such are the consequence of the so-called armed peace of Europe—slow destruction in consequence of expenditure on preparations for war, or swift destruction in the event of war—in both events convulsions in the social order.

What the Governments will all soon come to see more or less clearly is that if they persist in squandering the resources of their people in order to prepare for a war which has already become impossible without suicide, they will only be preparing the triumph of the Socialist revolution.²¹

In states that had been relatively unable to gain public approval for their war aims, this would provide a golden opportunity for anarchists and socialists who had been gaining influence in recent years to overthrow the "bourgeois-capitalist" order.

The War of the Future and the Reality of the Russo-Japanese War

As mentioned earlier, Bloch did not live to see the Russo-Japanese War as he died in January 1904 at the age of 65. Although primarily interested in Europe, Bloch did make reference to Japan in the chapter entitled "Does Russia Need a Navy?" In this chapter

²⁰ Stead, "A Conversation with M. Bloch," pp. 37–8.

²¹ Bloch, *Is War Now Impossible?* p. 356; Stead, "A Conversation with M. Bloch," p. 48.

Bloch mentions Japan's rapid naval expansion after the Sino-Japanese War but underestimates Japan's national power and intentions.

... from the direction of Japan there can be no serious danger. In her excessive armaments Japan is making efforts to follow in the footsteps of Europe, like the frog in the fable which, seeking to rival the size of the ox, blew himself out until he burst. Something of this nature must happen with Japan. It is inconceivable that she would enter upon a war with Russia even though she was possessed of preponderance in battleships.²²

The future war that Bloch imagined and feared was the clash of Europe's Great Powers. He had little concern for wars that might occur outside Europe. As a typical European intellectual, Bloch had little knowledge of post-Meiji reform Japan. Indeed, his view of Asia and Asians was colored by the prevalent idea of "yellow peril" that existed among educated Europeans of the period.²³ His book, however, began its own history, separate from that of its author, from the moment it was completed. While, *The War of the Future* did not specifically predict the Russo-Japanese War, it, in effect, foresaw it.

The Difficulty of a Frontal Attack and Its Solution

One of Bloch's central arguments focused on the emergence of the "fire-zone," the area that became known as "no man's land" during World War I; an area through which no army could pass unharmed because of advancements in weaponry. Offenses against well-protected enemy defense positions armed with barbed wire, obstacles, field artillery, rapid fire guns, machine guns and magazine rifles would inflict ruinous damage on the attacking side. Therefore, since frontal attacks had become impossible, long lines of trenches would be formed on the battlefield and fighting would reach a stalemate. In the Battle of Nanshan and especially at the siege of Port Arthur, just such a situation emerged.

²² Ibid., p. 127.

²³ For Bloch's biased view of the Japanese influenced by the then prevailing idea of "yellow peril", see Hashimoto Yorimitsu, "Jack Rondon to nichirosenso: jugun kiji kara 'hiruinaki shinryaku'(1910) he," [Jack London and the Russo-Japanese War: From military reports to 'The Unparalleled Invasion (1910)'] in Nichirosenso kenkyukai [Russo-Japanese War Study Group] ed., *Nichirosenso kenkyu no shinshiten* [A new perspective of the Russo-Japanese War studies] (Tokyo, 2005), p. 221.

On 26 May 1904 at Nanshan on the Liaodong peninsula, the Japanese 2nd Army of 36,000 men with 216 guns and 48 machine guns attacked the 3,500 strong Russian garrison, possessing 65 guns and 10 machine guns. Although outnumbered, the Russian army fought back with rapid-fire rifles and machine guns skillfully forming a cross-fire from entrenched field fortifications. With just 10 Maxim heavy machine guns providing the bulwark of their defensive fire, the Russian position proved formidable, a tremendous force that required the Japanese to wade through the surf to outflank and eventual prevail in what proved to be a bloody battle.²⁴

With their advantage in weaponry, the Japanese bombarded the Russian positions intensively, and in a single day of fighting consumed 2,195,825 rifle and machine gun rounds and 34,049 shells.²⁵ Even then, the Japanese were unable to completely destroy the Russian position and after the end of the artillery bombardment the Japanese infantrymen who conducted the frontal advance were mown down by rapid-fire artillery, machine guns and small arms fired from the Russian army's defensive fortifications. After 15 hours of intense combat, the Japanese finally outflanked the Russian garrison and they abandoned their positions, retreating toward Port Arthur, but the Japanese had suffered 739 dead and 5,459 wounded losing a sixth of the main forces of the 2nd Army in one day of fighting. So shocked was the Japanese leadership by these losses that Imperial Headquarters asked the 2nd Army to confirm that they had not got a digit wrong in their killed in action figures from this battle. In contrast, the Russians, who manned the defensive positions had casualties that numbered only approximately 1,000.²⁶ For the Japanese Army, the Battle of Nanshan proved comparable to the experience the British army suffered on the bleak first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

²⁴ Regarding Russia's use of machine guns up to the Russo-Japanese War, see John A. Ellis, *The Social History of the Machine Gun* (London, 1975). For a concise history of the war, see: John W. Steinberg, "The Operational Overview," in Steinberg, et al. ed., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, 2005) pp. 105–128.

²⁵ Oe Shinobu, *Nichiro senso no gunjishiteki kenkyu*, [Military history study of the Russo-Japanese War] (Tokyo, 1976), p. 412.

²⁶ Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets*, pp. 158–160.

casualty rate (figures in brackets represent the death rate) in the wars preceding the Russo-Japanese War and in the major battles of the Russo-Japanese War.

In the 1866 Battle of Koeniggratz in the Austro-Prussian War, the Prussian casualty rate was 4% (0.9%) compared to an Austrian casualty rate of 11.5% (2.7%). In the Battle of Sedan in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, the German casualty rate was 7.3% (2.1%), while the French casualty rate was 18.9% (unknown). In the Siege of Plevna in the Russo-Turkish War, the Russian casualty rate was 11.4% (unknown) compared to a Turk casualty rate of 16.8% (3.5%). In contrast, the Japanese casualty rate in major battles of the Russo-Japanese War was 17.9% (4.2%) in the Battle of Liaoyang, 13.9% (2.4%) in the Battle of Shaho, 9.1% (1.9%) in the Battle of Sandepu, 27.2% (6.4%) in the Battle of Mukden and 45.6% (11.5%) at the siege of Port Arthur.²⁸

The War and The National Economy

In trying to measure the impact of future conflicts on national economies, Bloch measured the consumption of ammunition as an indicator. First, regarding European Great Power wars prior to the Russo-Japanese War, in the Austro-Prussian War (1866: 3 months), the Prussians consumed 2 million rifle rounds, and in the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71: 7 months), the Prussians consumed 25 million rifle rounds.

In contrast, regarding the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5: 19 months), in the aforementioned Battle of Nanshan (1 day), 2.19 million rifle and machine gun rounds and 34,049 artillery shells were consumed. In the Battle of Liaoyang (9 days), 8.39 million rifle and machine gun rounds and 106,370 shells were consumed. In the first attack on Port Arthur (4 days) 2.68 million rifle and machine gun rounds and 50,992 shells were consumed. In the Battle of Mukden (11 days), 20.11 million rifle and machine gun and 279,394 shells were consumed.²⁹ In other words, the ammunition consumed in the 7 months of the Franco-Prussian War was consumed in just over 10 days of fighting at Mukden, and the amount consumed in the entire Austro-Prussian war was consumed in just a single day of fighting at Nanshan.

²⁸ Oe, *Nichiro senso no gunjishiteki kenkyu*, pp. 132–3.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 412–3.

This one indicator, the consumption of ammunition, revealed that a major war of attrition clearly laid a heavy burden on the finances of Russia and Japan and quickly caused difficulties in funding the war effort. Russia mainly borrowed from France, while Japan sought foreign loans from Britain and America to meet their war expenditure.³⁰ To meet the increased demand for military goods such as ammunition, Japan ordered production by private companies in addition to the public munitions works. More telling of what the future had in store, during the Russo-Japanese War the Japanese government had to ration the distribution of food.³¹

On the one hand, while the war left Russia and Japan economically exhausted, even with financial capacity less than an eighth that of Russia, Japan managed to prepare for the war by means of some imaginative fiscal policies. Foreign loans paid six months of Japan's war expenses and, even after the Battle of Mukden, there was enough left to fight one more major battle.³² On the other hand, Russia with her much larger economic resource base and army did not have to resort to greater government control over industry nor did they have to ration food.³³ As a result, the economic demands of war forced the Japanese to form a "home front," but in Russia no such thing occurred. In this sense, the Russo-Japanese War was more of a "total war" for Japan than for Russia.

³⁰ Regarding Russia's methods of meeting its war expenditure, see Shinonaga Nobutaka, "Nichirosenso to Furansu no tai Roshia Shakkan" [The Russo-Japanese War and the French Loan to Russia], Gunjishi gakkai [The Military History Society of Japan] ed., *Nichirosenso (1): Kokusaiteki bunmyaku* [The Russo-Japanese War (1): International Context] (Tokyo, 2004), pp. 228–45. Boris Ananich, "Russian Military Expenditure in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–5," in John W. Steinberg, et al., eds., *The Russo-Japanese War: World War Zero* (Leiden, 2005), pp. 449–64.

³¹ See: "Industrial mobilization during the Russo-Japanese War," in Oe, *Nichirosenso no gunjishiteki kenkyu*, Chapter 4. Regarding the extent of the formation of a "home front" see, Takemoto Tomoyuki, "Senjika no shimin seikatsu: Kyoto no ba'ai" [The Impact of the War on Local Society: The Case of Kyoto], Gunjishi gakkai [The Military History Society of Japan] ed., *Nichirosenso (2): tatakaino shoso to isan* [The Russo-Japanese War (2): Aspects and Legacies of the War] (Tokyo, 2005), pp. 167–83.

³² Regarding Japan's methods of meeting its war expenditure, see Ono Keishi, "Nisshin sengo keieiki no gunjishishutsu to zaisei seisaku" [Japan's Financial Power Mobilization for Arms Build-up towards the Russo-Japanese War], Gunjishi gakkai ed., *Nichirosenso (1): kokusaiteki bunmyaku*, pp. 45–60. Edward S. Miller, "Japan's Other Victory: Overseas Financing of the War," Steinberg et al., eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, pp. 465–84.

³³ Yokote Shinji, *Nichirosenso: nijuseiki saisho no taikokukan senso* [The Russo-Japanese War: The First Great Power War of the Twentieth Century] (Tokyo, 2005).

The Influence of War on Society

Perhaps the most dramatic impact of the Russo-Japanese War was the mounting social discontent in Russia that spilled over into revolution beginning with the events of “Bloody Sunday” in January 1905. The capricious conduct of Tsarist authorities combined with persistent military defeat resulted in widespread mutiny throughout the armed forces of which the incident on the Battleship Potemkin of the Black Sea Fleet was the most notorious. By the time Sergei Witte led the Tsar’s peace delegation to the Portsmouth peace conference, Russia was embroiled in a general strike that affected every social class. With unrest spreading across every spectrum of Russian society, the effectiveness of the military establishment had been compromised.³⁴ Twelve years would pass before the 1917 Revolution, would overthrow the Tsarist regime, but the Russo-Japanese War had provided the socialists and anarchists the opportunity of a dress rehearsal for future political turmoil, as Bloch had predicted.

In contrast, there were few disturbances or signs of unrest in wartime Japan. During the Sino-Japanese War, there had been considerable draft dodging and desertion but this was not the case during the Russo-Japanese War. Japan’s “home front” formed and strengthened during the course of the war. However, as was the custom of the age, victorious nations in wars expected reparations to pay for the cost of the conflict. But Nicholas II, failing to acknowledge that he had lost the war since he still had a strong army in the field, refused to pay reparations. Not extracting reparations at the Treaty of Portsmouth, therefore, resulted in shattered expectations that culminated in the anti-government Hibiya riots and, despite a victorious war, undermined confidence in the government.³⁵ Bloch’s prediction that future war would compromise the power of contestant governments, both winners and losers, proved correct. Modern war put tremendous strain not only on the military but also the social, political, and economic institutions of a country.

³⁴ Regarding the internal unrest in Russia, see *ibid.*, pp. 165–7, and John Bushnell, “The Specter of Mutinous Reserves: How the War Produced the October Manifesto,” in Steinberg et al., eds., *The Russo-Japanese War*, pp. 333–48.

³⁵ Yokote, *Nichirosenso*, pp. 195–6. Regarding the Japanese people’s hopes and disappointment at the peace treaty, see Nagayama Yasuo, *Nichirosenso: mohitotsu no “monogatari”* [The Russo-Japanese War: Another “Story”] (Tokyo, 2004), pp. 170–181.

Naval Strategy

The sections of *The War of the Future* devoted to the navy are not very extensive but contain some predictions that proved accurate.³⁶ In discussing naval power, Bloch's point of reference was primarily the Royal Navy. However, unlike Britain whose economic strength depended on controlling the sea, Russia was a continental power that only needed a navy for coastal defense. Bloch, therefore, argued that for a less-industrialized continental nation like Russia, possession of a blue-water navy was pointless, not to mention a huge financial investment that the tsar could not afford. Complicating Russia's maritime position was that any fleet she built would have to be divided disadvantageously between the Baltic Sea, Black Sea and the Far East. Nonetheless, the Russians built ships to symbolize their great power status and by the outbreak of the war, the Russian fleet consisted of approximately 800,000 tons, about 3 times the tonnage of the Japanese fleet (approximately 260,000 tons).³⁷ The Japanese fleet, however, took advantage of the divided deployment of the Russian fleet between Europe and the Far East, and defeated the Russian fleet in the Battle of the Yellow Sea, the Battle of Ulsan, on land in the Siege of Port Arthur, and at the Battle of Tsushima.

While Russia's fleet-in-being at Port Arthur kept the situation in doubt, in fact, there was never any question in reality; Japan controlled the sea throughout the Russo-Japanese war. While the Russian Fleet at Port Arthur made a few offensive efforts at the beginning of the war and, for the next 10 months it succeeded in restricting movements of the Japanese Fleet to the Yellow Sea and Japan Sea. Moreover, the continuous threat posed to the Japanese supply line to the Korean peninsula by the small Russian cruiser detachment based at Vladivostok was another significant contribution of the Russian naval forces.³⁸ Thus, the Russian navy did harass the Japanese war effort but it could not stop the flow of men and materials from Japan to the theater of operations. Bloch missed the important role that naval power can have in a "total war" when he underestimated

³⁶ Bloch *Is War Now Impossible*, pp. 93-127.

³⁷ Kuwata Etsu, *Nihon no senso: zukai to deta* [Japan's War: Maps and Data] (Tokyo, 1982), data 3.

³⁸ Vladimir L. Agapov, "Operations of the Russian Vladivostok Detachment," Gunjishi gakkai ed., *Nichirosenso* (2): *tatakaino shoso to isan*, pp. 97-117.

the impact a navy could have even when operating against deep disadvantages. While the Russian navy never came close to controlling the sea, its presence, and the threat of reinforcements arriving from the Baltic fleet, had a clear impact on Japan's prosecution of the war both on land and sea. If the Japanese navy had not maintained control of the sea throughout the war, its army would have suffered from a need for supplies essential to their victorious operations.

The War of the Future and the Lessons of the Russo-Japanese War

To this point, this paper has sought to demonstrate that most of the elements of future war that Bloch had predicted were present in the Russo-Japanese War. At the end of March 1905 after the Battle of Mukden, the land fronts had become fixed north of Mukden and between the opposing Japanese and Russian frontlines a "no-man's land" was formed. The Japanese Army had enough financial reserves to fight just one more major battle but the human and physical resources that it could mobilize were depleted. In contrast, the Russian army was preparing to reopen the fighting after bringing the Siberian railway into full operation and obtaining increased aid from within Russia and Europe. With the passage of time, it was clear that the Russo-Japanese land army's military balance in Manchuria would lean in favor of the Russians.³⁹

The subsequent annihilation of the Russian Baltic Fleet on May 27–28 ended Russia's plan to turn the tide of the war by gaining control of the Sea of Japan. Since rebuilding lost naval assets requires time and investment, both unavailable in the summer of 1905, Russia had lost the option of directly threatening the Japanese homeland, even if the Army defeated the Japanese in Manchuria. In addition,

³⁹ Regarding the frontlines in Manchuria after the Battle of Mukden, see Numata Takezo, *Nichiro rikusen shinshi* [The New History of the Land Battles of the Russo-Japanese War] (Tokyo, 1940. Reprinted 1982), Chapter 11 "Hoten kaisengo no jokyo," [The situation after the Battle of Mukden]. In August 1905, the Russian forces in Manchuria were at their peak of the entire war period, and there was a sense of crisis among the Japanese Army in Manchuria. According to an army estimate, in order to take Harbin and win the war, the Japanese would need to fight three more major battles. This would require 250,000 men and 1.5 billion yen, which far exceeded available sources. Tani Hisao, *Kimitsu nichiro senshi* [The Secret History of the Russo-Japanese War] (Tokyo, 1966), p. 660. The actual cost of the Russo-Japanese war was approximately 1.7 billion yen.

after the Russians admitted defeat, anti-government movements grew in strength in Russia, and the Tsarist government struggled to maintain law and order. Thus, in the midst of revolutionary turmoil and military defeat, Russia signed the American-mediated Treaty of Portsmouth at the beginning of September, ending the Russo-Japanese War.

From a military perspective, the numerical strength of both the Russian and Japanese armies in the Russo-Japanese War was unprecedented and, with the exception of the American Civil War, the number of casualties was also without precedent, given the relatively short period of combat.⁴⁰ Economically, both Japan and Russia were dependent on foreign loans to finance the war. After the war both faced serious fiscal problems because of the expenditures required to fight on the modern battlefield. Bloch's predictions that social revolution would occur in a nation-state with a fragile economic and social base as a result of attempting to pursue "total war," was quite accurate regarding Russia. The consequence of Bloody Sunday combined with constant military defeat compromised Russia's national security and events such as the Potemkin mutiny shocked educated society while simultaneously invigorating the revolutionary movement. Although there was no revolutionary movement aiming to overthrow the government in Japan, violent popular discontent in reaction to the Portsmouth Peace Conference occurred and exposed the challenges of waging modern war even when a nation enthusiastically supported the effort.

Written by a subject of one of the warring parties Bloch's *The War of the Future* predicted with impressive accuracy the social, political, economic and military consequences of the Russo-Japanese War. Yet the book received little attention, particularly after Bloch's death. In fact, the evidence indicates that after the Russo-Japanese War little effort was made to reconsider Bloch's work in light of the lessons learned in the recent conflict.

Defeat in the Russo-Japanese War was a great shock to Imperial Russia. In the aftermath of the Manchurian debacle both the Army and the Navy established commissions of experts to investigate in detail the causes of the defeat.⁴¹ While these commissions focused on

⁴⁰ Japan mobilized a total of 1,080,000 men, 84,000 of whom were killed in action while 143,000 were wounded. Russia mobilized a total of 1,300,000 men and suffered casualties of between 190,000 and 270,000. Yokote, *Nichirosenso*, pp. 194–5.

⁴¹ Wada Haruki, "Rosia jin wa nichirosenso o do mitaka," [How did Russians

everything from strategic questions to operational shortcomings, Russia's military leadership devoted little time or energy to the study of the socio-economic problems of the Empire which were the root of the regime's ability (or lack thereof) to wage war. This was partly because the specialized, exclusive, and embattled group of military officers had little time to carefully consider the ideas and teachings of a Polish banker. Even worse, although they were not disposed to the ideas of all "outsiders," Bloch's Jewish background made him easy to overlook by anyone in power in late Tsarist society.

Instead, the Russia's military leadership learned from their Manchurian experience that the central lesson of modern war was the "importance of the offensive." In other words, Russian military analysts concluded that the defensive operations at Port Arthur and A. N. Kuropatkin's defensive strategy and war of maneuver had caused the army to lose the initiative on the battlefield and, combined with the subsequent loss of morale, had resulted in the series of defeats that caused Russia to lose the war. There was no accurate recognition of the importance of skillful defensive operations or of the massive losses, both human and material, incurred by the attacking army against well-defended field positions and fortifications. Thus, the Russian Army fought the First World War less than a decade later believing in the doctrine of "bayonets before bullets," or assaulting the enemy positions to defeat the foe with the shock of hand-to-hand combat. Ignoring their recent experience therefore, the Russian army chose to maintain a military doctrine that resulted in high casualties; the consequences of such conduct contributed to the undermining of confidence in the military establishment and the Tsarist regime itself.⁴²

When *The War of the Future* was published in Japanese in the midst of the Russo-Japanese War, under the title *War and Economy in Modern Times* [*Kūji no senso to keizai*] Bloch's audience did not completely comprehend the meaning of his work. In the introduction to the Japanese version, Inoue Kaoru pointed out Bloch's low estimation of Japan:

regard the Russo-Japanese War?] *Kikan Chugoku* [China Quarterly] (Autumn, 2005), pp. 19–20.

⁴² Bruce W. Menning, "The Offensive Revisited: Russian Preparation for Future War, 1906–1914," Schimmelpenninck and Menning eds., *Reforming the Tsar's Army*, pp. 217–9.

The war began almost 9 months ago. Fortunately, our Army and Navy have achieved a series of victories in battle, attracting the attention of foreign nations and spreading the Japanese flag far north of Liaoyang. In comparing the size of our nations, Mr. Bloch likened Japan to a small frog and his motherland to a large ox. He made light of us, saying that when a small frog grows angry he would [blow] himself out until he burst. However, up until now the large ox has run away every time we have fought and all we can hear is his howling in the distance. Who, I wonder, may more accurately predict the future? . . . Mr. Bloch argued that because of the developments in weaponry and strategy in modern warfare, frontal offensives will become impossible and, because the defensive side will resist from strong positions, fighting will not be easily decided and will become drawn out, producing hitherto unthinkable numbers of casualties. That may be true. However, our officers and men have fought with skill and courage and overturned the majority of Mr. Bloch's predictions. The intelligentsia of every nation now look upon the strategist Mr. Bloch as no more than an amateur.⁴³

In addition, Inoue disagreed with Bloch's argument that the war of the future would strike a destructive blow to national economies.

Mr. Bloch's perspective is extremely pessimistic. He sees modern war as requiring military expenditure so large that, ultimately, the people of the warring nations are unable to sustain the burden. Moreover, even should the war be decided, Mr. Bloch predicted that both the victor and the defeated party could not escape economic bankruptcy and revolution. However, this view is far too pessimistic. It is quite natural that modern war should require a large amount of expenditure. However, this is relative rather than absolute. It is the result of the general advance of civilization. Therefore, it is quite natural that modern war expenditure should be greater than that at the time of the Franco-Prussian War.⁴⁴

Clearly Inoue Kaoru had little regard for Bloch's work. Since, unlike Russia, Japan had won the war, it was more difficult for a Japanese commentator to criticize Japanese mistakes on the Manchurian battlefield. For example, *Gokuhi meiji sanjushichihachi nen kaisenshi* [The Top Secret Naval Battle History 1905–6] was critical of the naval

⁴³ Inoue Kaoru (1835–1915) was a leading politician from the Choshu clan. He became a Genro [elder statesman] in 1898 after being Foreign Minister, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister of Finance. He also held an advisory position in the Mitsui Zaibatsu and was influential in the financial world. See: *Burohoshi gencho, kinjino senso to keizai* [Originally written by Mr. Bloch, War and Economy of Recent Times], "Inoue Kaoru jobun" [Foreword by Inoue Kaoru], pp. 5–6.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

war, so the Navy's leadership managed to have the document sealed, not to be read until after it was rediscovered after World War II. *Kimitsu nichiro senshi* [The Secret History of the Russo-Japanese War], a critical study of the land war written by Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Tani Hisao in the 1920s was circulated only among the military elite and not seen by public eyes until after the end of the Second World War.

Access to this precious critical research was limited to a small group of military leaders, so that it could not become common knowledge within the rest of the military, let alone the general public.⁴⁵ In this kind of environment, there was little possibility that research on the Russo-Japanese War would occur from the critical or analytical perspective of *The War of the Future*.⁴⁶ In the end, in Japan the myth was created that the dauntless courage, fervent patriotism, and vigorous offensive spirit of the Japanese Army and Navy officers and men had overcome the more numerous and better equipped Russian forces. Moreover, in the euphoria of victory and with the difficulties of post-war settlement, both decision-makers and the general population forgot all about Bloch and his predictions.

It is not fair to criticize only Japan and Russia for their failure to appreciate the significance of Bloch's ideas. After all, the battlefields of the Russo-Japanese War displayed numerous ominous precursors to the nightmare landscapes of the Great World War. But despite sending many military observers, the United States and the European Great Powers uniformly failed to grasp the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War. British Lieutenant General Sir Ian Hamilton who was attached to the Japanese Army expressed an opinion prevalent in international military circles in the aftermath of the war:

⁴⁵ Regarding the path by which research critical of the Russo-Japanese War came to be sealed away by the Japanese Military, see Hara Takeshi, "Nichiro senso no eikyo: senso no waishoka to chugokujin besshi," [The Legacies of the Russo-Japanese War: Its Impact on Japanese Mentality toward War and Chinese People] Gunjishi gakkai [The Military History Society of Japan] ed., *Nijusseiki no senso* [War in the 20th Century] (Tokyo, 2001), pp. 12–14. For *Gokuhi Meiji sanjushichihachi nen kaisenshi*, see Aizawa Kiyoshi, "Kishudanko ka Iryokuteisatsu ka: Ryojunko kishu sakusen wo meguru tairitsu" [Surprise Attack or Forced Reconnaissance? Controversies over the Surprise Attack on Port Arthur] in *Nichiro senso* (2): *tatakaino shoso to isan*, pp. 68–83.

⁴⁶ The present author intends to, though has not yet, fully researched the subject, but if anyone felt keenly the significance of Bloch's arguments, it is likely to have been those involved in logistics and financial specialists at the time of the Russo-Japanese War.

All that trash written by M. de Bloch before 1904 about zones of fire, across which no living being could pass, heralded nothing but disaster. War is essentially the triumph, not of a chassepot over a needle-gun, not of a line of men entrenched behind wire entanglements and fire-swept zones over men exposing themselves in the open, but of one will over a weaker will, the best defense to a country is an army formed, trained, inspired by the idea of attack.⁴⁷

In stark contrast to Bloch's argument of the "folly of the frontal attack," Hamilton, a highly respected military attaché, concluded that the "offensive spirit," the smashing through every enemy stronghold with brute force generated from the will, courage, and morale of the army was the major lesson to be drawn from his observations of the Russo-Japanese War.

In America too, where *The War of the Future* had been well-known and where there had been considerable sympathy with his argument for peace, Bloch's name was quickly forgotten after the Russo-Japanese War.⁴⁸ Thus everyone ignored Bloch's warnings and denied the scope of the casualties that the Manchurian battlefields yielded. The Europeans and the U.S. military establishments became obsessed with the "spirit of the offensive" in their training and doctrine.⁴⁹ Even the Japanese would over-emphasize hand-to-hand combat based on bayonet charges in the post-war tactical doctrine of their army.⁵⁰

The Fate of a Book: A Tentative Conclusion

Everyone missed the point. Despite Bloch, and despite the horrors of the Manchurian battlefields, military leadership across the world arrived at the wrong conclusions. Bloch's work was not seriously re-evaluated in Europe and America until after World War I, over 14 years after the Russo-Japanese War and after the 4 years of carnage on European battlefields. Only after World War I, the first "total war" in human history, was the Russo-Japanese War recalled as a

⁴⁷ From Ian Hamilton, *Compulsory Service* (2nd ed.) (London, 1911) p. 121, quoted from Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 521.

⁴⁸ Chambers, "American Debate over Modern War", p. 275.

⁴⁹ See Hara Takeshi, "Hohei chushin no hakuheishugi no keisei" [The Formation of "Hakuhei Shugi" Based on Infantry], *Nichiro senso* (2): *tatakaino shoso to isan*, pp. 271–287.

⁵⁰ Regarding the cult in Europe and America surrounding the "Doctrine of the Offensive" see Jack Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive* (Ithaca, 1984).

“partial total war” or a “precursor of total war,” and retroactively Bloch’s predictions received new recognition.⁵¹

Major General J. F. C. Fuller, renowned for having influenced the planner of Germany’s Blitzkrieg, General Heinz Guderian, described Bloch as: “[the] only man of note [who] took the trouble to examine war scientifically and, who made remarkable prophecy as regards the next great war in Europe.”⁵² The famous military historian Basil Henry Liddell Hart noted that Bloch gave a remarkably accurate diagnosis of essential elements [of total war] in his *War of the Future* before he had even the data of South Africa and Manchuria to confirm his deductions.⁵³

In Japan too, the concept of “total war” first began to be recognized after the Great War.⁵⁴ The Japanese Military’s research on “total war” was based entirely on the reports of military observers sent to the battlefields of Europe and the strategic theory that had emerged in Europe and America after World War I. In considering the debate on “total war” in the interwar period, the translator’s note by the anonymous translator of *Kinji no senso to keizai* [Originally work by Mr. Bloch, War and Economy in Modern Times] is extremely instructive.

Mr. Bloch, having argued that modern war has a tendency to become prolonged and that the economies and people of nation-states have a tendency to be able to endure war for shorter periods, reaches the following conclusion. He states that before a war can be decided, due to economic exhaustion, the people of nation-states lose the ability to continue to fight. Therefore, war has become impossible since it is impossible to achieve war aims without the continued active support of the people.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Michael Howard, “Europe on the Eve of the First World War,” R. J. W. Evans and Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, eds., *The Coming of the First World War* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 10–11.

⁵² J. F. C. Fuller, *The Dragon’s Teeth: A Study of War and Peace* (London, 1932), pp. 252–253. Azar Gat, *Fascist and Liberal Visions of War: Fuller, Liddell Hart, Douhet, and other Modernists* (Oxford, 1998), p. 25.

⁵³ Basil Liddell Hart, *Europe in Arms* (London, 1937) p. 277.

⁵⁴ Regarding the Japanese army’s research into the First World War and the concept of “total war,” see Kurosawa Fumitaka, *Taisenkaniki no Nippon Rikugun* [The Japanese Army in the Interwar period] (Tokyo, 2000) and Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914–1919*, (Harvard, 1999).

⁵⁵ *Burohoshu gencho, Kinji no senso to keizai* [Originally work by Mr. Bloch, War and Economy in Modern Times], Translator’s Note, p. 2.

The translation itself is thought to have been made by one or more staff members at the Minyusha Publishing House, but the translator's note is likely to have been written by Tokutomi Soho (1863–1957). Tokutomi was a liberal-turned-conservative journalist who had a defining influence on Japanese popular opinion from the end of the Meiji period until the early Showa period.

The translator's further note praises the scientific and economic methods of analysis used in Bloch's work, describing it as "one of the great works of the 19th Century," but he also states that Bloch's conclusion, that "... due to the massive human and material drain of resources, war will become impossible for all of the Great Powers" is mistaken. The translator arrived at this conclusion because the duration of a prolonged war may fall within the shortened period that a nation's economic power can sustain a war. In other words, in a case where a nation's economic power can support a war for 5 years, it cannot be said that a war could not be concluded in 3 years.⁵⁶ "To fight a three-year war, prepare to fight a five-year war" was a phrase predictive of the Great Powers' approach to the "total war" of the future. However, it is worth wondering if Tokutomi had thought through the fundamental question: can a nation that only has the means to wage a three-year war sustain war for five years?

For Japan, which was not fully involved in the Great War, the Russo-Japanese War was its closest experience to a "total war," before World War II. For this reason, the question of whether there existed any intellectual effort in Japan in the interwar period to re-evaluate the Russo-Japanese War, and of whether Japan's political, economic and military elite attempted again to grapple with Bloch's arguments in *The War of the Future* warrant further research.⁵⁷

(Translated by Myanna Lennon)

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ For example, it would be interesting to find out if Bloch's work was read by employees of the Mantetsu chosabu [The Research Section of the South Manchurian Railway Company], pre-war Japan's largest think tank and the Soryokusen kenkyujo [The Total War Research Institute], which was created in 1940 just before the Asia-Pacific War began and simulated the war against Britain and America.

PART II

THE HOME FRONT

JAPAN JUSTIFIES WAR BY THE “OPEN DOOR”: 1903 AS TURNING POINT

Kato Yoko

The majority of the Japanese didn't want war. . . . The general public, particularly business people, hated war, but they hadn't the courage to object openly. In spite of this, the people gradually came to accept the inevitability of war, but their heart wasn't in it. There were many in the government who sought personal recognition by advocating war, but in fact did not want it. However, since they had spoken out so strongly in favor of going to war there was no way for them to retract what they had said.

The Diary of Takashi Hara, February 11, 1904¹

When they open their mouths, the majority of Japanese utter expressions like 'civilized diplomacy,' 'venerable monarch,' 'benevolent war,' 'imperial honour.' Japanese citizens naively look on this war as if it were Kintaro swinging his broad axe or adorable little Momotaro setting sail for Oni-ga-shima (Devils Island) to conquer the devils. During waking hours the people and the government alike think of the war in terms of Kintaro, and when they are sleeping, in their dreams they conveniently turn the war into a fairy tale like Momotaro. It would be nice if things were to continue to be so pleasant, but real wars are not so simple.

Kotoku Shusui, *Heimin Shimibun*, April 3, 1904²

Numerous public men, the most informed of their day, were surprised by Japan's sudden turn toward a war course in late 1903 and early 1904, noting the more measured and pacific vision that had generally pervaded Japanese policy after the Sino-Japanese war.

¹ Diary entry the day after Japan declared war on Russia. *Hara Takashi Nikki* [The Diary of Takashi Hara] (Hereafter, Hara) Vol. 2 (Fukumura Shuppan, 1965) pp. 90–91. Hara was the powerful right hand man of Saionji Kinmochi who, in July 1903, became President of the Rikken Seiyukai, and a member of the House of Representatives and the Seiyukai. Later Prime Minister from September 1918 to November 1921.

² *Heiminsha Hyakunen Korekushon* Vol. 1, *Kotoku Shusui*, [Heiminsha Pub. 100 Year Collection Vol. 1, Shusui Kotoku], (Ronso Sha, 2002), p. 114.

Recent scholarship, notably by Ito Yukio and Chiba Isao, as well as studies of Japanese public opinion in the decade between the wars, does not support from a factual point of view, the interpretation that Japan was determined to get revenge for the Tripartite Intervention in the Sino-Japanese war, that this opinion was shared by Japanese citizens and the government, and, for this reason, the country steadily prepared over this ten-year period and then declared war on Russia. Since this was the interpretation taught as part of elementary education in Japan for many years, most Japanese not even familiar with the idea that there was a clear and directed turn toward war in the course of 1903.

It is also in this connection that Japan's increasing use of the "open door" rhetoric, an international principle invoked as a justification for war, must be viewed. This language signalled an open, but unofficial, shift in sympathies as America joined Japan and England in favor of the Open Door and against Russia's unwarranted military occupation of Manchuria. Below I review some of the recent research conducted in Japan that supports this point of view, while also presenting Ogawa Heikichi's role in the propagation of an international law justification for war. With the appearance and wide acceptance of this argument, the central irony of Japanese war causes appears: even as the elder statesmen and cabinet limited the cause of war to Korea, a justification for war based on Manchurian affairs was developed.

The Direction of Recent Research

Professor Banno Junji, a well-known scholar of modern history, expresses it well when he writes, "A rather large percentage of Japanese and a substantial number of individuals of the ruling class of that day were war-weary up until immediately before the Russo-Japanese war began."³ In a session of the 17th Imperial Diet held at the end of 1902, the largest party, the Seiyukai, which had the majority in the House of Representatives along with the number-two party, the Kensei Honto (Constitutionalist Party), blocked the

³ Banno Junji, *Vol. 13 of Taikō Nihon no Rekishi-Kindai Nihon no Shuppatsu* [An Outline of Japanese History—The Start of Modern Japan], (Shogakukan, 1993), p. 323.

passage of a land-tax extension bill with the result that on December 28 the cabinet of Katsura Taro dissolved the House of Representatives. The Russo-Japanese war began a year and two months later. If the country as a whole had been supporting this war the House of Representatives would not have denied the land-tax extension bill, aimed as it was at raising funds for the expansion of the navy. However, as a blow to the government, in the 8th general election held in March 1903, the Seiyukai won a further 193 seats and the Kensei Honto won a further 91 seats, each maintaining their political strength. The Seiyukai had the majority with 376 seats. In spite of dissolving the House of Representatives and calling the subsequent general election, the government's attempt to increase its support failed.

At that time the right to vote was limited to citizens who paid taxes. Taking this into consideration, the success in the following election of the Seiyukai and Kensei Honto, whose support base consisted of rural landlords and independent farmers, and the fact that these parties had rebelled against the government by opposing the expansion of the navy, is testimony to the negative stance of many of the nation's leaders with regard to the Russo-Japanese war. It was argued that, with the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in January 1902, the likelihood of a military crisis vis-à-vis Russia was past, making military expansion unnecessary, and that in the case of the need arising, rather than instituting an additional land-tax, the government itself should be able to come up with the necessary funds by way of internal reforms. Along these lines, in his diary, Hara Takashi, a leader of the Seiyukai at the time, wrote: "Landlords should oppose the policy of imposing a land-tax to raise funds for expanding the navy. The reason for this is that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance has been signed, making military expansion unnecessary."⁴

Mitani Taichiro compared pre- and post-war conditions, beginning with the Sino-Japanese War and up to the Cold War and concluded that in the West, social change is brought about through revolutions, while in Japan social change has been brought about through war. Mitani bases this observation on the following cases. On December 28, 1903, when diplomatic negotiations between Russia and Japan came to an impasse, the government, anticipating the outbreak of war, drafted an Imperial ordinance containing emergency finance

⁴ Hara, Vol. 2, p. 32. October 29, 1902.

measures to provide for war costs and presented it to the Privy Council. The Meiji Constitution allowed the Emperor to issue imperial ordinances without the approval of the Diet. The Councillors, however, offered many arguments against the ordinance and became entangled in unanticipated deliberations.⁵ Since the Diet had been dissolved two weeks earlier on December 11 for the purpose of passing the emergency ordinance the government used Article 70 of the constitution that states that crucial financial matters do not require the approval of the Imperial Diet. In response, the Councillors argued against the government's assertion that, with respect to budget matters, when the Diet is closed, truly urgent matters could still be dealt with. It deserves special mention that even in a period directly before the outbreak of war such objections were raised.

In a diary entry three days before the war began, Hara points out how strong anti-war sentiment was among the people: "The majority of the people today wish for peace, but none expresses this feeling publicly. Since it is the same with elder statesmen (with the exception of a handful of war advocates) in spite of the fact that in his heart no one wants war, in reality war is drawing nearer day by day."⁶ In his book Mitani observes that not a few of the world's leaders, including Japan's elder statesmen, followed the policy of renunciation (or potential renunciation) of war.⁷

In parallel with Mitani's conclusions, a detailed study by Ito Yukio⁸ of the connection between military and domestic affairs in the period leading up to the Russo-Japanese war describes how the financial readjustment policy of Ito Hirobumi, the elder statesman leader of the Seiyukai, continued to be persuasive. This line of analysis goes on to show that the stratagems of Yamagata Aritomo and Katsura Taro caused Ito to resign as president of his party to assume the "non-partisan" post of President of the Council (Sumitsuin, the Emperor's highest advisory panel). With Ito sidelined, the Seiyukai's conciliatory policy lacked authoritative leadership at the decisive moment

⁵ The minutes of fiscal measures under the Imperial Constitution article 70 (Minutes of Privy Council), Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (<http://www.jacar.go.jp>), Reference Code: A03033533500.

⁶ Hara, Vol. 12, p. 90. Entry for February 5, 1904.

⁷ Mitani Taichiro, *Kindai Nihon no Senso to Seiji* [War and Government in Modern Japan], (Iwanami Shoten, 1997).

⁸ Ito Yukio, *Rikken Kokka to Nichiro Senso* [Constitutional States and the Russo-Japanese War], (Bokutaku-sha, 2000).

and Japan entered on the path to war. In his book Ito highly evaluates Professor Ian Nish's study,⁹ but he refutes statements about general trends in Japan relying on such sources as *The Diplomatic History of Komura*¹⁰ and Jun Tsunoda's *Manchuria Issues and National Defence Policy*.¹¹ Ito criticizes Nish for not sufficiently positioning the reconciliatory policy toward Russia of elder statesman Ito Hirobumi, Inoue Kaoru and the Seiyukai in the context of the political diplomacy of 1903. He also criticizes the conclusion that it was public sentiment already developing against Russia between 1900 and 1903 together with the hard-line policy adopted against Russia that constituted the chief causes for Japan going to war.¹²

In several recent publications, Chiba Isao has examined in great detail the course of several negotiations conducted between Japan and Russia (July 1903 to February 1904), on the basis of the Japanese elder statesmen's view that: "Since Manchurian and Korean affairs are inextricably linked, these two problems should be negotiated at the same time with Russia."¹³ On this point there was no difference between the positions taken by pro-war Yamagata Aritomo, Katsura Taro, Komura Jutaro, et al., and the more pacific Ito and Inoue.¹⁴ who represented those who were against it. Chiba goes on to add that, hypothetically, even at the very last minute, if Russia had responded quickly, and that response (of January 28, 1904) had been transmitted to Japan, the Russo-Japanese war could have been avoided.

In fact, at a meeting in Army headquarters around December 10, vice chief of staff Kodama Gentaro remarked, "No doubt negotiations will go smoothly because of Russia's financial deficit. However,

⁹ Ian Nish, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War*, New York: Longman, 1985.

¹⁰ Japan Foreign Ministry, *Komura Gaikoshi*, Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1966.

¹¹ Tsunoda Jun, *Manshu Mondai to Kokubo Hoshin* [Manchuria Issues and National Defence Policy], (Hara Shobo, 1967).

¹² Ito, pp. 203–204.

¹³ The area known as Manchuria consisted of the three provinces of Shengjing, Jilin and Heilongjiang in the north-eastern part of Qing dynasty China. For more on terminological issues, see the article by Nakami Tatsuo in this volume.

¹⁴ Isao Chiba, "*Nichiro Koshō—Nichiro Kaisen Gen'in no Sai-kento*" ["Japan-Russia Negotiations—re-evaluation of the reasons for the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War"], in *Kindai Nihon Kenkyū* [Modern Japanese Studies], vol. 18; *Hikaku no naka no Kindai Nihon Shiso* [Modern Japanese thought in the midst of comparison], (Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1996); and "*Mankan Fukabun-ron—Mankan kokan-ron no Keisei to takakuteki domei/kyōsho-mo no mosaku*" ["The formation of the argument for the exchange of Manshu and Korea and the multi-lateral alliance/in pursuit of entente"] *Shigaku Zasshi*, 105:7, July 1996.

this probably means that the war may be delayed three or four years, during which Russia's military power would be strengthened, putting Japan at a disadvantage." Even men like Kodama who believed Japan should go to war right away, were concerned that the peaceful solutions might yet prevail.

Even as they prepared for war, staff officers wondered if the battle would truly be joined. Here and there can be found negative comments concerning ambiguous government positions. For example, an officer's diary entry dated October 8, 1903, four months before the outbreak of the war, reads, "Prime Minister Katsura's decision is not very clear. It is a mistake to be indecisive when it comes to important government affairs."¹⁵ The soldiers realized that a large number of national leaders, political parties and influential citizens held strong negative attitudes toward war only a few months before it broke out.

Negotiations were active with proposals presented three times from each side and the details may be found in Chiba's article,¹⁶ but it is particularly interesting to see how Japan's diplomatic stance, transmitted to Russia by the Katsura cabinet on December 21, 1903 and based on the decisions of the elder statesmen conference of December 16 offered hope for a peaceful outcome. The main elements can be reduced to the following;

- 1) The Manchurian problem is to be handled through diplomacy and the ultimate measure [going to war] is not to be taken.
- 2) Concerning the Korean problem, Japan's revised plan is to be thoroughly explained, and if Russia does not accept it, we will carry out our objective by taking the ultimate measure.¹⁷

In other words, in December 1903, Prime Minister Katsura made it clear for the first time that Japan had reached the point of compromise regarding the Manchurian problem, but on the Korean problem was ready to take absolute measures. Hara accurately assessed

¹⁵ Iguchi Shogo Monjo Kenkyukai [Shogo Iguchi Document Study Group], ed. *Nichiro Senso to Iguchi Shogo* [Shogo Iguchi and the Russo-Japanese War], (Hara Shobo, 1994), p. 257.

¹⁶ Chiba, *Nichiro Kosho—Nichiro Kaisen Gen'in no Sai-kento*.

¹⁷ Letter from Katsura to Yamagata, December 21, 1903, *Yamagata Aritomo Kankei Monjo* [The Papers of Yamagata Aritomo] Vol. 1 (Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2005), pp. 333–334.

Japan's stance at this stage when he wrote, "In the beginning, it seems, Japan was also making demands of Russia but gradually these were lessened until at this point, except for the problem of the neutral zone, Japan had no matters of conflict with Russia."¹⁸ In Japan immediately before the outbreak of war, official policy, agreed upon by all the top politicians, limited *casus belli* to the Korea issue. None were actively promoting conflict with Russia.¹⁹ As a whole, recent research painstakingly clarifies the way of thinking of those who took responsibility for forming Japanese diplomatic and national defense policy and emphasizes the fact that, even until the last days, there were other options that would not have led to the Russo-Japanese war.

The Search for an International Legal Justification for War

But by the time the war broke out, there was no further talk of war-weariness for enthusiasm was necessary to win the support of foreign powers and a favorable response when requesting foreign loans. An August 1901 Katsura cabinet attempt to raise money in New York had failed, so all were aware of this uncertainty. Ultimately, nearly half the expenditures for the Russo-Japanese war came from foreign loans, so clearly the Japanese concern was warranted, especially with the Anglo-Japanese alliance guaranteeing only indirect support from Great Britain. Although America also manifested an aggressive attitude in opposing Russia's interference with China's equal economic opportunity policy and with respect to the Manchurian problem, there was little reason for Washington to consider deploying armed forces.

In the event that Japan decided to declare war on Russia, what could be presented as the purpose for having to go to war? In other

¹⁸ Hara, Vol. 2, p. 90, Entry for February 5, 1904.

¹⁹ However, according to recent studies of the Russian side, in Russo-Japanese negotiations in 1903, the Bezobrazovtsy group was receiving Imperial support and considered the Korean issue to be more important than the Manchurian issue. If this were the case, Japanese leaders would have left the Manchurian issue up to Russia, Japan would have taken a stand only on the Korean problem, and the Russo-Japan negotiations, which started in August 12, 1903 would have been settled. But Japan and Russia were not able to avoid armed conflict. Igor Lukoianov, "The Bezobrazovtsy", *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, Vol. 1 (Brill Academic Pub., 2005).

words, it was felt that some justification for the war had to be presented to England and America, who were friendly toward Japan. There had been a number of negotiations between Japan and Russia, but under close examination, even if war could solve problems involving the Korean peninsula, this alone would not be enough to convince these foreign powers to support the war.

As far as America and England were concerned, it was, after all, a conflict between Japan and Russia over Korea, a very minor and marginal area of the Far East that did not merit their concern or support. Ugaki Kazushige, later an influential general and statesman, but then only a young soldier living in Germany, immediately recognized the difficulty of limiting the justification for war to Korea: "Japan is on the defensive in diplomatic negotiations with Russia. In spite of the fact that Japan should be negotiating for a solution to the Manchurian problem, suddenly negotiations appear to be concerned only with the Korean peninsula problem. In such a situation, it isn't hard to see how countries in the family of nations like England, Germany and France would mistakenly think these negotiations dealt with the Korean problem and not the Manchurian problem. This cannot be to Japan's advantage."²⁰ In Ugaki's thinking, since the Korean problem had already been settled in 1902 with the formation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, bringing up the Korean problem as a reason for going to war was incomprehensible from the perspective of European nations. The key figure in elaborating the "open door" justification would be Ogawa Heikichi, an up and coming Diet representative.

As I said in my introduction, looking at relations between the Katsura cabinet and the Imperial Diet approximately a year before the war, there were such deep feelings separating them that it is difficult to imagine how the decision to go to war was ever made. The 17th Diet session called on December 6, 1902 in an effort to keep the land-tax increase extension bill alive, resulted in the dissolution of the Katsura cabinet on the 28th of the same month. About six months later, on May 8, 1903, an extraordinary session of the Diet was called and the 18th session opened on June 4. However, it was forced to recess for the first three days because, in the interval between May 8 and June 4, the House of Representatives had blocked

²⁰ Tsunoda, ed., *Ugaki Kazushige Nikki* [Diary of Kazushige Ugaki] revised edition, vol. 1 (Misuzu Shobo, 1968), p. 23.

passage of the land-tax increase extension bill. The fact that the 18th Diet session managed to close without any serious incident was due to a compromise agreed to by the Katsura cabinet and leaders of the Seiyukai, and supported by the Emperor Meiji. In the process of reaching a compromise, 61 of the 187 members of the Seiyukai either deserted or were expelled from the party.²¹ On the one hand, the government lost with the compromise because it was seeking an increase in the land-tax to finance an expansion of the navy; and on the other hand the Seiyukai lost political strength with the loss of one-third of its members. This conflict between the government and the political parties continued until the outbreak of the war. In the 19th Diet session, which opened on December 10, 1903, the Seiyukai and the Kensei Honto parties together presented a reply to the Emperor (*Hotobun*, a formality observed at the opening of Diet sessions representing the Diet's response to an imperial edict) containing the implication that the cabinet should be impeached. Since this was approved by the Diet the cabinet was dissolved on December 11. This situation led to the outbreak of war in February of the following year.

Attention should be called to the influence of discussions concerning relations between Japan and Russia among Seiyukai members who deserted or were expelled during the 18th Diet session. It is said that their reason for deserting the party, in addition to mistrust in the Seiyukai leaders for deciding to compromise with the government without consulting party members and having their demand for reforms in the party system ignored by them, was dissatisfaction with the leadership's conciliatory attitude toward Russia.²²

Next, let us examine the argument presented to the Diet by Diet man Ogawa Heikichi who deserted the Seiyukai after the 18th session. Ogawa's argument presented just eight months before the outbreak of the war clearly called for a tough policy toward Russia. The fact that Ogawa's argument appeared in the midst of an atmosphere filled with numerous arguments against declaring war on Russia merits further investigation of its background and significance, because herein lies the key to the great leap of logic in Japan's posture toward Russia immediately before and after the war began.

²¹ Ito, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

²² Ito, pp. 226-227 and 313-314.

Ogawa's Policy toward Manchurian Troop Withdrawal and the Open Door

Ogawa Heikichi's grappling with the Russian problem began early. In view of the tense situation triggered by the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, he argued the need for a national consensus with respect to Russia and East Asian territorial integrity, and in September of that year became an active member of the Kokumin Domeikai organized under Atsumaro Konoe.²³ In response to an article that appeared in the Seiyukai's in-house publication *Seiyu* in December 1901 advocating a policy of rapprochement between Japan and Russia, Ogawa published in the same organ his opinion that Japan should not trade Korea for Manchuria,²⁴ criticizing the Seiyukai's conciliatory policy toward Russia.

In the 18th Diet session, on June 4, 1903, Ogawa spoke for an hour on the foreign diplomacy issue.²⁵ His own question which he raised with the government concerned Russia's withdrawal of troops from Manchuria, but he broached his subject by saying that his opinion differed from previous questions raised by Diet members. Ogawa said that the problem as he saw it was that although the second withdrawal of Russia's troops from Manchuria should already have been implemented, to that date, two months after the scheduled date of April 8, 1903, the withdrawal had not yet taken place. The Manchurian Reimbursement Agreement between Russia and China signed on April 8, 1902 was a treaty following the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 in which Russia agreed to withdraw, in 3 installments at 6-month intervals, soldiers stationed in Manchuria (the three provinces of Shengjing, Jilin and Heilongjiang in the north-eastern part of Qing Dynasty China) to protect the country's rights from Boxer insurgents.²⁶ On October 8, 1902 Russia executed the first

²³ Yoshitake Oka, et al., ed., *Ogawa Heikichi Kankei Monjho I* [Heikichi Ogawa's Writings, I], (Misuzu Shobo, 1973), p. 24. The Kokumin Domeikai, which was formed in September 1900 with Konoe Atsumaro, President of the House of Peers as chairman, took a firm stance toward Russia with respect to the security of China and the Manchuria problem, but it was disbanded in April 1902.

²⁴ Oka, p. 26.

²⁵ Oka, p. 176. Ogawa's diary entry of June 4, 1903, reads, "Made speech at Diet session questioning foreign negotiations. Lasted about an hour. On this day the dramatic session of the Diet ended."

²⁶ Within six months after the treaty was signed, Russia was to withdraw troops stationed in southern Mukden to the area of the Liao River and hand over to China (Qing) the railroad in that district (between Shanhaikuan and Yingkou); in the next six-month period withdraw troops from Jilin and Shengjing provinces; and in the third six-month period withdraw troops from Heilongjiang provinces.

withdrawal of troops, but the second withdrawal, scheduled for April 8, 1903, had not taken place.

According to Ogawa, the problem was not just the fact that Russia had not executed the second withdrawal of troops, but whether or not to recognize Russia's right to leave troops in Manchuria to guard the Chinese Eastern Railway (Toshin Tetsudo) constructed by Russia that connected Harbin and Lushun. Any Japanese government acknowledgment that Russia's claim was justified, he said, would be a great mistake. In general, the people thought that even after Russia withdrew her troops, she had the right to station soldiers to guard the Chinese Eastern Railway, but a closer examination of the treaty (Clause 2 of the Manchurian Reimbursement Agreement signed between Russia and China on April 8, 1902) reveals that this right was not included. If one examines the railroad agreement (a treaty signed between China and the Russo-Chinese Bank²⁷ on August 27, 1896 concerning eastern China) there is a clause regarding the stationing of a police official but no mention of the right to station military personnel there. This was the first point Ogawa made in his presentation.²⁸ I would like to bring attention to the fact that Ogawa's presentation does not touch on Japan's political negotiations with Russia at all, but discusses only the terms of China's agreement with Russia.

Ogawa's second point was the establishment of a Manchurian open-door policy. His argument for an open-door policy for Manchuria had nothing to do with an out-and-out desire to acquire territory, nor envy toward Russia for attempting to take Manchuria. The issue was that an area that was exceptionally well suited for commercial development by the Japanese was being blocked by Russia. Ogawa argued, "Since America, England and countries throughout the world have expressed approval of the Manchurian open-door policy, Japan too should take the necessary steps to open up Manchuria to development as quickly as possible."²⁹ He concluded his speech with these words: "There are justifiable grounds for demanding a Manchurian

²⁷ A bank established by Russia's finance minister Witte in which many French industrialists held shares. This bank was involved in the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway.

²⁸ *Kampo Gogai* [Authoritative Report, extra edition] (June 5, 1903), No. 11 Minutes of the Shugiin—House of Representatives.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

open-door policy. Because the policy embraces conditions for the survival and advancement of the Japanese people, it is indeed justified. I believe we could not make a more appropriate demand.”³⁰ In this way he argued that England, America and the whole world agreed on an open-door policy for Manchuria and that it was justified.

It is clear that the “open door declaration”³¹ presented on September 6, 1899 by U.S. Secretary of State John Milton Hay to the governments of England, Germany and Russia had as its premise equal economic opportunity for China. Finally, this declaration was proposed to six countries, England, Germany, Russia, Japan, Italy and France and all of them agreed in principle, but the primary target was Russia.³² It is well known that the specific proposals were as follows: (1) that customs duty on all cargo of ships landing in ports within “spheres of interest” of any of these countries should conform to the standard set by China and be collected by the Chinese (Qing) government; (2) that port-of-call tax on ships at ports in the “sphere of interest” of any of these countries be the same for ships from other countries as the tax on ships of the country holding these rights, and in addition that there be no discrimination in charges for using railroads constructed on land located in the country’s “sphere of interest.” In other words, the principle of equal opportunity applied to custom duties, seaport tax and railroad charges. In 1898, Russia signed an agreement with China (Qing) permitting Russia to build and operate the South Manchurian branch of the Chinese Eastern Railway which, compared to taxes imposed on other countries, gave an economic advantage to Russia. Obviously the main target of the Manchurian commercial equal opportunity declaration from America, who had a vested interest in textile shipments from Manchuria, was Russia and not China.

Russia, however, although agreeing not to insist on special privileges in respect to customs duty on ships landing in harbors where Russia had special interest rights, made no mention of port-of-call taxes or railroad charges.³³ Concerning this stipulation, Russia gave

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ The same proposal was made on Nov. 13 to Japan, Nov. 17 to Italy, and Nov. 21 to France.

³² Nagamichi Hanabusa, *Monko Kaiho Kikai Kinto Shugi* [Open-door equal opportunity-ism], (Japan International Association Pub., 1934), p. 53.

³³ Ibid., p. 56.

America no clear response. Afterwards, because Russia did not execute the second withdrawal of troops by the April 8, 1903 deadline, the problem of withdrawing troops and the open-door policy became connected. The connection was made clear when instead of withdrawing troops, on April 18 of that same year Russia presented a new list of seven demands to the Chinese government.³⁴ An example of these demands is Article 3 which demanded that no new ports or markets be opened in Manchuria and that no foreign ministry representatives be permitted there.³⁵ Not only did this infringe on China's sovereignty, it was against the open-door policy. Requests for opening ports was a matter to be negotiated freely between China and individual countries, and, furthermore, forbidding the establishment of foreign ministry posts went against the most-favored-nation policy.³⁶ In that period, both Japan and America were negotiating trade agreement revisions with China. In the process of these negotiations Japan opened markets in Mukden and Dandong and America was granted permission to open markets in Harbin and Takushan. Japan and America collaborated in these revisions and the agreement was signed on October 8, 1903; but if Russia's seven demands had materialized, their treaty rights vis-à-vis Manchuria would have been violated. These were the actual events taking place that formed the background for Ogawa's adhesion to a Manchurian open-door policy.

The Opinions of Seven Doctors of Law

No doubt because he held the degree of Doctor of Jurisprudence, in his interpellation Ogawa raised questions regarding the legality of Russia's infringement on rights held by Manchuria, but it was not

³⁴ In a letter dated April 20, 1903, marked "No. 47 Confidential," titled "Concerning the matter of the seven demands made by the Russian acting minister" sent from Minister Uchida stationed in China to Foreign Minister Komura. Reported in *Nihon Gaiko Monjo* [Japan Foreign Policy Report] No. 36, vol. 1 (1957), p. 66.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 80. A letter dated April 25, 1903, from Minister Uchida stationed in China to Foreign Minister Komura. "Concerning receiving an official copy of Russia's 7 demands of China."

³⁶ Ibid., p. 115. A letter dated May 1, 1903, from Foreign Minister Komura to Minister Uchida in China, directing him to register Japan's opposition to Russia's demands to Prince Gong.

a seething argument fanning the flames of war. The methodological argument Ogawa presented was his own self-selected battle strategy. Recollecting events that took place in 1900, Ogawa said, "In Count Ito Hirobumi's way of thinking, a decision to go to war with Russia would have to be based on the opinions of pigheaded, inflexible ne'er-do-wells who refuse to listen to anyone. He would listen to experts on Western affairs, like the so-called Seven Doctors of Law, Hirondo Tomizu, Toru Terao and others to take the wind out of our sails."³⁷ (As a matter of fact there were only six doctors of law: Kanai En, Terao Toru, Tomizu Hirondo, Tomii Masaaki, Nakamura Shingo, and Matsuzaki Kuranosuke.) What he was referring to was an incident that took place in September 1900, when the Kokumin Domeikai had professors of the Imperial University draft a recommendation regarding war with Russia to be presented to Yamagata Aritomo, the prime minister at that time. It was not ne'er-do-wells, but scholars that he was attacking. Later it was Ogawa himself who committed "the foolishness of lecturing emotionally"³⁸ about the Manchurian problem during a political campaign in Kyoto on July 12, 1903 after the 18th Diet session.

Up to this point in this paper, I have examined the interpretation made by Ogawa in speeches delivered to the Katsura cabinet, but Ogawa's view of the rights contained in the treaty made with Russia was not his own unique analysis; it was based on the analysis of professionals. On June 10, 1903, seven professors, mainly from Tokyo Imperial University, presented a document to the Katsura cabinet entitled, "A memorandum concerning the Manchurian problem representing the opinions of Seven Doctors of Jurisprudence." Six of them had participated in the drafting of the 1900 memorandum, with Matsuzaki now replaced by Onozuka Kiheiji and Takahashi Sakue of Tokyo Imperial University. The memorandum was delivered either by hand or mail to foreign minister Komura Jutarō, navy minister Yamamoto Gonbei, army minister Terauchi Masatake, and elder statesmen Yamagata Aritomo and Matsukata Masayoshi. Ogawa was involved in the composition of this memorandum from the day of its inception on May 31, 1903, which coincided with the delivery of his memorial at the 18th Diet session. Let us verify the content

³⁷ Oka, pp. 24–25. A letter regarding Ogawa Heikichi.

³⁸ Oka, p. 181, Ogawa's diary entry of July 12, 1903.

of this opinion memorandum.³⁹ The existence of this memorandum is common knowledge, but other than the fact that it promoted the declaration of war, it has not been discussed in detail.

According to the memorandum, an opinion brief, the legal issue was given as a reason for settling the Manchurian problem. The document maintained that not only was Russia obligated to withdraw her troops from Manchuria, but that she must also withdraw soldiers who had been stationed in Manchuria to guard the Chinese Eastern Railway. Article 2 of the Manchurian Reimbursement Agreement which was signed on April 8, 1902 stated that, "The Chinese (Qing) government, with respect to the restoration of government administrative authority, in accordance with a contract with the Russo-China Bank which was signed on August 27, 1896, guarantees adherence to the stipulations of the agreement within the time limit of the contract and furthermore, in accordance with Article 5 of said contract, accepts the obligation to protect the railroad and its employees, and equally acknowledges its responsibility to protect ordinary Russian citizens residing in Manchuria and to stabilize the construction work."⁴⁰

A further look at Article 5 of this contract which China made with the Russo-Chinese Bank reveals that, "The railroad and personnel using the railroad shall abide by the laws of the government of China." As to the question of whether the Chinese government made any law allowing Russian soldiers to guard the railroad, the answer is clearly "Never." The stationing of Russian soldiers to guard the railroad is not based either on this contract or on Chinese law, according to the argument presented in the brief presented by the seven lawyers. One has only to read the memorandum to see that these legal scholars presented the same argument that Ogawa made to the 18th Diet session on June 4. The scholar who drafted the gist of the memo was Takahashi Sakue.⁴¹ That it was he who drafted it can be verified by the fact that Takahashi includes a direct quotation from Article 2 of the contract in a letter of August 1903 in

³⁹ Koreto Kurahara, ed., *Nichiro Kaisen Ronsan* [Outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war] (Asahi Shokai, 1903), pp. 167–175.

⁴⁰ *Manshu Kanpu Kyoyaku* [Manchurian Reimbursement Agreement] (Official French translation) Foreign Ministry, [Japanese Diplomatic Documents] No. 35, 1957, p. 229.

⁴¹ That Takahashi drafted his recommendation based on the opinion memorandum of the 7 doctors of law appears in Hirono Tomizu's *Kaikoroku* [Memoirs], (Shimizu Shoten, 1904).

which he writes, "Since this is what I argued in our opinion memorandum, I quote it here."⁴² The Japanese Foreign Ministry was also aware that there was no treaty granting Russia the right to station soldiers in Manchuria to guard the Chinese Eastern Railway. On May 5, 1903 Foreign Minister Komura issued an official directive to Yada, the deputy administrative official in the Japanese consulate in Hankou, saying, "There is no agreement between China and Russia concerning the stationing of soldiers to guard the Railroad."⁴³

It is well known that at least some of the professors involved in the opinion memorandum drafted by Takahashi and others were closely associated with the central group consisting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Army and Ministry of the Navy who were eagerly engaged in war preparations.⁴⁴ The fact that they were is apparent from the following statement in the 7 Doctors of Law Opinion Memorandum: "The present military strength of the Japanese army compared to that of the Russian army is at a level where we would stand a fair chance of success. Whether or not this chance will continue depends on what happens this year. (On this point, as a result of a number of years' experience in the details of military matters, even though we are confident we will stay on top, since the details are classified information, they cannot be divulged here)."⁴⁵

Conclusion—Inheritors of the Policy of Going to War

England, being a participant in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, held a negative view of the mounting antipathy in Japan toward Russia. America too was negative. But when Russia did not execute the second withdrawal of troops in April 1903 and moreover made seven new demands on China, in contrast to Japan and England who maintained a wait-and-see attitude, America on her own filed a

⁴² Kurahara, ed., *op cit.*, p. 151.

⁴³ *Nihon Gaiko Monjo* [Japan Foreign Policy Report] No. 36, vol. 1, *op cit.*, p. 151. A letter dated May 5, 1903, marked "No. 5 Confidential" from Foreign Minister Komura to Yada, the deputy administrative official in the consulate in Hankou, concerning an official directive regarding conferences with persons concerned with China.

⁴⁴ Oka, *op cit.*, p. 32.

⁴⁵ Koreto Kurahara, *op cit.*, p. 170.

protest against the Russian government. Russia denied the existence of these new demands and in a reply to America stated that she respected the open-door policy. As America saw it, America was alone in raising a clenched fist only to strike into the air at an empty threat. In the latter half of 1903 America felt she had been betrayed by Japan and England and had to bear the brunt of this. On June 23, 1903, at a Gozen Kaigi (a council held in the Imperial presence where elder statesmen and government officials made final decisions on government policy) Japan decided that on the Manchurian and Korean problems direct negotiation with Russia was the only alternative, but the content of these negotiations was made top secret. England and America felt that in the end Japan would make a compromise with Russia to recognize Russia's authority over Manchuria in return for authority over Korea. English and American newspapers speculated that if the central party to the negotiation, Japan, were to offer a compromise, England and America would relax their stern attitude toward Russia and would not charge her with treaty violation.

Japanese newspapers also reflected the same attitude. There was no explicit mention of a policy to go to war but only imprecise statements concerning the government's foreign policy, and criticism of Russia for treaty violation. Newspaper editorials for the most part concentrated chiefly on the section in the opinion memorandum of Ogawa and the seven doctors that criticised Russia for not withdrawing troops. Some newspapers such as *Tokyo Nichinichi Shimbun* criticised the severe attitude toward Russia in the seven doctors' memo and advocated friendly relations between Japan and Russia, but *Yorozuchoho* and *Yomiuri Shimbun* published editorials that concurred with the point of view of Ogawa and the seven doctors.

In the morning edition of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* on July 24, 1903, captioned "Notice from Russia," the following comment appeared: "According to recent news coverage, Russia has notified America, Japan and England of her pledge to free Manchuria. This is a strange statement coming from Russia. Russia has no authority to free Manchuria because it has always been China's territory and was never a territory of Russia. The reason Russia delivered such a notice was to cover up her intention to continue to occupy Manchuria forever. The problem is that while making public pledges to other members of the family of nations, Russia doesn't follow through. The entire Manchurian problem is that Russia hasn't withdrawn her

troops from Manchuria. Russia's occupation of Manchuria is occupation in breach of the treaty, and if this were interpreted from a legal point of view it is illegal occupation." The article concludes, "Ignoring the fact that Russia's actions have reached the point they are at today and allowing Russia to continue to occupy Manchuria will clearly endanger peace in the Far East. Japan has every right in the world under international law to chastise Russia for her high-handedness." The article throughout, rather than promoting war with Russia, blames Russia for the crime of breaking international law.

This was the logic made to justify the war in the period directly before it began. Yoshino Sakuzo, an intellectual who was famous as a standard-bearer for Taisho democracy, expressed the following opinion after the Russo-Japanese war began in which he named Russia as an enemy of civilization.⁴⁶

I see no reason that Japan should oppose Russia for territorial expansion in itself. Our opposition is only that without fail Russia's territorial expansion policy is always accompanied by the exclusion of foreign trade and I consider this to be uncivilized. For this reason, in order to defend ourselves Japan must oppose this expansion with all our might. . . .

It is not that Russia's territorial expansion poses a danger only to Japan; this expansion is an enemy to the extension of peace throughout the world. The reason we must subvert Russia's expansion endeavor is because it is an enemy to the spreading of peace throughout the world.

In this way he argued that Russia's action, tantamount to shutting the open door in Manchuria, was uncivilized and that Russia must be defeated for the sake of world peace. It may be said that Yoshino Sakuzo inherited Ogawa Heikichi's logic in the period after the war began.

The person who played the same role in America immediately after the war began was Kan'ichi Asakawa. Asakawa, who had received a Ph.D degree from Yale University, was an up-and-coming historian lecturing at Dartmouth University.⁴⁷ In the fall of 1904, he

⁴⁶ Sakuzo Yoshino, *Seiro no mokuteki* [The Purpose for Attacking Russia], in (*Shinjin*, March 1904); and *Yoshino Sakuzo Senshu* 5 [Collected Papers of Sakuzo Yoshino 5], (Iwanami Shoten, 1995), pp. 7–8.

⁴⁷ Yabuki Susumu, *Potsumasu kara kesareta otoko—Asakawa Kan'ichi no Nichi-ro Senso-ron* [The man who was eliminated from Portsmouth—Kan'ichi Asakawa's Argument for the Russo-Japanese War], (Toshindo, 2002), p. 9.

published in English *The Russo-Japanese Conflict, its causes and issues*⁴⁸ a monumental volume of 400 pages. His book was reviewed in an editorial in *The New York Times* and elsewhere, and received high praise.⁴⁹ It is an enormous book containing an introduction and twenty chapters. From the first chapter to the last, the history of the diplomatic and political struggle among powers for territorial rights in the Liaodong Peninsula, Korea and Manchuria, documented with objective and reliable data from each country, is presented in a straightforward manner. The introduction concentrates on the author's argument designed to convince the American people of the justness of the war.

Asakawa calls the Russo-Japanese war a dramatic conflict between two civilizations: Japan, representative of the new civilization, and Russia, representative of the old.⁵⁰ He also poses the question of the purpose of this war between civilizations, calling attention to the fact that the territory that was being fought over, though rich in natural resources, was still a developing region of northern China. Manchuria was a section of that region, and Korea was a country bordering on that region. The two countries fought bitterly over the prospect of gain. Russia fought to annex an immense section of the region and close it; Japan sought to make the region independent and develop it.⁵¹ This came into play later at a Japan-Russia peace conference where the justification for the war presented above, simple and clear as it is, served to spread support for Japan among the American people.

Those who accepted the argument for going to war presented by Ogawa Heikichi and the seven doctors of law were a minority in the government and among the people who were leaning toward a conciliatory policy toward Russia. However, they argued from the beginning from the position of international law and based their policy on the open-door policy. Because of this, immediately before the Russo-Japanese war began, the direction of negotiations between Japan and Russia was not clear. In one sense, people suddenly woke

⁴⁸ Kan'ichi Asakawa, *The Russo-Japanese Conflict, its causes and issues*, (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1904).

⁴⁹ Shiozaki Satoshi, "Amerika no Media ni miru Nichiro Shototsu Hyo" [Critique of the American Media's View of the Russo-Japanese Conflict—The Conflict and its Limitations], in [*Kan'ichi Asakawa Study Society Newsletter*, No. 37], June, 1999.

⁵⁰ Asakawa, *op cit.*, p. 53.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

up to find Japan at war with Russia, and the argument for going to war presented by Ogawa Heikichi and the seven doctors of law was taken over by top intellectuals like Yoshino Sakuzo, Asakawa Kan'ichi and others, and widely circulated as the justification for going to war once it had begun.

RIDING THE RAILS: THE JAPANESE RAILWAYS MEET THE CHALLENGE OF WAR

Steven J. Ericson

Beginning with the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, railroads have played a central role in modern warfare.¹ By making possible the rapid concentration and supply of forces, rail transport revolutionized combat logistics. By the time the Russo-Japanese War had ended, railroads had become so vital to the success of military campaigns that a magazine writer could declare: “the mobilization of the great armies . . . is but the systematized work of train dispatchers.”²

Railroads indeed figured prominently in the Russo-Japanese War, leading one scholar to describe that conflict as “very largely a railway war.”³ In doing so, he and others generally have in mind the intense rivalry for control of railroads in Korea and Manchuria and the negative impact of the Trans-Siberian Railway as both “the fundamental cause of the hostilities”⁴ and the decisive factor in Russia’s defeat. Historians typically contrast the enormous difficulties Russia faced in moving troops and supplies more than five thousand miles from Europe over the poorly equipped, single-track Trans-Siberian line, whose rupture at Lake Baikal persisted until late September 1904, with the advantages Japan enjoyed of proximity and easy deployment by sea. Unlike the Russians, with their dependence on a deficient railway system, the Japanese relied for military transport primarily on their extensive merchant marine. Having won command of the sea early in the conflict, Japan could send its troops quickly from ports in the home islands and land them “at almost

¹ On these first cases of effective railway use in war, see, for instance, John E. Clark, Jr., *Railroads in the Civil War: The Impact of Management on Victory and Defeat* (Baton Rouge, 2001), and Geoffrey Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870–1871* (Cambridge, 2003).

² James F. J. Archibald, “The Railroad in War,” *Sunset*, 16 (1906), 261.

³ John Westwood, *Railways at War* (San Diego, 1981), 112.

⁴ *Ibid.*

any point on the seaboard of the theatre of war.”⁵ Consequently, whereas Russian reinforcements reached the Asian front “in dribblets,”⁶ Japan’s entire army was in the field within months of the outbreak of hostilities.

This standard juxtaposition of slow Russian trains and fast Japanese ships misses the point that, for Japan, military transport during the war was not just smooth sailing. With its army divisions scattered across the four main islands, Japan faced a huge logistical challenge in assembling troops and materiel at the major sending ports. In every case, it gathered its forces by rail, although the distances they had to travel at home averaged in the hundreds rather than thousands of miles. The Japanese did not escape problems of land transport on the continent: for instance, with Korea’s trans-peninsular trunk railroad more than a year away from completion at the start of the war, the First Army took one month to slog the 125 miles from Pyongyang to the Yalu on roads “bad beyond description.”⁷ But, even within Japan, the authorities had to contend with a railway system divided among the state railways, which accounted for less than a third of the total length of line open, and dozens of private companies. Moreover, the railways themselves equaled, if not exceeded, the Trans-Siberian in terms of limited carrying capacity, with their dearth of double-tracking, their generally cheap construction, and their use of the 3’6” narrow gauge as opposed to the 5’ Russian standard. In fact, in nationalizing the principal private lines in 1906, the Japanese government cited, among other reasons, the inconveniences and delays the military had experienced at home during the war with a fragmented rail network badly in need of renovation and expansion. The actual wartime performance of the Japanese domestic railroads as military conveyers demonstrates that, for Japan as well, the conflict was as much a “railway war” on the home front as on the battlefield.

⁵ Great Britain, Committee of Imperial Defence, Historical Section, *The Official History of the Russo-Japanese War*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (London, 1909), vol. 1, p. 39. See also J. N. Westwood, *Russia Against Japan, 1904–05: A New Look at the Russo-Japanese War* (Albany, 1986), 119, 223.

⁶ Edwin A. Pratt, *The Rise of Rail-Power in War and Conquest, 1833–1914* (Philadelphia, 1916), 269.

⁷ German General Staff, Historical Section, *The Russo-Japanese War: The Ya-lu*, tr. Karl von Donat (London, 1908), 147.

At the start of the war, Japan's railway network extended to the home bases of all thirteen army divisions. (See Map 1.) By then, the domestic system had in operation nearly 4,500 miles of line, about one third of its eventual total mileage. Although still lacking the vast majority of branch and connecting lines, the network had in place most of the arteries on the three biggest islands. In early 1904 the rail system was split among the state railways and 41 private companies. Of the private railroads, the big five—the Nippon, Kyushu, San'yô, Kansai, and Hokkaido Colliery and Railway—handled the bulk of the military transport, along with the state's Tokaido, Japan Sea-side, and Hokkaido lines. The opening of a final section of track to Shimonoseki in 1901 had completed the trans-Honshû artery, encompassing the main lines of the San'yô and Nippon railway companies at either end and the Tokaido in the middle. This trunk line would be the workhorse of the domestic railroads, connecting seven divisions directly with Ujina, the principal port of embarkation, and serving three others by feeder. Meanwhile, the Kyushu Railway Company's network linked the 6th Division located at Kumamoto and the 12th at Kokura with the port of Nagasaki. By the time the army mobilized the 7th Division at Asahikawa in north-central Hokkaido in October 1904, the Hokkaido Railway Company had opened its line to Hakodate, so it was then possible to travel by rail, with a ferry link to the main island, from Asahikawa all the way to Ujina over the lines of four private companies and the state railways. (The 7th Division in fact went only on government and Hokkaido Colliery lines the 150 miles to Muroran, where it boarded ships for the continent.)⁸ The 8th Division at Hirosaki had the longest continuous voyage by rail, covering more than a thousand miles from the northern end of Honshû to Ujina, while the 5th Division at Hiroshima enjoyed the shortest journey over the 3.5-mile military line to Ujina.⁹

⁸ *Hokkaidô tetsudô hyaku nen shi* (Centennial History of Hokkaido Railways) (Sapporo, 1976), vol. 1, p. 182.

⁹ *Tetsudô kyoku nenpô* (Annual Report of the Railway Bureau), 1907 (Tokyo, 1909), 30, Appendix, 1-46.

Logistical Challenges

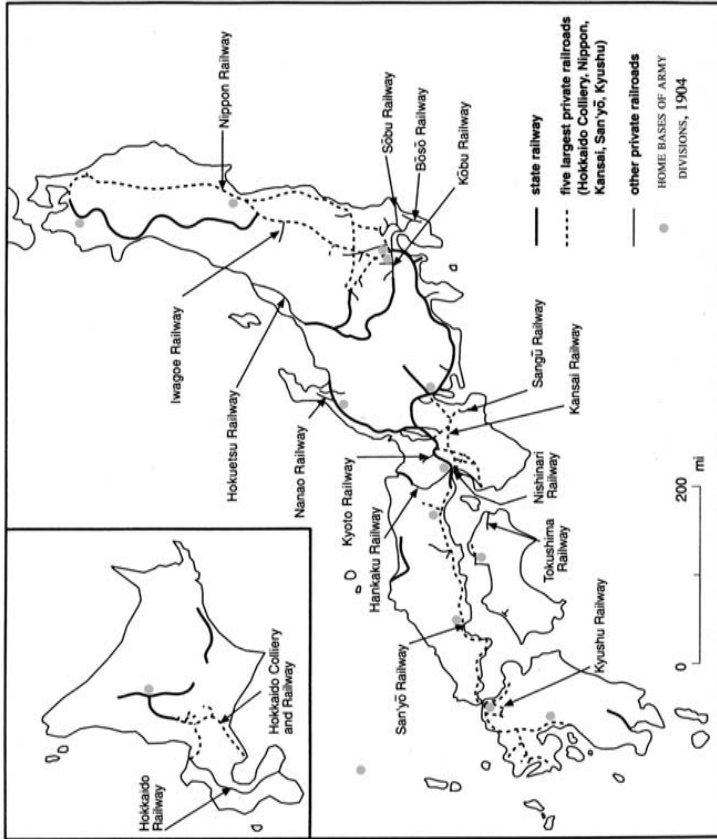
Although able to concentrate its forces on the continent more quickly than Russia, Japan still took nine months to mobilize its thirteen army divisions partly because of the restricted carrying capacity and speed of its domestic trains. The following description of the Trans-Siberian Railway would have applied equally to most contemporary railroads in Japan: "To save money, it was single track. . . . To avoid expensive circuitous routes in mountainous areas the gradients were excessively steep. . . . Eighteen miles an hour was a high average speed, and in some sectors seven miles an hour was the limit."¹⁰ In Meiji Japan as well, most railroads sought to minimize capital expenditures by avoiding tunneling and double-tracking as well as by neglecting or postponing needed repairs and improvements. As a British railway executive observed in late 1904: "Japan must be congratulated on the cheap construction of her railway system, but it is impossible to have a thoroughly efficient system without paying for it. . . . Nothing strikes one more forcibly in Japan than the impermanence of things."¹¹

Among the worst offenders in this regard was the Nippon Railway Company, the biggest private railroad, which operated the trunk line from Aomori to Tokyo. Right up until its nationalization in 1906, the Nippon Railway did little to renovate its shoddy lines and equipment. Like the majority of Meiji railroad concerns, the Nippon succumbed to pressure from its stockholders to pay profits out almost entirely as dividends rather than to plow them back into the enterprise. To meet such investor demands, the company simply had to ignore or delay essential improvements. In 1900, the Nippon's president admitted that private railroads, including his own, were poorly equipped as compared to those of the state, then added lamely that, "since the funding needed to [upgrade facilities] is lacking, circumstances do not permit it."¹² As a result, the company was slow to

¹⁰ Denis Warner and Peggy Warner, *The Tide at Sunrise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905* (London and Portland, OR, 1974), 139.

¹¹ Alfred W. Arthurton, "The Railways of Japan," *The Railway Magazine*, 15 (December 1904), 503.

¹² Cited in Sakurai Tōru, "Nippon tetsudō kabushiki kaisha no shihon chikuseki jōken to kokuyūka mondai: kokka dokusen seisei ni kansuru junbiteki kōsatsu" (Conditions of Capital Accumulation in the Nippon Railway Company and the



Map 1. Japan's Railway Network in 1906 (railroads nationalized in 1906-07 identified by name)

Source: Steven J. Ericson, *The Sound of the Whistle: Railroads and the State in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1996), p. 247.

renovate not only its stations and lines but also its rolling stock; at the end of 1904 the railroad determined that nearly a fourth of its 350 locomotives were superannuated.¹³ Compounding these shortcomings in facilities and equipment was the fact that in 1870 the state railways had adopted the “colonial” 3'6" gauge for Japan's rail system, following the advice of their British engineer-in-chief, a veteran of railway building in the British empire; this gauge had then become the standard as well for private main-line companies, of which the first, the Nippon Railway, had started construction in the early 1880s.

Not unlike the situation Russia faced, these factors placed limits on the transport power and speed of Japan's domestic rail network. In its report on the Russo-Japanese conflict, the German General Staff, which had assembled each of its armies in three to seven days during the Franco-Prussian War using Germany's double-tracked trunk lines,¹⁴ sniffed that Japan had required “the comparatively long period of about three weeks” to mobilize its regular divisions “owing to the small carrying power of the railways.”¹⁵ In speed, Japanese trains were not much better than their Russian counterparts. The aforementioned British executive noted at the end of 1904 that regular trains “are scheduled to run at about eighteen miles an hour.”¹⁶ Meanwhile, military trains ambled along at 15–16 miles per hour and made frequent supply and rest stops, each one lasting one to four hours, so that troops of the Hirosaki Division required four full days to reach Ujina.¹⁷

Unlike the Hirosaki and Sendai divisions, which had to travel over the deficient Nippon Railway, the majority of army units relied for rail transport solely on the superior lines of the state railways and the San'yō and Kyushu railway companies. Those two private railroads, the largest after the Nippon, were exceptional in having as

Nationalization Issue: Preliminary Study Concerning the Formation of a State Monopoly), *Ōsaka shidai ronshū* (Studies of Osaka City University), no. 25, (1976), 73.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 78–79.

¹⁴ Wawro, *Franco-Prussian War*, 74.

¹⁵ German General Staff, Historical Section, *Russo-Japanese War*, 101.

¹⁶ Arthurton, “Railways of Japan,” 503.

¹⁷ Ōe Shinobu, *Nichi-Ro sensō no gunji shiteki kenkyū* (Studies in the Military History of the Russo-Japanese War) (Tokyo, 1976), 515; *Nihon kokuyū tetsudō hyaku nen shi* (Centennial History of the Japanese National Railways), 14 vols. (Tokyo, 1969–1974), vol. 3 (1971), 556.

their top shareholder the Mitsubishi combine, which in both of those firms supported the ascendance of professional managers committed to expansion and renovation of the enterprise. With Mitsubishi's backing, the San'yō and Kyushu exceeded the level of fixed investment on other private railroads, approaching the state railways in the solidity and repair of their lines. As the former railway commissioner of India, Sir William Bisset, concluded on a visit to Japan in 1902, although the country's railroads were "at least equal to the railways of India," the San'yō and the government's Tokaido line were in fact the only Japanese railroads "worthy of the name."¹⁸ (Sir William might have added the Kyushu, had he visited the southernmost big island.)

Despite achieving relatively high standards of construction, the San'yō and Kyushu railways both fell short in the key area of double-tracking. The managing director of the San'yō warned at a general stockholders' meeting in late 1904 that, since the company had only double-tracked the 34 miles from Kobe to Himeji, "before long, we will be pressed by the need to double-track the line west of Himeji,"¹⁹ including the remaining 155 miles to Hiroshima. In the event, the railroad did not begin to address that need until after the war.²⁰ Meanwhile, on the eve of its nationalization in 1907, the Kyushu Railway had double-tracked a paltry 28 miles of its entire 461-mile network.²¹ With the industry leaders doing such a poor job of enlarging their carrying capacity through the war years, it is no wonder that railway transport at home posed logistical challenges to the Japanese army.

The fragmentation of Japan's railway system also confronted the military with a number of problems. One was a lack of equipment

¹⁸ "Sir William Bisset," *Japan Weekly Mail* (May 24, 1902), 560; "Bisset-shi no honpō tetsudō hyō" (Mr. Bisset's Evaluation of Our Country's Railroads), *Tōyō keizai shinpō* (June 5, 1902), 29–30.

¹⁹ "San'yō tetsudō Ushiba senmu no enzetsu" (Speech by Managing Director Ushiba of the San'yō Railway), *Tetsudō jihō* (Railway Review) (November 5, 1904), 10.

²⁰ In December 1903 the San'yō had completed a second track for a few miles east from Hiroshima to the point at which its main line intersected with the newly opened state railroad running to the naval base at Kure; the government then leased its 12-mile Kure line to the San'yō from December 1904 until the company's nationalization two years later: *Nihon kokuyū tetsudō hyaku nen shi*, vol. 4 (1972), 419–420.

²¹ *Kyū-tetsu nijū nen shi* (Twenty-Year History of the Kyushu Railway Company) (Tokyo, 1907), 73.

standardization among the forty-some railroad administrations. The principal railways all used the same narrow-gauge track, but they differed greatly in the weight of their rails, the model and tonnage of their rolling stock, and so on. The railroads, for example, imported all manner of locomotives from a variety of Western manufacturers; according to railway historians Harada and Aoki, "it was as if the makers of various countries were holding a locomotive competition using the whole of the Japanese railroads as their stage."²² Under these conditions, Vice-Minister of Communications Den Kenjirō, who joined military officials in planning and executing the wartime conveyance of troops by rail, found it "difficult even to estimate how many trains would be needed to transport one division."²³ As it turned out, the railroads had to run fourteen trains a day over a period of ten days to move just one division, the Imperial Guard, from Tokyo to Hiroshima (a division consisted of about 20,000 troops and non-combatants as well as three dozen artillery and several hundred horses).

Other difficulties related to the network's lack of unity stemmed from the government's order that the railroads provide the military with through service from departure point to destination. For the eight army divisions in central and northern Japan, this requirement meant that military trains would travel directly across the lines of the state railways and at least one private company. In such cases, not only did the changing of train crews at the junctions between different railroads cause delays, but the allocation of rolling stock and the calculation of fares became extremely complicated. For instance, on the state railways, from February 1904 to October 1905, carriages belonging to private rail companies accounted for over a third of the passenger-car mileage and over a fourth of the freight-car mileage for military transport. Anticipating this situation, the government, in addition to having the army compensate the state and private railways at discounted rates for passage on their respective lines, devised a system whereby the railroads paid each other mileage and "late" fees for the use of each other's cars.²⁴ The result of these arrangements was that both the authorities and the railroads were

²² Harada Katsumasa and Aoki Eiichi, *Nihon no tetsudō: hyaku nen no ayumi kara* (Japanese Railroads: A Century of Progress) (Tokyo, 1973), 113.

²³ *Den Kenjirō den* (Biography of Den Kenjirō) (Tokyo, 1932), 184.

²⁴ *Nihon kokuyū tetsudō hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, pp. 383, 562.

constantly pressed to settle accounts on military through traffic during the war. Although avid students of European conflicts, the Japanese thus repeated the mistake France had made of entering its war with Prussia in 1870 “with a skein of public and private rail companies, all of which burdened the others with mountains of paperwork every time a load of men or material was transferred from one line to another.”²⁵

With so many players involved in military transport, the Japanese authorities also encountered difficulties in maintaining military secrecy just before and after the outbreak of hostilities. Once the army began mobilizing the 6th Division at Kumamoto in late January 1904, for example, newspapers in Kyushu rushed to report the movement of military trains on the lines of the Kyushu Railway Company. Though in supplying such information to the press the railroad was merely providing an essential service to civilian users, the reports disclosed not only the fact of troop mobilization but also its scale based on the number of trains scheduled for military use.²⁶

Another problem resulting from the business mindedness of the private railroads surfaced when the army started requisitioning rolling stock from them for use on the continent. As the Second Army seized control of Russian rail lines in southern Manchuria beginning in May 1904, the Communications Ministry recommended that the government direct the Field Railway Corps,²⁷ which it was then belatedly assembling in Tokyo, to convert the lines from the Russian to the standard gauge, since Japan could easily obtain rolling stock from the United States. On the other hand, should the corps rebuild the railways on the narrow gauge, it could import rolling stock from Japan; but, as the communications bureaucrats pointed out, the domestic railroads were already experiencing a shortage of cars for troop transport and could spare little for use in Manchuria. At the insistence of the Army Ministry, however, the government decided “as an emergency measure” to convert the lines to the narrow gauge and divert rolling stock from the home islands.²⁸ At first, the authorities appropriated equipment mainly from the state railways, but after

²⁵ Wawro, *Franco-Prussian War*, 48–49.

²⁶ Harada and Aoki, *Nihon no tetsudō*, 108–109.

²⁷ For more on this and other army railway units active on the mainland, see below, “Japanese Railroads on the Continent.”

²⁸ *Den Kenjirō den*, 185.

the fall of Liaoyang in early September 1904 the demand for servicing the nine divisions at the front suddenly increased. Thereupon, the Communications Ministry negotiated with the railway companies and “by proportional allotment” requisitioned locomotives and carriages from them to supplement the rolling stock in southern Manchuria.²⁹ The three private railway giants—the Nippon, Kyushu, and San'yô—relinquished a total of 42 locomotives and 822 freight cars for this purpose.³⁰ Yet, not surprisingly, the private firms did their best to reserve their latest equipment and to supply only outmoded rolling stock; since the government was “not in a position to be particular about what it received,” the army ended up having at its disposal in Manchuria only the most dilapidated of private railway engines and cars: “the rivets were loose, the roofs leaked, and, while speeding along, they would emit strange sounds.”³¹

The railway companies themselves had to contend with a number of difficulties during the war, not the least of which were the state's commandeering of their rolling stock and constraining of their higher-paying general traffic. In late 1904, for example, mine operators in the Jôban coal fields serviced by a branch line of the Nippon petitioned the railroad about the lack of freight cars for transporting coal, declaring with admirable precision: “Your company has 5.22 freight cars per mile of line in contrast to [railroads in] Western countries where the number of cars ranges from a maximum of 70 per mile to a minimum of no fewer than 20–30 . . .”³² By the spring of 1905 the shortage of fuel in the Tokyo area, which had become dependent on Jôban coal, had reached serious proportions, with one part of the capital having only a day's worth of coal reserves.³³ The private railways sustained requisitioning not only of their equipment but also of their personnel. The Kyushu Railway, for example, had more than a hundred of its operational staff called up for military

²⁹ Ibid., 186–187.

³⁰ Hisashi Oyama, *Expenditures of the Russo-Japanese War* (New York, 1923), 219; *Kyû-tetsu nijû nen shi*, 19.

³¹ *Den Kenjirô den*, 186–187.

³² Yamada Eitarô, *Nippon tetsudô kabushiki kaisha enkakushi* (History of the Nippon Railway Company), 2 vols. (Hitotsubashi University Library, Tokyo), vol. 2, pp. 365–366.

³³ *Monogatari Tôhoku honsen shi* (Narrative History of the Tôhoku Main Line), ed. Nihon kokuyû tetsudô Sendai chûzai riji-shitsu (Tokyo, 1971), 243.

service.³⁴ As early as April 1904 the Nippon Railway faced a crisis owing to the army's enlistment of train crew and telegraph operators and the firm's inability to recruit and train replacements fast enough. Then, in June 1905, the government ordered the company to supply additional crew for field railways, causing it to experience yet another shortage of engineers and conductors. Since few employees volunteered to serve on the continent, the Nippon had to offer higher salaries or the perquisites of business travel to those it finally dispatched. At the same time, it was forced to adopt a variety of expedients to replace the leave takers, including rehiring laid-off or retired workers unconditionally and compensating apprentice telegraph operators, who had previously trained without pay.³⁵ As the quality of employees necessarily declined, so did the frequency of accidents increase: between the fiscal years ending in March 1904 and March 1905, for instance, the number of train collisions on the Nippon Railway rose from 19 to 36 and the number of derailments from 30 to 53.³⁶

Despite the effective rebate on military transportation and the pressure such service exerted on civilian traffic, most of the private railways, for all their complaints about wartime sacrifices, in fact experienced no drop in profits during the war. To the contrary, the big three—the Nippon, Kyushu, and San'yô—all showed substantial gains in operating income during the fiscal years 1903–1905. In the first year of the war, while the Nippon recorded a growth in net revenue of just over 5 percent, the Kyushu and San'yô enjoyed increases of nearly 18 and 27 percent, respectively.³⁷ The wartime rise in profits resulted to a large degree from the companies' efficient employment of their limited rolling stock as well as their precise scheduling of civilian trains to maximize the intervals between military runs. Equally important, however, was the accommodative attitude of the authorities, who premised their timetables on the parallel operation of military and civilian trains. The government allowed the railway companies not only to use returning military empties for general service but also to run as many civilian trains as they could between the military trains, which made lengthy stops at designated

³⁴ *Kyû-tetsu nijû nen shi*, 19.

³⁵ *Monogatari Tôhoku honsen shi*, 243–244.

³⁶ Nippon tetsudô kabushiki kaisha, *Nenpô* (Annual Report), 1903–1904.

³⁷ *Tetsudô kyoku nenpô*, 1907, Appendix, 76–104.

stations.³⁸ Moreover, in its confidential report on wartime military transport, the San'yō Railway Company admitted that, during periods of inactivity in troop movement, it “was able to place all the carrying power of the military trains at the disposal of ordinary traffic and to provide even more [non-military] service than in peacetime.”³⁹

In the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War, proponents of railway nationalization in Japan underscored the problems that a multitude of profit-minded railway concerns had created for military transport during the conflict, but critics countered that, for all its shortcomings, the mixed railway system had actually performed well during the war. Advocates of a state buyout of the major private lines argued that, with a unified railway network under its control, the government could readily outfit the railroads to meet military needs and operate them at its beck and call in time of emergency. As Army Minister Terauchi Masatake testified to a Diet committee investigating the government's Railway Nationalization Bill in March 1906, “to be able to operate our railroads from the center, just as a person uses his fingers, will make it possible for us not only to employ our military forces to advantage but also to take the initiative against the enemy.”⁴⁰ Opponents of the nationalization proposal retorted that existing regulations contained ample provisions for through traffic as well as for state takeover of the entire network in the event of a national crisis. One Diet member asserted that, under the Order for the Military Requisition of Railroads, which the government had issued on the very eve of the war, “the authorities . . . can at any time use all the country's railroads as they please. At present there is no reason why they cannot attain this objective without nationalizing [the private railroads].”⁴¹ Moreover, many observers

³⁸ *Nihon kokuyū tetsudō hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, pp. 555–556, 564, 566.

³⁹ San'yō tetsudō kabushiki kaisha unyu-ka (San'yō Railway Company Traffic Department), *San'yō shichi-hachi nen sen'eki ni kansuru gunji yusō hōkoku* (Report on Military Transport during the 1904–1905 War), in Noda Masaho et al., eds., *Meiji ki tetsudō shi shiryō* (Materials on Meiji Railway History), ser. 2, vol. 15, part 3: *Gunji yusō kiroku* (Military Transport Records) (Tokyo, 1989), 39.

⁴⁰ “Shūgi-in tetsudō kokuyū hōan hōka ikken iinkai kaigiroku” (Minutes of the House of Representatives Committee on the Railway Nationalization Bill and One Other Item), 2nd session (March 9, 1906), 5, *Shūgi-in iinkai kaigiroku* (Minutes of House of Representatives Committees), 5th ser., no. 36 (National Diet Library, Tokyo).

⁴¹ *Dai Nihon teikoku gikai shi* (Japanese Imperial Diet Records) (Shizuoka, 1928), vol. 6, p. 976.

noted that, in practice, the system had run quite smoothly during the conflict. The railroads had managed to convey vast numbers of troops and supplies with “no particular difficulties,” wrote one commentator in the *Tôkyô keizai zasshi* (Tokyo Economic Journal) on March 10, 1906; and even Vice-Minister of Communications Den found that in the end, despite the inconveniences caused by the lack of standardization, the system had worked “without any hitches to speak of.”⁴² Indeed, in making the strategic case for nationalization, Terauchi had to resort to the rather forced argument that the army could achieve the rapid deployment of troops it would need to repulse an enemy landing, say, in central Honshû only if the main lines were all under direct government control.⁴³

The Army's Railway Policy

To the extent that Japan met the challenges that its inadequate railway network posed to military conveyance during the Russian conflict, much of the credit should go to the legacy of army planning that culminated in the Military Requisition Order of January 25, 1904. After initially opposing railroad development as a wasteful extravagance, Japan's military leaders had come around to recognize the strategic importance of railways during the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877. By 1887 the Army General Staff had formulated a comprehensive railway policy, which centered on demands for the inland routing and double-tracking of trunk lines and the conversion of all domestic railroads to the standard gauge. In the pamphlet it published the following year, the General Staff explained that “to make the construction [of railroads] completely suited to military needs is the same as to train soldiers and enhance weapons.”⁴⁴ The powerful chief of the state railway bureau, Inoue Masaru, flatly rejected the army's construction demands as too expensive. Yet, in his proposal for railroad building legislation, an amended version of which the Diet passed in 1892 to regulate future extension of the rail system, Inoue reflected the concerns of the army high command by calling

⁴² *Den Kenjirô den*, 184.

⁴³ “Shûgi-in tetsudô kokuyû hôan hoka ikken iinkai kaigiroku,” 5th session, March 13, 1906, pp. 32–33.

⁴⁴ *Nihon kokuyû tetsudô hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, p. 76.

for the purchase of land for projected railroads with the goal of eventually double-tracking them, so they might “fully achieve their [military] purposes,” and recommending the construction or renovation of train stations for military use and the laying of branch lines to local army bases. The Diet incorporated these points into the 1892 Railway Construction Law, which also established a Railway Council as an advisory body under the cabinet with wide-ranging authority over the planning, construction, and operation of the nation’s rail network. Consistently chaired by a ranking member of the Army General Staff and including half a dozen military officials along with a score of civilian bureaucrats and Diet members, the council served to strengthen and institutionalize the army’s voice in railway policy making.⁴⁵

Through the Railway Council, army authorities continued for the next several years to press their costly construction demands. In 1896 they finally persuaded the government to place the gauge issue on the policy agenda. In that year, the Diet passed three motions urging the cabinet to develop plans for conversion to the standard gauge, and the Communications Ministry obliged by forming a committee to investigate the matter. In the opinion paper it submitted to the committee, the Army General Staff pointed to the restrictions that employment of the narrow gauge had imposed on troop mobilization during the Sino-Japanese War and called on the government to use the war indemnity from China posthaste to rebuild all lines on the standard gauge so as to make them more serviceable militarily.⁴⁶

The army’s railroad policy shifted dramatically in 1898. In that year, the General Staff abruptly replaced gauge conversion with railway nationalization as its top priority, causing the gauge investigative committee to break off its deliberations. The key figure behind this policy change was an Army College graduate named Ôsawa Kaiyû. In 1890 Ôsawa had joined the General Staff, which sent him to Europe in 1893 to study railway logistics. Instead of evidence in support of the army’s traditional construction demands, what he brought back with him, as one newspaper noted, was “a firm conviction that private ownership is altogether a mistake.”⁴⁷ The report

⁴⁵ Steven J. Ericson, *The Sound of the Whistle: Railroads and the State in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 201, 238–241.

⁴⁶ *Nihon tetsudô shi* (History of Japanese Railroads), 3 vols. (Tokyo, 1921), vol. 2, pp. 779–782.

⁴⁷ “Railways,” *Japan Weekly Mail* (September 3, 1898), 236.

he presented to the General Staff after his return in 1895 undoubtedly came as a bombshell to army strategists. Drawing on his observations particularly of Germany's efficient state system, Ôsawa concluded that unification of railroad management through nationalization of private lines was the first requisite for effective military transport, whereas "train speed is rather a secondary issue, and track width is not an important point."⁴⁸ By 1898 Ôsawa had become head of the military transport section in the General Staff, establishing himself as the army's resident expert and chief spokesman on railroad matters. By then he had succeeded in bringing the General Staff around to his position on railway construction and ownership; accordingly, for the next decade, the gauge issue receded from the political limelight.

Ôsawa went public with his views in a pamphlet he published in mid-1898. In it he argued not only for nationalization of private railroads but also for improvement of existing facilities and operating procedures so that the railroads would better meet the needs of military transport. In particular, he called for the accelerated adoption of cars equipped with bogies or swiveling undercarriages, which enabled manufacturers to increase the width of cars to three times the track width. As a result, the railroads could substantially increase the load of their rolling stock without switching to a broader gauge. In addition, Ôsawa insisted that speed was less important than efficiency and that the railways could significantly raise their efficiency through better management and training of staff.⁴⁹ His viewpoint represented a sharp departure from the army's conventional wisdom, which until then had pitted the strategic role of railroads against their economic function. By contrast, Ôsawa advocated structuring the system to serve economic purposes in peacetime while allowing for a smooth transition to military use in time of emergency: in other words, a system in which economic and strategic functions would coexist. This stance became the essence of army railroad policy thereafter, and the careful planning of contingency timetables that resulted

⁴⁸ *Nihon tetsudô shi*, vol. 2, pp. 795; Aoki Eiichi, Harada Katsumasa, and Miyazawa Motokazu, "Meiji hyaku nen kinen tokushû gô" (Special Edition on the Meiji Centennial), *Han kôtsû* 68 (October 1968), 31, 139.

⁴⁹ Noda Masaho et al., eds., *Nihon no tetsudô: seiritsu to tenkai* (Japanese Railroads: Formation and Development) (Tokyo, 1986), 114. The railroads began introducing bogie cars in large numbers during the 1890s, although as late as March 1906 such cars accounted for barely one fifth of the carriages on the state railways: *ibid.*, 89.

from this new perspective accounted in good measure for the relatively smooth running of the railway system during the Russo-Japanese War.⁵⁰

With the support of Ôsawa and other military leaders, communications bureaucrats, who had been pushing for state purchase of private railroads since the late 1880s, would finally achieve that goal with implementation of the 1906 Railway Nationalization Law; in the meantime, however, the General Staff's new outlook on railroad construction and operation provided the basis for extensive cooperation between army and communications officials in preparing and executing plans for wartime rail transport. Ôsawa became Den Kenjirô's principal contact within the army and worked closely with the vice-minister of communications in drafting railway bills and directives for submission to the cabinet as well as in supervising the movement of troops by rail during the conflict with Russia.⁵¹

The Military Requisition Order and War-Related Transport

The most important such directive came barely a fortnight before the outbreak of war: the Order for the Military Requisition of Railways, which the cabinet issued to private railroads on January 25, 1904. The authorities based this ordinance on Article 71 of the Private Railway Law of 1900, which read: "In accordance with the provisions of law or regulations, the company must offer its railways to military service, either in time of peace or of war."⁵² Article 17 of the requisition order made clear that its terms were also to "apply correspondingly to the government railways." Articles 2 and 13 spelled out the key requirements, obligating the railroads to provide military transport and to construct new facilities at the request of the army or navy. The ordinance also detailed the rates the companies could charge for the use of their carriages and stipulated that the army or navy minister and the minister of communications would decide the amount of compensation for required construction work in consultation with the firms. In addition, the directive required the

⁵⁰ Aoki, Harada, and Miyazawa, "Meiji hyaku nen kinen tokushû gô," 129–132.

⁵¹ *Den Kenjirô den*, 170.

⁵² Department of Railways, *Private Railway Law and Law Relating to the Working of Railways* (Tokyo, 1900), 16.

railroads to offer the military through transportation from departure point to destination.⁵³

Under this ordinance, Japan carried out an almost unprecedented military mobilization by rail during the Russo-Japanese War. On February 5, just before hostilities began, the General Staff ordered four divisions to start mobilizing and the railroads that serviced them to provide the necessary conveyance. Among the companies receiving this order were the Kyushu and Nippon railways, although as early as October 1903 the General Staff had already secretly directed the Nippon to make preparations for large-scale military transport in the event of war.⁵⁴ While moving the 12th Division, the first to leave for the front, from Kokura to Nagasaki, the Kyushu Railway Company deployed several hundred of its staff “from the president on down” at the key terminals.⁵⁵ The whole operation, the German General Staff noted approvingly, “went off without delays occurring in the dispatch of trains; the accelerated concentration of those portions which were to be embarked first came off as well without any friction.”⁵⁶ On February 8, the army set up a “railway headquarters” within its General Staff Office to plan and coordinate military transport on the railway system as a whole. Under the direction of Ôsawa Kaiyû, this planning body assembled veteran traffic managers from the state railways and private companies. To enable through transport to the sending ports, it drew up special timetables for activation whenever major troop mobilizations took place. Under these timetables, the railroads had to suspend their regular schedules and run military trains at fixed intervals day and night. When the 2nd and 8th divisions received orders to mobilize, for example, the state and private railways operated twelve trains at two-hour intervals each way between Hirosaki and Sendai and sixteen trains at one-and-a-half-hour intervals each way between Sendai and Ujina.⁵⁷ The railroads involved devoted fourteen of those sixteen scheduled trains to military service and restricted civilian use to the remaining two trains. During lulls in the movement of troops, the railroads could essentially reinstate their normal schedules, leaving a few time slots open

⁵³ *Nihon kokuyû tetsudô hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, pp. 381–383.

⁵⁴ *Monogatari Tôhoku honsen shi*, 239.

⁵⁵ *Kyû-tetsu nijû nen shi*, 19.

⁵⁶ German General Staff, Historical Section, *Russo-Japanese War*, 101.

⁵⁷ *Monogatari Tôhoku honsen shi*, 240.

for military runs, should they become necessary. In its report on wartime transport, the San'yō Railway indicated that it had not gotten its first respite from heavy military service until July 20, 1904; from mid-February until then, the railroad had continuously operated according to the special military timetable.⁵⁸

The San'yō Railway, whose lines carried ten of Japan's thirteen divisions to Ujina Harbor, was the biggest contributor of all to wartime military transport by rail. Between February 1904 and September 1905, it conveyed to Ujina a total of 603,366 troops, 100,559 horses, and 241,922 tons of military supplies. During that time, on average per month, it transported about 30,000 outbound troops, with a high of nearly 59,000 in March 1904; 5,000 horses, with a high of more than 13,000 in March 1904; and 12,000 tons of freight, with a high of almost 19,000 in November 1904. To provide this transport, the company averaged 179 military trains a month, with 320 in the peak month of March 1904.⁵⁹ In addition, from 1904 to early 1906, the San'yō carried in special ambulance cars 181,339 sick and wounded returning from the front and conveyed 50,704 Russian prisoners of war bound for places of internment throughout Japan. Finally, from the start of repatriation in October 1905 to its conclusion in March 1906, the railroad moved a quarter of a million troops, some 50,000 horses, and about 17,000 tons of freight. In payment for all these services, it received nearly ¥2.7 million from the army.⁶⁰

Under the Military Requisition Order, the army directed the railroads to carry out scores of improvements and additions to their facilities. From the start of the war until the end of 1905, the San'yō Railway alone received 64 such work orders, which together required an outlay of more than ¥142,000; the company and the army essentially split the cost.⁶¹ Besides undertaking smaller projects, the San'yō

⁵⁸ San'yō tetsudō kabushiki kaisha unyu-ka, 2, 7. As a concession to ordinary freight traffic, however, of the sixteen daily round trips between Sendai and Hiroshima, the authorities reduced the number they designated for military use to thirteen beginning March 10, 1904: Ōe, *Nichi-Ro sensō no gunji shiteki kenkyū*, 509.

⁵⁹ San'yō tetsudō kabushiki kaisha unyu-ka, "Hassō yusō seiseki hyō" (Table of Outgoing Transport Results).

⁶⁰ Ibid., appended tables.

⁶¹ Ibid., "Meiji sanjū shichi-hachi nen sen'eki gunyō kōji shisetsu ichiran hyō" (List of Construction Work and Facilities for Military Use during the 1904–1905 War).

laid additional track and enlarged platforms. The firm also built extensive facilities for troops and horses at major stations both on its main artery from Kobe to Hiroshima and on the short line it purchased in late 1904 from the Sanuki Railway Company in north-eastern Shikoku.⁶² This line connected the 11th Division at Zentsûji with ports from which the San'yô's own ferry business carried troops across the Inland Sea to its trunk railway on Honshu, Japan's main island.

Naoko Shimazu has provided a lively account of what the experience of riding military trains en route to the sending ports meant to individual soldiers, particularly those bound for Ujina.⁶³ Drawing on the personal diaries of several soldiers, she portrays the trip from divisional base to Ujina as both "one long journey of farewell" and a "grand tour" of Japan for conscripts who were often leaving their home regions for the first time. At train stations all along the route, local elites mobilized members of grassroots patriotic associations, Red Cross volunteers, and schoolchildren to welcome and send off the troops with gifts of food and tobacco, war songs, flag waving, and shouts of *banzai*. In addition, the railway journey through Japan turned provincial conscripts into "tourists," eagerly taking in and identifying with famous landmarks along the way. As Shimazu demonstrates, mobilization by rail thus played a vital role in raising the national consciousness of soldiers not only by "bonding" them with hosts of ordinary Japanese in the continuous train of farewells but also by taking them on a voyage of discovery through "the common landscape of the homeland."

After the conflict ended, the San'yô and the other railroads continued their war-related service by conveying hundreds of thousands of troops returning from the continent. As the *Japan Weekly Mail* declared on the eve of this massive enterprise, with only slight exaggeration: "All the Japanese skill and forethought in organization will be needed for this stupendous task, incomparably the greatest of its kind ever undertaken by any nation since the days of Xerxes . . ."⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid., 85–86 and appended tables.

⁶³ "Journey of Farewell: National Consciousness of Japanese Conscripts in the Russo-Japanese War," in Naoko Shimazu, ed., *Nationalisms in Japan* (London, forthcoming). For a brief discussion of the smaller-scale precedent for that experience during the Sino-Japanese War, see Stewart Lone, *Japan's First Modern War: Army and Society in the Conflict with China, 1894–95* (New York, 1994), 54–57.

⁶⁴ "The Return of the Troops," *Japan Weekly Mail* (September 23, 1905), 326.

On October 17, 1905, a day after the imperial proclamation of the restoration of peace, the army issued instructions to the railroads for the transport of repatriating forces, directing them to put into effect schedules prepared in advance for that purpose. On October 28, the Nippon, for instance, began running nine military trains a day to Sendai and six trains from there to Aomori. The entire operation proceeded in a festive mood: the company decorated the cars of trains carrying home the 2nd and 8th Divisions with national flags and cedar garlands and “even added dining cars,” provided free beer to officers of the 7th Division returning to Hokkaido via the Nippon’s trunk line, and festooned its principal stations with flags and electric lights.⁶⁵ After six months of transporting repatriating troops, Japan’s domestic railroads completed their military service related to the war in late March 1906.

Japanese Railroads on the Continent

During the conflict, Japan also put considerable effort into building and controlling railroads on the Asian mainland in order to move and supply troops in the field, though with somewhat mixed results. After the outbreak of hostilities, the Japanese army formed three sets of military units to build and operate both standard and field railways on the continent. First of all, on February 21, 1904, imperial headquarters ordered the establishment of a Special Military Railway Brigade to oversee construction of the standard-gauge line from Seoul to Uiju on the Manchurian border. The railway and engineering battalions under the brigade’s command landed at Inchon in March 1904.⁶⁶ Owing to the difficulty of traversing a remote, mountainous area and four major rivers, however, the brigade took until April 1905 to finish laying the track; even then, it would not complete the bridges over two of the rivers until seven months after the war.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Monogatari Tōhoku honsen shi*, 241–242, 244.

⁶⁶ The railway battalion, a standing unit the army had founded in 1896, had had field experience in China during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900: *Nihon kokuyū tetsudō hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, p. 79.

⁶⁷ In April 1905, Vice-Minister of Communications Den Kenjirō made an inspection tour of Japanese railways in Manchuria and Korea; because of the remaining breaks in the Seoul-Uiju line, he ended up traveling “intermittently by open car” from the Manchurian border to Seoul: *Den Kenjirō den*, 189–190.

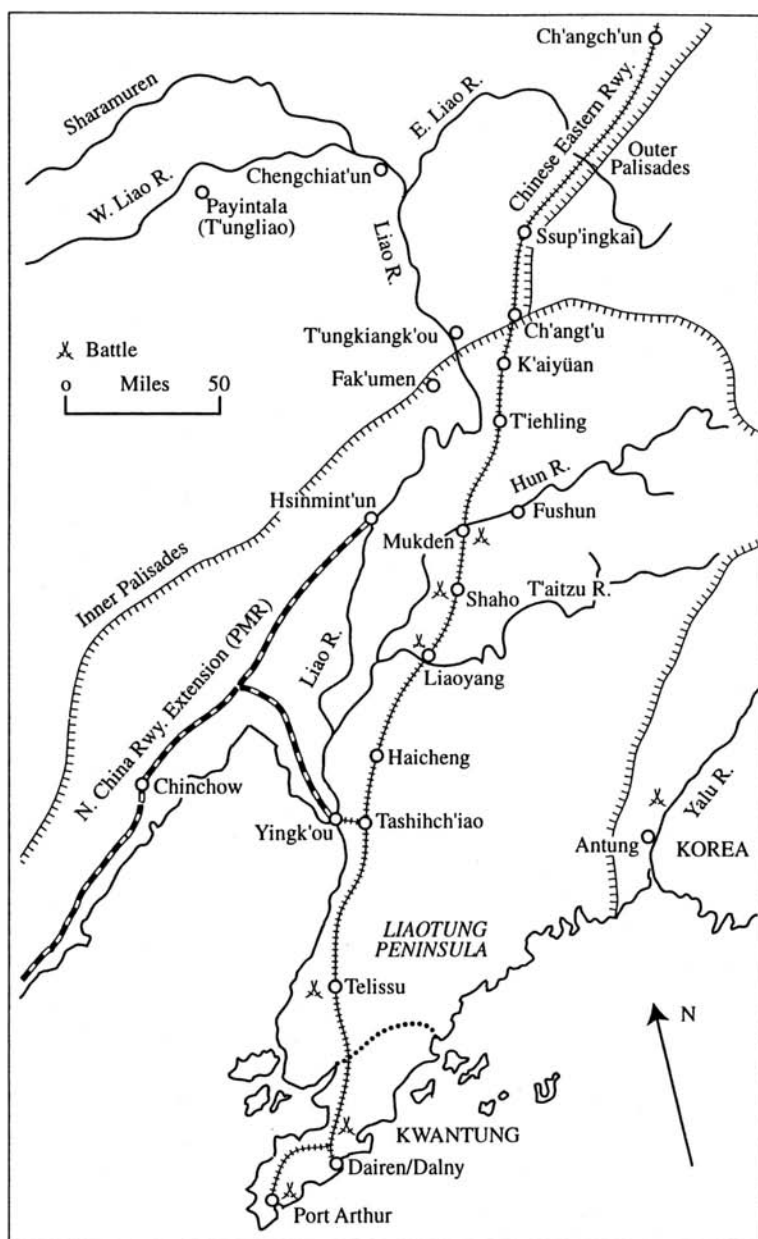
The brigade also built a short military railway from the naval stronghold at Masan at the southern end of the Korean peninsula to the Seoul-Pusan trunk line, which a private Japanese company, with extensive backing from its home government, was scrambling to complete by the end of 1904. The Masan line tentatively opened in May 1905, but due to flood damage it soon became unusable; the army brigade would not finish repairing it until October of that year. In the end, the army's construction of railroads in Korea served less to support Japan's wartime operations against the Russians than to facilitate its control of the Korean peninsula.⁶⁸

The Special Military Railway Brigade contributed more directly to the war effort by laying a 2'6" light railway from Andong, across the Yalu from the northern terminus of the Korean trunk line, toward the southern branch of the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) beginning in August 1904. The army initially planned to have this railway connect with the CER branch at Liaoyang, but after the occupation of Mukden decided to extend the line in a more northerly direction to Mukden instead. On the eve of the Battle of Mukden, the line had gotten about three fifths of the way to that city, which it would eventually reach in December 1905. Following the Battle of the Yalu, this railway served as the supply route for the First Army during its advance to form the right flank of the Manchurian front. The railway lost that function in October 1904 when Japan's main armies in Manchuria all moved their supply bases to Liaoyang after the repair and reopening of the occupied portion of the southern branch of the CER.⁶⁹

After the Battle of Mukden, the army reassigned the railway battalion that had been laying the Andong-Mukden line, ordering it to construct a light-railway connection between the Chinese Northern Railway and the CER. Following the Mukden engagement, the Japanese army occupied Hsinmintun, the northern terminus of the Chinese Northern Railway some forty miles west of Mukden, and

⁶⁸ *Nihon kokuyū tetsudō hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, p. 89; Inoue Yūichi, "Nichi-Ro sensōji ni okeru Nihon no gun'yō tetsudō kensetsu mondai: dai nikai Nichi-Ei dōmei e no ichi kōsatsu" (The Problem of Japanese Military Railway Construction at the Time of the Russo-Japanese War: A Study on the Background to the Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance), *Gunji shigaku* (Journal of Military History), 16:3 (December 1980), 12–13; Ōe, *Nichi-Ro sensō no gunji shiteki kenkyū*, 535–537.

⁶⁹ Inoue, "Nichi-Ro sensōji ni okeru Nihon no gun'yō tetsudō kensetsu mondai," 16; Ōe, *Nichi-Ro sensō no gunji shiteki kenkyū*, 537–539.



Map 2. Southern Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War

Source: Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904-1932* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), p. 37.

by mid-May 1905 the railway battalion had completed the light railway from Mukden to Hsinmintun. Thus did the Chinese Northern, the property of a neutral country, China, join the CER and the Liao River as the three great supply routes of the Japanese forces in Manchuria.⁷⁰

Besides the battalions under or spun off from the Special Military Railway Brigade, the army also established two "manual light railway" corps in April 1905 to supply the armies on the far right and left flanks of the front line in Manchuria and another one in mid-1905 to support military operations in northeastern Korea. The official British history of the war describes the "narrow-gauge tramways" these units laid: "The line was of two feet gauge, and was sent from Japan made up in lengths of six feet six inches, each length being joined to the next by a kind of hook joint. . . . Men alone were used for propelling the trucks. The lines were single throughout, traffic being so arranged that two loaded trucks never met. Empty trucks could be lifted from the rails to allow of loaded ones passing them."⁷¹

In mid-March 1904, the army ordered the formation of its most important railway unit of the war, the Field Railway Corps, to repair and operate the occupied sections of the southern branch line of the CER. This special unit, consisting of army engineers and state railway personnel, sailed for the mainland in early June but came under fierce attack from Russian warships en route and barely made it back to Sasebo with a loss of 147 of the 962 corps members on board. After regrouping with additional recruits from the state railways, the unit finally landed at Dairen on the Liaodong Peninsula in early July and set about converting the CER line to the narrow gauge, completing the work to Liaoyang in one direction and to the doorstep of Port Arthur in the other by September. Continuing its rebuilding northward through the Battle of Mukden, the Field Railway Corps made the CER branch into the lifeline of the Japanese armies in Manchuria.⁷²

⁷⁰ Ôe, *Nichi-Ro sensô no gunji shiteki kenkyû*, 544–545.

⁷¹ Great Britain, Committee of Imperial Defence, *Official History of the Russo-Japanese War*, 172.

⁷² *Nihon kokuyû tetsudô hyaku nen shi*, vol. 3, p. 79; Inoue, "Nichi-Ro sensôji ni okeru Nihon no gun'yô tetsudô kensetsu mondai," 16; *Den Kenjirô den*, 186; Aoki Kaizô and Yamanaka Tadao, *Kokutetsu kôryû jidai: Kinoshita un'yû nijû nen* (The Golden Age of the National Railways: Twenty Years of Transportation under Kinoshita) (Tokyo, 1957), 8.

Conclusion

As for Japan's domestic railroads, the contrast with the Trans-Siberian Railway highlights the fact that, despite the challenges the Japanese rail lines presented to military transport, on balance they performed well during the war with Russia. At the start of the conflict, Russian authorities, unlike their Japanese counterparts, were "quite unprepared to send further large reinforcements by land," the "unreadiness" of the Trans-Siberian line having "prevented the drawing up of time-tables for the concentration of the troops."⁷³ The break at Lake Baikal persisted for nearly eight months into the war. Mainly on account of that rupture, although individual Russian trains had greater loads than those of Japan, the system as a whole lagged far behind the Japanese network in carrying capacity until late in the war: for at least the first three months of the conflict, the Russians were running only three military trains a day each way on the Trans-Siberian while the Japanese were from the very outset operating as many as fourteen a day each way on the trans-Honshû trunk line. Ôsawa Kaiyû may have been right that train speed was not important for the Japanese army, whose divisions had to travel by rail relatively short distances at home; but for the Russian army, whose reinforcements had to cover more than five thousand miles of railway line from Europe, the lack of speed on top of anemic transport power proved decisive: in the spring of 1904, the journey by rail from westernmost Russia to southern Manchuria "took fifty days—an average speed of five and a quarter miles per hour."⁷⁴ Furthermore, in Japan, efficient wartime operation of the railways resulted in large part from the collaboration of military and civilian bureaucrats and private railway officials. Epitomizing this cooperation were the close working relationship between army logistics expert Ôsawa and Vice-Minister of Communications Den (who also had prior experience as a railway company executive) and the establishment of the wartime railway headquarters in the General Staff. By contrast, on the Russian rail network, lack of coordination between military and civilian authorities at times "led to confusion, traffic chaos and the complete blocking of junction stations."⁷⁵ With the completion of the circum-Baikal

⁷³ Pratt, *Rise of Rail-Power*, 263–264.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 269.

⁷⁵ Ernest F. Carter, *Railways in Wartime* (London, 1964), 70.

line and the addition of sidings and other improvements, the Russians steadily increased the carrying capacity of the Trans-Siberian Railway until they could run at least a dozen trains daily each way. By then, however, "the important battles had been lost."⁷⁶

The wartime performance of Japanese railroads also suggests that Ôsawa may have been correct in his dismissal of standard-gauge conversion, although his position did not prevent military and civilian officials from raising that issue intermittently over the next several decades. (The government would finally decide in 1939 to adopt the standard gauge in building what would later become the Shinkansen network of postwar Japan.)⁷⁷ On the other hand, the comparatively smooth running of the mixed railway system during the conflict belies the strategic case that Ôsawa and other military officials made for railway nationalization. In the end, political and financial reasons loomed larger than military ones in the government's decision to buy out the major private lines in 1906–1907: Diet members were eager to please their constituencies by extending and renovating a unified network, and state bureaucrats wanted to use the system as collateral to refinance the enormous war debt as well as to borrow anew for the postwar management of Japan's expanded empire.⁷⁸ By facilitating comparatively rapid military mobilization, railroads on the home front played no small part in the victory that led to that expansion.

⁷⁶ Steven G. Marks, *Road to Power: The Trans-Siberian Railroad and the Colonization of Asian Russia, 1850–1917* (Ithaca, NY, 1991), 204.

⁷⁷ Katsumasa Harada, "Transportation during Wartime (1938–1945): Railroads," in Hirofumi Yamamoto, ed., *Technological Innovation and the Development of Transportation in Japan* (Tokyo, 1993), 173–174.

⁷⁸ See Ericson, *Sound of the Whistle*, 245ff.

JAPAN'S MONETARY MOBILIZATION FOR WAR

Ono Keishi

Japan's wars at the turn of the twentieth century were not cheap. Between June 1894 and March 1896, the Japanese government's special account for the clash with China amounted to ¥200 million. Post-war expenses during the next five years drew ¥32 million from the general account, while indirect costs between the fiscal years (hereafter FY) of 1896 through 1901 required another ¥2.5 million.¹ The confrontation with Russia ten years later was even more costly. From FY 1896 through FY 1903, the military expenditures during the preparation period for the war amounted to ¥815 million, although this included costs associated with the Sino-Japanese War. Meanwhile, extraordinary war spending during the 45 months from November 1903 to June 1907 reached an astronomical ¥1.5 billion, not including post-war requirements of ¥96 million through FY 1915 and indirect costs of ¥222 million. To put these figures in perspective, in 1904 Japan's gross national product (GNP) was calculated at some ¥3 billion, while the central government's general account during FY 1904 stood at ¥277 million. In other words, overall spending on the Russo-Japanese War was around 60 percent of annual GNP or seven times larger than Tokyo's annual budget.

Paying for war is normally a function of a state's financial policy. Nevertheless, the central bank's monetary policy also plays an important role. When a relatively small economy tries to cover enormous military costs in a short period, its success largely relies on a relaxation of monetary discipline by the central bank. During its struggle with Russia, revenues raised by loans always came after the money

¹ At the time military disbursements were divided into the categories of Extraordinary War Expenditures and Extraordinary Wartime Administrative Expenditures. The former was for military operations and was managed by the Army and Navy Ministries. The latter was for other than military operations, i.e. diplomacy, prefectural police operations, interest payment of national debt. In order to manage the Extraordinary War Expenditures independently from the general account, the Special Account for Extraordinary War Expenditures was established. However, military spending after the Special Account for Extraordinary War Expenditures was closed were paid from the general account.

had already been spent on military needs. To cover the resultant gap, the Bank of Japan provided bridge financing, which was paired by monetary relaxation to support subscriptions to government bonds.²

Katayama Toru discusses the Bank of Japan's loans to the government to draw specie money (proceeds of foreign loan issue) into Japan.³ However, supply side analysis of war spending doesn't explain why bridge financing had lasted until August 1905, three months after the Battle of Tsushima effectively ended the fighting. This paper therefore examines the demand side of the war expenditures (i.e., the purposes of such spending) going on to study the relation between monetary policy and spending during the war. To understand the nature of military expenditures, it will also be necessary to compare budgets in times of war and of peace. Since this chapter's goal is to study the impact of war spending on Japanese monetary policy, it will also pay attention to bridge finance, encouraging domestic loan subscription, and supporting the currency. This will yield insights into how monetary policy supported the war and re-evaluate the Bank of Japan's role.⁴

Japan's Economic and Military Position in 1900

To put Japan into perspective, this section briefly reviews the economic and military strengths of the great powers at the turn of the twentieth century. Table 1 shows that both Japan's GNP was the smallest among the eight powers both in total and per capita. Compared to Russia, Japan's GNP was only 14 percent of its adversary's, while GNP per capita was a little less than 50 percent. Although Japan's government had the smallest budget, the ratio to its GNP was a little larger than that of Russia, not to mention Britain. However, with regard to military spending, the gap between Japan and Russia was narrower.

² Ito Masanao, "Nichirosengo no Nihonkinhonisei to Chuouginkouseisaku," Fujioka Koji and Yoshioka Akihiko, eds., *Kokusai Kinhonisei to Chuouginkouseisaku* (Nagoya, 1987), 380–386.

³ Katayama Toru, "Nichirosensou ikou no Zaisei Kinyu Kouzou," *Keizai Ronso* vol. 138, nos. 5–6 (November–December, 1986), 107–107.

⁴ In this chapter, the war expense of the Russo-Japanese War refers to spending from the Special Account for Extraordinary War Expenditures, and does not include military expense from the general account nor the Extraordinary Wartime Administrative Expenditures.

Table 1. Economic/Military Strength of Eight Great Powers in 1900 ⁵ (in current prices, in dollars for GNP per capita, in millions of dollars for others)								
	Japan	Russia	Britain	USA	Germany	France	Italy	Austria-Hungary
GNP	1,200	8,300	9,400	18,700	9,300	6,100	2,800	5,000
GNP per capita	30	60	230	250	170	160	90	110
Government expenditures (GE)	144	943	668	521	464	699	346	630
Military expenditures (ME)	66	204	253	191	205	212	78	68
Army	37	162	107	135	168	139	54	60
Navy	29	42	146	56	37	73	24	9
Growth of ME (1890–1900)	214%	41%	61%	185%	42%	14%	–1%	6%
GE/GNP	12%	11%	7%	3%	5%	11%	12%	13%
ME/GE	46%	22%	38%	37%	44%	30%	23%	11%
ME/GNP	6%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%
Navy/Army	0.78	0.26	1.36	0.41	0.22	0.53	0.44	0.15

Japanese financial policy emphasized the military. In 1900, the nation disbursed \$66 million on the armed forces, a figure equivalent to 30 percent of Russia's army and navy budgets. Indeed, the armed forces' burden on the economy was the highest among the powers, at nearly half of total government spending and 6 percent of GNP. During the nineteenth century's last decade, Japanese military expenditures had grown by 214 percent, a rate far exceeding those of the other powers.⁶ By contrast, Russian military expenditures rose by only 41 percent during this period.

The navy was particularly favored. Although Japan had the smallest overall military budget among the powers, the ratio of navy to

⁵ The author's calculation based on the followings: US Department of Commerce, *Historical Statistics of the United States*, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1987), 224, US Department of Commerce *Historical Statistics of the United States* vol. 2 (Tokyo, 1989), 1,114, Kazuchi Ohkawa, et al., eds., *Cyōuki Keizai Toukei*, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1974), 200, Ministry of Finance, *Meiji-Taisho Zaiseishi*, vol. 1, (Tokyo: 1955), 128, 220–223, Paul Bairoch, "Europe's Gross National Product: 1800–1975," *Journal of European Economic History* vol. 5, no. 2 (Fall, 1976), 281, 292, Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (Chicago, 1971), 670–671.

⁶ This growth rate is dollar-based, and the yen-based figure is 418 percent, while the deflator increased by 168 per cent during the same period.

army spending was 0.78:1, a figure surpassed only by Great Britain. To put these figures in other terms, while Japan's army budget amounted to under a quarter of Russia's, its naval spending stood at over 2/3 of its rival's. As a result, during the decade before the war, the Japanese navy had procured six battle ships and eight armored cruisers, while Russia placed twelve battle ships and four armored cruisers in service.

Budgetary Planning

In July 1903, eight months before the outbreak of the war, a group of Tokyo University faculty wrote Prime Minister Katsura Taro a letter about the Manchurian question, *shichi Hakase no Oboegaki* (The Memorandum of the Seven Doctors). One of the authors, Kanai Noburu, confidently estimated that the coming war with Russia would cost ¥280 million.⁷ He based his projection on the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), when some ¥2.2 million were needed to field one army division per month, although expected that logistical reforms would result in some savings.⁸ Since the Russian Army deployed 50,000 troops in East Asia, and reinforcements would be slow in coming, Kanai argued that seven or eight divisions would suffice to drive them from the region.⁹ Therefore army-related war expenditures would total ¥16 million per month or ¥192 million yen per year, while the fleet's needs would boost the annual amount by another ¥90 million.

While in hindsight this figure proved too optimistic, the government's own calculations were also low. In his memorandum to the general staff meeting of June 8th 1903, Major General Iguchi Shogo put the figure at ¥500 million.¹⁰ Lieutenant General Kodama Gentaro, the general staff's new deputy chief, presented an estimate of ¥800 million in October of that year.¹¹ And at the war's outbreak, in

⁷ Kanai Noburu, untitled, Igarashi Eikichi, ed., *Nichiro Kaisen Ronsan* (Tokyo, 1903), 48.

⁸ During the Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese Army depended on contract labor for logistic support. This accounted for one third of army's war expenditure. Wage of a contracted laborer was ten times more expensive than a conscripted soldier, who composed majority of transport units at the Russo-Japanese War.

⁹ Kanai Noburu, 39–40.

¹⁰ Tani Toshio, *Kimitsu Nichiro Senshi* (Tokyo, 1966), 90.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

February 1904, a high-ranking government official told Takahashi Korekiyo, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Japan before he was dispatched to New York and London to negotiate foreign loans that the conflict's cost would be only ¥450 million, on the assumption that the fighting would only last for one year and that the combat would be limited to the Korean Peninsula.¹² Of course, soon after the start of the war the First Army had already crossed the Yalu River into Manchuria, and thereafter most of the campaign took place outside of Korea.¹³

Why were pre-war estimates so far below the mark? For one thing, troop levels had generally been underestimated. As we have seen, the Tokyo University professor Kanai believed only seven or eight divisions, or 120,000 to 130,000, men would suffice to drive the Russians from the Pacific, and another calculation by the Japanese Army soon after the Sino-Japanese War put the number at 200,000. These predictions were based on intelligence projections of Russian strength in the region. In his brief of June 1903, Major General Iguchi had put tsarist forces in the Amur and West Siberian Military Districts at 160,000, which could be boosted to a total of 230,000 with reinforcements from the center, and it might take more than 120 days. In addition, as Iguchi noted, garrison and logistics support duties on Russian territory meant that the adversary's deployments in Manchuria would be smaller.¹⁴ However in the event, at Mukden, largest battle of the war on land, the Japanese Army fielded 14 divisions, or nearly a quarter of a million men, and in subsequent months another five divisions were mobilized. Ultimately, the Japanese Army dispatched a total of 945,000 soldiers to Manchuria. Including those deployed on the home islands, the actual total number of men in uniform was closer to 1.1 millions, not counting 154,000 civilian employees.¹⁵

¹² Takahashi Korekiyo, *Takahashi Korekiyo Jiden* ge-kan, vol. 2 (Tokyo, 2001), 190–191.

¹³ In *Tairo Iken Gushin*, Iguchi Shogo insisted on the necessity to occupying Harbin, the key junction of traffic in Manchuria. Therefore he expected expansion of the war to outside the Korean peninsula. Tani, 92.

¹⁴ Tani, 89.

¹⁵ General Staff Office, *Meiji 37–8nen Nichiro Senshi*, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1912), 51. For the Sino-Japanese War, Japan mobilised 174 thousand only for field duty, 241 thousand including home territory duty. The number of civilian employees was 6,000, while more than 100 thousand porters were employed. General Staff Office, *Meiji 27–8-nen Nisshin Senshi*, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1904), 64–65.

The main reason for this miscalculation lay in underestimating the Trans-Siberian Railway's ability to carry reinforcements to the Far Eastern front. Professor Kanai argued that, despite improvements in railway technology, the new route would never meet its builders' expectations.¹⁶ For one thing, when it was initially built the Trans-Siberian was single-track. Furthermore, the line around Lake Baikal had not yet been completed. All traffic, therefore, had to cross the lake by boat in summer and by sled over its frozen surface in winter. Taking these considerations in mind, the General Staff calculated that at best the track would be able to sustain 300,000 soldiers in the Far East.¹⁷

However, Russia had been hard at work to boost the Trans-Siberian's capacity. Just recently, more than sixty sidings had been built, and in winter a track over Lake Baikal's ice now connected the gap.¹⁸ As a result of these improvements the tsarist military succeeded in increasing troop levels during the first half-year of the fighting from 98,000 in February to 149,000 at the Battle of Liaoyang in August 1904, surpassing Japanese troop levels in Manchuria by over 20,000.¹⁹ From then on, Russian soldiers outnumbered their adversaries in the theatre for the remainder of the conflict. In August 1905, one month before the conclusion of the peace treaty St. Petersburg deployed 40 percent of its land forces in the Far East, or 788,000 men, whereas Japan could only commit 670,000.²⁰ Consequently, the Russo-Japanese War became one of the age's largest clashes, exceeded only by the American Civil War both in troop levels and cost during the century that separates the Battle of Waterloo from the call to arms of Summer 1914 (see Table 2).

¹⁶ Kanai Noburu, 40.

¹⁷ General Staff Office (1912), 65. More accurate statistics had to await Transport Minister Khilkov's report to the tsar, which was only submitted in April 1904, two months after the opening of hostilities. Ohe Shinobu, *Sekaishi to shiten no Nichirosensou* (Tokyo, 2001), 352.

¹⁸ Kuwata Etsu, "Ryokoku no Senryoku-Sakusenkouso to Daihonei," Kuwata Etsu, ed., *Kindai Nihon Sensoushi*, vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1995), 463.

¹⁹ I. I. Rostunova, *Soren kara mita Nichirosensou* (Tokyo, 1980), 276.

²⁰ Another 22,000 were sent to Sakhalin. Ohe Shinobu, *Nichirosensou no Gunjishiteki Kenkyuu* (Tokyo, 1976); 78. I. I. Rostunova, *Soren*, 323–324.

Table 2. Major Conflicts from the Crimean to the Russo-Japanese War ²¹				
	Years	Cost (¥ billions)	Duration (months)	Mobilized Troops (thousands)
Crimean War	(1854–56)	3.4	24	350
Austro-Italian war	(1859)	0.5	3	400
American Civil War	(1861–65)	11.2	49	1,600
Austro-Prussian War	(1866)	0.7	2	540
Franco-Prussian War	(1870–71)	2.4	6	1,230
Russo-Turkish War	(1877–78)	2.4	10	660
Boer War*	(1899–02)	2.3	32	300
Russo-Japanese War	(1904–05)	3.8	19	1,480
* Statistics for Britain only				

Military Outlays

How did the Japanese government spend its money during the war? The bulk of the outlays came from the Special Account for Extraordinary War Expenditures. Set up in October 1903 and closed in June 1907, its total appropriation amounted to 1.7 billion yen of which 1.5 billion yen were actually spent. As table 3 indicates, personnel-related expenditures, including pay, provisions, uniforms and medical care, took up 60% of the army's spending. As much more capital-intensive service, the navy devoted more than half of its allocation to arms. These sums included ¥16 million to import two armored cruisers *HIJMS Kasuga* and *Nisshin*, and another ¥26 million to build another pair of cruisers, the *HIJMS Tsukuba* and *Ikoma*, at Kure naval arsenal to replace two battleships that had been sunk by mines off Port Arthur in May 1904.²² Since the army's expenses were 5.7 times larger than the navy's, manpower made up more than half of the special account in aggregate, while hardware took up less than a fifth.

²¹ Source: Tokyo Keizai Shinposya, *Tokyo Keizai Shinpo* vol. 298 (March, 1904), J. Riesser, *Finanzielle Kriegsbereitschaft und Kriegführung* (Tokyo: 1938), 217, US Army Center of Military History website <<http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/books/amh/AMH-09.htm>>.

²² Navy Staff Office, *Meiji 37–8-nen Nichiro Kaisenshi*, vol. 8, no. 1, 152, Navy Staff Office, *Meiji 37–8-nen Nichiro Kaisenshi*, vol. 8 no. 2, 86–87.

Table 3. Japanese Military Spending by Category ²³						
Special Account of the Extraordinary War Expenditures (Oct. 1903–Jun. 1907)						
	¥ thousands			Percentage		
	Army	Navy	Total	Army	Navy	Total
Personnel related	735,749	37,849	773,598	57.3	16.8	51.3
Material supply	40,475	40,991	81,466	3.2	18.2	5.4
Arms procurement/ maintenance	177,757	111,182	288,938	13.9	49.4	19.2
Facility construction	46,504	6,156	52,660	3.6	2.7	3.5
Transport/travel	262,433	21,543	283,975	20.4	9.6	18.8
Total with others	1,283,318	225,154	1,508,473	100.0	100.0	100.0

Military Expenditures from the general Account (FY1896–FY1903)						
	¥ thousands			Percentage		
	Army	Navy	Total	Army	Navy	Total
Personnel related	185,592	57,876	243,468	47.3	16.3	32.5
Material supply	5,738	18,532	24,270	1.5	5.2	3.2
Arms procurement/ maintenance	137,207	239,511	376,718	35.0	67.3	50.3
Facility construction	23,956	24,809	48,765	6.1	7.0	6.5
Transport/travel	11,569	2,473	14,072	2.9	0.7	1.9
Total with others	392,552	355,925	748,477	100.0	100.0	100.0

The exigencies of war naturally affected the nature of the government's military spending. Conscription during the conflict significantly boosted the share of personnel-related expenses, as did those for transportation, totaling twenty times what had been disbursed in peacetime, or one-fifth of the Special Account. Largely because of increased spending on feeding, equipping and transporting its vastly larger numbers of soldiers, during the war the army's share of total military spending far exceeded that of the navy, whereas before 1904 the two services' budgets had been roughly balanced.

²³ Ministry of Finance (1937), 701–705, Ogawa Gotaro, *Expenditures of the Russo-Japanese War* (New York, 1923), 49–50, Ono Güichi, *War and Armament Expenditures of Japan* (New York, 1922), 282–289, Toyo Keizai Shinposya, *Meiji-Taisho Zaiseisyouan* (Tokyo, 1975), 198–260.

This disparity becomes particularly evident when considering expenditures by month. In March 1904, the navy disbursed ¥6.2 million, and during the remainder of the conflict its monthly requirements ranged between ¥5 and ¥8 million. Meanwhile, after having averaged some ¥40 million, the army's monthly expense rose to around ¥60 million, peaking at ¥76 million in May 1904, two months after the last major confrontation on land, at Mukden. These variations in the navy and army's spending reflect their different patterns of mobilization. The former already declared that it would place itself on full wartime footing on February 5, 1904, and within four days the Combined Fleet's main force was already engaging Russia's Pacific Fleet off Port Arthur. By comparison, the army drafted its divisions sequentially. Until May 1904, 11 of the 13 standing divisions, as well as both cavalry and two artillery brigades had been mobilized. However, the number of troops under arms (and related civilians) continued to grow during the course of the war, rising from 500,000 in July 1904 to around 700,000 in the wake of the Battle of Mukden in March 1905.²⁴ Since the army's needs amounted to 85 percent of the Special Account, troop increases basically determined that category's basic trend as can be seen in the following chart.

In contrast to personnel and logistics, arms took up a larger share of the two services' antebellum budgets. At the same time, naval equipment spending of the Special Account dropped to less than half of the General Account, whereas the army's Special Account outlays on hardware were 30 percent higher. The prewar fleet buildup explains this disparity; Japan had already acquired the bulk of its fleet in the two expansion programs during the years leading up to the confrontation with Russia, leaving only two cruisers to be bought through the Special Account. As for the army, acquiring and maintaining arms continued at high levels during the combat. Not only did the intense use of ammunition far exceed estimates made before 1904, but the unexpectedly high battlefield losses of rifles and artillery also kept arms production going at full capacity during the fighting.

Because of Japan's ambitious industrialization after the Meiji Restoration, the army bought most of its weapons from domestic industry. However, the war of attrition forced Japan to import a lot of arms and materials. At ¥68.9 million, the service's imports made

²⁴ Ministry of Army, *Nichirosensou Toukeisyu*, vol. 8, (Tokyo, 1994), 346.

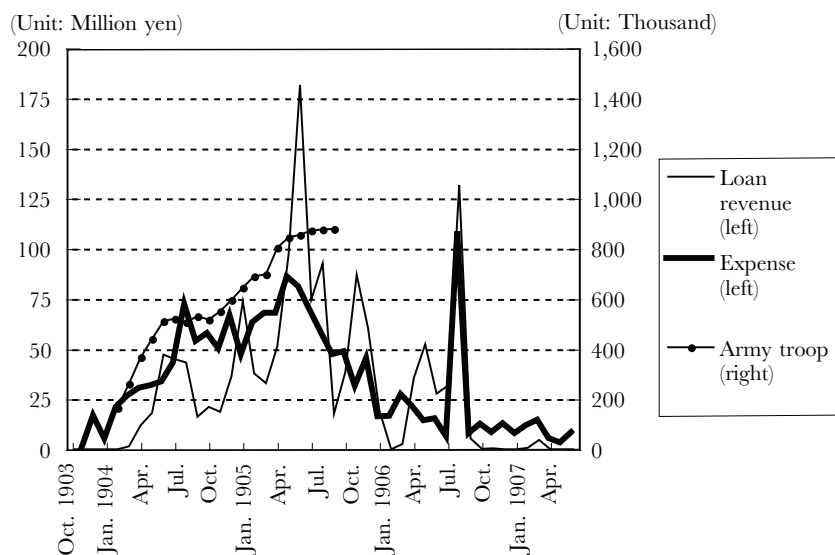


Figure 1. Special Account Revenues and Spending, and Troops Mobilized²⁵

up as much as two-fifths of the Special Account's procurement and maintenance spending.²⁶

Meanwhile, the need to boost wartime production also accounted for the army's higher facility construction spending from the Special Account. Most of the expense of facility construction is for Tokyo and Osaka arsenals expansion. From the special account, ¥8.3 million was paid for Tokyo arsenal expansion and ¥18.4 million was for Osaka.²⁷ In other words, approximately 60 percent of the facility construction expense of the army from the special account was for the two arsenals. On September 15th 1904, major-scale expansion of the two arsenals was decided (¥2.6 million for Tokyo and ¥8.9 million for Osaka). In August of the same year, the first all-out attack on the Port Arthur fortress failed, and it made the army real-

²⁵ Data troops are available only from Feb. 1904 to Sep. 1905. Ministry of Army (1994), 346, Ministry of Finance (1937), 697–699.

²⁶ Ministry of Army, *Nichirosensou Toukeisyu*, vol. 7 (Tokyo, 1994), 152–157.

²⁷ In addition to this sum, the General Account, paid ¥4.6 million for Tokyo arsenal expansion and another ¥1 million for Osaka. Ohe, *Nichirosensou*, 426. One of the reasons of the failure of the first attack on the Port Arthur fortress was lack of shells. Kuwata "Ryokoku," 513.

ize the necessity of increase the production capacity of Osaka arsenal whose main products were shells for field artillery and siege guns. At ¥6.2 million, the Special Account's allocation for the navy's arsenals was comparatively modest.

Monetary Policy and the War

Much of the war with Russia was fought on credit. Of the government's ¥1,721 million Special Account for Extraordinary War Expenditures, 42 percent were raised by domestic loans, 40 percent were borrowed abroad, and 11 percent were transferred from the general account. Since over four-fifths were financed by debt, monetary policy was critical for keeping the currency relatively stable. At the same time, loan revenues did not flow into Tokyo's coffers sufficiently fast to cover the campaign's enormous costs. The state therefore had to rely on bridge financing by the Bank of Japan to make up the difference, putting further stresses on inflation and the Yen.

Because of the central bank's crucial role in wartime, the Finance Ministry had already taken steps to tighten control over this institution in October 1903. That month, it reminded the bank's governor that, "the primary mission of the Bank of Japan is to supply money according to the government's requests."²⁸ As if to underscore this point in advance, Minister of Finance Sone Arasuke refused to reappoint the governor of the Bank, Yamamoto Tatsuo the previous day for supporting his policies with insufficient zeal.²⁹

This section studies how the Japanese government, working with its central bank, managed the war's fiscal challenges.

Bridge Financing

Tokyo had to resort to bridge financing even before the hostilities began. In December 1903, two months before it went to war, the government had to borrow ¥7 million from the Bank of Japan to cover the cost of two new armored cruisers. As the fighting progressed,

²⁸ Ministry of Finance, *Meiji Taisho Zaiseishi*, vol. 14 (Tokyo, 1937), 637.

²⁹ Sakatani Yoshiro, "Sanjyunen mae no Hijyouji Zaisei," Jiji Shinposya, ed. *Nichirosensou wo Kataru Gaikou-Zaisei no maki* (Tokyo, 1935), 20, Yoshino Toshihiko, 548-551.

recourse to such short-term borrowing rose, reaching a peak of ¥92 million at the end of 1904.³⁰ By July 1905, the government repaid all of these debts, but it was forced to resume the practice two months later, and in March 1906 obligations had risen to ¥77.5 million. This lending supplied approximately half of the war expenditures by May 1904. Until then Japanese Army organized three armies with eleven divisions, and First Army crossed the Yalu to occupy Kui-Lien-Chang while Second Army won the Battle of Nanshan. During this time, the Navy attacked Inchon harbor to sink two Russian vessels, and conducted the attack and blockade of Port Arthur. These operations were mainly financed by the Bank of Japan.

In early 1905, the Ministry of Finance began to sell treasury bills, or short-term bonds that mature in three months, to cover the Special Account's shortfall. Although there had been some earlier treasury bill offerings,³¹ starting in February 1905 the Bank of Japan underwrote all such securities and then gradually sold them to the public. Nevertheless, the bank held around 40 percent of the average balance of the bills in 1905 and 30 percent in 1906, which was equivalent to bridge financing.³² When the government received ¥140 million from its first 4.5 percent sterling loan in June 1905, the account's cash-flow improved, thereby lessening the need for bridge financing in October 1905, when the issue of treasury bills started to increase. Their total value reached ¥115 million in May 1906.³³

The government issued military notes to be spent in Manchuria for munitions, transport contract, and the salaries of military and civilian personnel. Since the local population preferred silver to gold, Japan's military notes were convertible into that metal, by contrast to the Russians, who issued bank notes redeemable for gold. As the war progressed, the ratio of military notes to total spending on the war rose to 15.6 percent in October 1904 and declined thereafter. The total value of notes issued amounted to ¥148 million, and the

³⁰ Ministry of Finance, *Okurasyou Hyakunenshi*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: 1969), 189, Yoshino Toshihiko, *Nihonginkoushi* vol. 3 (Tokyo, 1977), 567–568.

³¹ Treasury Bills for the general account issued between August 1904 and January 1905 were sold not by public offering but by private contract with fixed discount. Goto Shinichi, *Nihon Tanki Kinyushijyou Hattatsushi* (Tokyo, 1986) 233; Tsurumi Masayoshi, "Seiritsuki Nihonshinyoukikou no Ronri to Kouzou" *Keizai Shirin* vol. 47, no. 4 (December, 1979), 117.

³² Bank of Japan, *Nihonginko Hyakunenshi*, vol. 2 (Tokyo, 1983), 173.

³³ Ministry of Finance, *Meiji Taisyo Zaiseishi*, vol. 5 (Tokyo, 1937), 601–701.

highest monthly balance, ¥96 million, was reached in July 1905. To use bank notes convertible into gold like the Russians, the central bank had to boost reserves of specie.³⁴ However, Japan used military notes for local payment, thereby easing the Bank of Japan's efforts to maintain the currency system.

Domestic Borrowing

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Ministry of Finance's Deposit Bureau (later the Trust Fund Bureau for public investment and loans) played a leading role in underwriting domestic public borrowing. Acting primarily through postal savings and three special funds, the government encouraged the public postal savings after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War.³⁵ As a result, postal savings increased by ¥24 million between the end of FY1903 and FY1905, in addition to ¥11 million raised by the sales of savings bonds beginning in September 1904. However, the government transferred ¥70 million from the Deposit Bureau to war-related spending, thereby reducing its funds by ¥20 million between 1903 and 1905. Therefore, it could not rely on the agency to underwrite domestic bond issues.³⁶ Indeed, the Deposit Bureau underwrote under a million of the ¥435 million issued to Japanese lenders before the conclusion of the peace treaty.³⁷

Once again, the Bank of Japan stepped into the breach, and its services proved indispensable to Tokyo's domestic borrowing campaign. On the one hand, the bank helped by carefully managing the money supply to restrain inflation.³⁸ More important, it also supported bond sales to Japanese investors in a more direct way. In January 1904, Matsuo Shigeyoshi, the Bank of Japan's new governor, assembled representatives of thirty-five major commercial banks

³⁴ For the purpose to support gold convertible bank note circulation in Manchuria, where people preferred silver to gold, Russia prepared a silver fund there to accept the request to convert bank note to silver. K. Hellferlich, *Nichiro no Senpi—Nichirosensou no Zaiseiteki Houmen* (Taihoku, 1906), 182–183.

³⁵ The three funds stand for warships and torpedo boats maintenance fund, distress relief fund and education fund, established with Chinese indemnity of the Sino-Japanese War 1894–95.

³⁶ Fund Planning and Operation Division, Financial Bureau, Ministry of Finance, *Okurasyo Tokinbushi* (Tokyo, 1964), p. 51.

³⁷ All of the ¥105 million for the gratuity (issued from July 1906 to June 1907) was underwritten by the Deposit Bureau.

³⁸ Bank of Japan, *Nihonginko*, 180.

to announce that he would provide favorable terms for lending by the Bank of Japan to commercial banks secured by public borrowing. The following month, the system was explained in greater detail. Payments for domestic loans were set at their collateral value and the minimum interest rate would be applied to secured lending, which were not counted as lines of credit. Meanwhile, the bank would buy domestic issues to support its price.³⁹

There was a catch. If the domestic bond issue was unsuccessful, the Bank of Japan had to supply long-term credit to the government, in addition to temporary loans. However, the central bank preferred lending money to commercial banks to help the latter underwrite domestic bonds, rather than financing the government directly, since it would collect the idle money from the private sector.⁴⁰ Consequently, the amount of domestic bonds secured by the Bank of Japan's loans grew from under ¥4 million at the end of FY 1903 to over ¥27 million by the first half of FY 1905, thereby boosting the share of the bank's entire lending from 13 to 55 percent.⁴¹ This policy of relaxing credit by lending to commercial banks appeared to encourage domestic bond sales.

Foreign Borrowing

Japan's Special Account for the war spent ¥236 million abroad.⁴² Not only did such outflows draw down the currency, but increasing the money supply to loosen credit at home put further pressure on the government's finances. The Yen's stability—and the war effort—relied on sufficient reserves. The alternative would have meant losing credibility among foreign lenders and the distinct possibility of economic collapse.

From 1904 to 1905, Japan's international balance of payments ran a ¥407 million deficit.⁴³ Therefore, of the nearly ¥700 million yen

³⁹ At that time, 80 percent of the current market price of equity or 70 to 80 percent of commodity value was accepted as hypothetical value.

⁴⁰ Bank of Japan, *Nihonginko*, 164.

⁴¹ Bank of Japan, *Nihonginko*, 165.

⁴² Ministry of Finance (1955), 253. 71,138 thousand yen of Extraordinary Wartime Administrative Expenditures was paid abroad, of which 42,076 thousand yen was paid in the two years from 1904 to 1905.

⁴³ Statistics Department, Bank of Japan, *Meiji ikou Honpo Syuyou Keizaitoukei*, (Tokyo, 1966), 278, 298, 302.

borrowed abroad during these years, 60 percent covered this shortfall (Table 4 gives a clearer picture of reserves held by the government and the Bank of Japan). During the period, the government raised ¥694 million abroad, of which ¥313 million were transferred to the central bank, mostly to repay loans (¥255 million),⁴⁴ while it increased its reserves by ¥357 million.

As for the Bank of Japan, its reserves were drawn down by ¥409 million, of which ¥222 million bought foreign exchange, and another ¥122 were converted. Annual conversion from 1903 to 1912 ranged between ¥4 million and ¥25 million, but there was a sharp increase to over ¥100 million in 1904⁴⁵ as the trade deficit pushed the yen's exchange rate to below the gold export point.⁴⁶ The Bank of Japan's reduction in reserves during these two years almost equaled the international balance of payment deficit before inflows from foreign borrowing (¥407 million).⁴⁷ In all, the Bank of Japan's reserves decreased by ¥17 million.

Table 5 shows the Bank of Japan's balance sheet between 1903 and 1905. Bank notes in credit side grew by 35 percent, or from ¥233 million to ¥313 million. This increase reflected a ¥1.4 million decline in specie-reserved issue and a guarantee-reserved issue increase of ¥81 million.⁴⁸ At the end of 1905, 37 percent of total bank notes were specie-reserved, while 63 percent were guarantee reserved. Some ¥79 million of the specie-reserved issue was backed by assets held abroad, and ¥77 million of the guarantee-reserved issue reflected a surplus.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Finance, *Meiji 37-8-nen Senjizaisei Shimatsu Houkoku* (Tokyo, 1995), 524-527.

⁴⁵ Nochi Kiyoshi, "Nissin-Nichiro Sengokeiei to Taigaizaisei 1896-1913," *Tochiseido Shigaku* vol. 92 (Summer, 1981), 31.

⁴⁶ Yokouchi Masao "Pondo Taiseika niokeru Yokohama Syukin Ginko Rondon Shiten," Takumi Mitsuhiro et al., eds., *International Finance* (Tokyo, 1986), 48-53.

⁴⁷ The international balance of payment is based on the fiscal year, while table 4 is based on the calendar year.

⁴⁸ Bank note issue at that time was classified into specie-reserved and guarantee-reserved. For specie-reserved issue, the Bank of Japan had to prepare specie (standard coin, gold/silver bullion or gold exchange) for bank note issue reserve. The bank held specie not only domestically but also abroad. Guarantee-reserved issue is covered with government bonds, treasury bills and other highly credible securities or commercial bills, and its upper limit was decided by the government. The Bank of Japan, however, could issue more bank note than the limit with permission of the Minister of Finance and paying the tax on the excess issue. This is called excessive guarantee-reserved issue, a kind of guarantee-reserved issue.

On the asset side of the ledger, the changes in lending to the government and short-term government loan (treasury bills) are particularly striking. While the balance of lending to the government stood at ¥21 million at the end of 1903, it rose to ¥94.5 million in 1904, and then halved to ¥48 million the following year. On the other hand, the balance of short-term government loans increased steeply from ¥5 million at the end of 1903, to ¥66 million in 1905. Bridge financing between Special Account revenues and expenses amounted for much of this rise, especially between 1904 and 1905.

Despite wartime borrowing abroad of close to ¥700 million, increases in bank notes were ultimately not supported by specie reserves. At first, the government repaid its short-term debts to the Bank of Japan with specie (or foreign currency), which the latter held as a reserve.⁴⁹ However, since the Bank drew down a greater amount to cover imports and the conversion of bank notes to gold, its specie reserves declined between 1903 and 1905. Convertible bank note issues were instead backed by the guarantee-reserved issue (especially excessive guarantee-reserved issue), which was not reserved with specie. Ironically the guarantee-reserved issue contributed much for the maintenance of the gold standard.

Foreign borrowing during the war proved more than sufficient both to finance imports and back the Yen with specie. Indeed, 40 percent of these loans were applied to post-war fiscal management (by increasing currency reserves). When Takahashi Korekiyo travelled to the United States and Britain to negotiate a new ¥251 million loan after the Battle of Tsushima, he believed that the victory at the Battle had made it superfluous, since the war was coming to an end.⁵⁰ But by demonstrating that Japan was still ready for more war should the peace talks come to nought, the second loan did serve an important diplomatic purpose.⁵¹ The proceeds from the second 4.5 percent sterling loan could have financed another major land battle on the scale of the Battle of Mukden if it had happened within a few months.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Finance, *Okurasyou*, 170–171, Kamiyama Tsuneo, *Meiji Keizaiseisakushi no Kenkku* (Tokyo, 1995), 243.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Finance, *Okurasyou*, 193, Takahashi Korekiyo, 246.

⁵¹ Fukai Eigo, “Bosai Kushindan,” Jiji Shinposya, ed., *Nichirozensou wo Kataru Gaikou-Zaisei no maki* (Tokyo, 1935), 56, Takahashi Korekiyo, 244–245. On the Japanese foreign loans, also see Edward Miller, “Japan’s Other Victory” ed. Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective* (Leiden, 2005), 465–484. For the Russian foreign loans, see Boris Ananich, “Russian War Financing” in Steinberg et al., 449–464.

Table 4. Flow of Specie during 1904—05 ⁵²			
Government-Held Specie			(in ¥ million) Flow
Outflow	Amount	Income	Amount
Sold to BOJ	313	Proceeds of foreign loan	694
Interest of foreign loan	33	Bought from BOJ	30
Others	59	Others	37
Increase of specie	357		
Bank of Japan-Held Specie			Flow
Outflow	Amount	Income	Amount
Exchange sold	222	Bought from the government	313
Conversion	122	Exchange bought	25
Sold to the government	30	Others	54
Others	35		
Increase of specie	-17		

Table 5. The Bank of Japan's Balance Sheet from 1903 to 1905 ⁵³							
Assets				Liabilities and Capital			
Accounts	1903	1904	1905	Accounts	1903	1904	1905
Bullion	38	69	89	Bank notes	233	287	313
Gold/Silver	83	21	31	(specie reserved)	(117)	(84)	(116)
Lending to government	21	95	48	(excess of guarantee res.)	(0)	(83)	(77)
Legal lending to government	22	22	22	Treasury fund	8	18	33
Lending to the public sector	46	67	53	Government deposits	5	15	406
Short-term government loans	5	12	66	Private deposits	3	11	11
Long-term government loans	37	41	51	Surplus	3	3	3
Government foreign loans	107	14	0	Capital	30	30	30
Agency accounts	5	10	398	Reserve	17	18	19
Total with others	299	381	814	Total with others	299	381	814

⁵² This table is calendar year basis. Ito, 391–392, Statistics Department, Bank of Japan, 169.

⁵³ The increase of agency account and government deposit in 1905 is made by the proceeds of foreign loan. Bank of Japan, *Nihonginko Hyakunennshi shiryo-hen*, (Tokyo, 1986), 278–279.

Conclusion

Japan would never have been able to finance its Russian war without the Bank of Japan's effective monetary policy. Under tight control of the Finance Ministry, the Bank had two essential functions: Temporary bridge financing and arranging domestic bond issues, both of which became particularly important because the war's costs had been underestimated. The common denominator in meeting this dual challenge was monetary relaxation. Yet although the Bank of Japan loosened the money supply, during the war it raised the official discount rate three times. Rising interest rates buttressed the government's finances by boosting deposits, but at the same time they discouraged private-sector investment. While such a policy would not have been tenable over the longer term, it proved effective for the more immediate needs of military spending.

The looser money supply made preserving the yen's ties to the gold standard an increasingly important political objective. Had a relatively small economy like Japan at that time been unable to maintain the integrity of its currency, borrowing abroad to pay for the war would have become increasingly difficult. However the Bank of Japan was able to maintain the yen through large issues of guarantee-reserved bank notes. When the share of notes in circulation backed by the Bank of Japan's specie reserves dropped to two-fifths of the total, the government's foreign loans increased its own holdings of specie in sufficient amounts to make up the difference. In other words, the government's own reserves rather than those of the Bank of Japan maintained the yen's integrity during the war. By tightening its control over the Bank on the eve of the hostilities, the finance ministry forced it to work closely in tandem with its own objectives, thereby managing both to relax the money supply while maintaining the currency's strength.

As we have seen, monetary policy played an important role in financing the war. Yet even its own historians admit that the Bank of Japan's role has been underestimated.⁵⁴ The Bank of Japan abandoned its independence as a central bank and performed as a credit granting organization for the government. Otherwise financing war

⁵⁴ Bank of Japan, *Nihonginko*, 186–187.

expenditures on such a scale would have been impossible. When the government faced the necessity of loan refinancing at lower interest rates after the war, the government's control over the Bank of Japan was further tightened. As a result, the Bank of Japan rarely carried out market operations and remained a major source of credit for the government.

PATRIOTIC RECESSION: KYOTO RESPONDS TO WAR

Takemoto Tomoyuki

The objective of this paper is to present an analysis of how the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) influenced society at the micro-level of the local community. This analysis is presented from the viewpoint of ‘war and society’. Observations made from this viewpoint to date have varied in their explanations.¹ In this paper, while acknowledging that different regions of Japan were affected in different ways, and to differing extents, I will focus particularly on Kyoto’s experiences, depicting a phase in the life of a community during the Russo-Japanese War.

The city of Kyoto became the capital in 794 during the Enryaku Period, rendering it an important political and historical city for over

¹ In *Shominno Mita Nisshin Nichiro Senso* (The public’s view of the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars), Tetsuya Ohama took a survey of a village in wartime years using the Oume area in Tokyo as an example (now Oume City). Referring to the findings in *Nisshin Nichiro Sensojino Noson Seisaku* (Political measures towards agricultural communities during the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars) (Ikuseisha, 1938) by Tosaku Azuma, he points out that the number of soldiers who went to the war from villages was 553,100; approximately 100,000 of them never returned due to death in action, and approximately 100,000 returned critically or severely injured. He also notes that agricultural productivity from 135,000 acres was lost, and that 150,000 horses and a great number of cows were commandeered as war horses and as food respectively, both of which resulted in a serious labor shortage in agricultural communities. In *Nichiro Senso Studies* (Studies of the Russo-Japanese War) (Kinokuniya Shoten, 2004) compiled by Yoichi Komori and Ryuichi Narita, Shoji Arakawa reviews the picture of military cities during the Russo-Japanese War by taking the example of Hiroshima. He reviews the war in terms of three points: 1. Hiroshima City and Ujina Port became the largest military transport bases in Japan during the Russo-Japanese War, and were subsequently burdened with the responsibilities of meeting and sending off troops, housing them and providing sanitary facilities; 2. Because injured soldiers returned to Hiroshima, the city became a relay point between the battlefield and hospitals in Japan and therefore became a place reflecting the war situation at large through disabled soldiers; 3. Hiroshima was asked to continue to house approximately 300,000 soldiers who returned with glory, to welcome them at Ujina Port and send them off from Hiroshima Station. Arakawa points out that Hiroshima was expected to play too hard a role compared to other areas, which resulted in an ever-increasing wartime burden on its citizens, and the role of Hiroshima as a gateway to dispatch and accept soldiers for colonial ruling became an everyday affair.

a thousand years. With the establishment of the Imperial Court in Kyoto, "virtuous politics pervaded and the prestige of the Emperor extended beyond Japan."² In general, the distinctiveness of Kyoto Prefecture, including the rural districts surrounding Kyoto City, derives from this point. The fact that Kyoto remained the political capital of Japan for so long also resulted in the city becoming the hub of cultural society. Supported by the generous patronage of the Imperial Court, industries such as textiles and ceramics advanced and, in this sense, Kyoto has historically been one of the world's leading industrial centers.

After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, however, when the capital was transferred to Edo (Tokyo), Kyoto temporarily took on the air of an ancient city passed its heyday and a third of its population moved out. Despite this, new technologies were incorporated in the traditional industries as a result of enthusiastic collaboration between local government and business leaders,³ which gradually restored the city's former bustle. Nonetheless, Kyoto had to face the full-on effects of the wave of wartime depression due to a sharp fall in demand for the more luxurious goods of Kyoto's traditional craft industries, including textile production.

Throughout its history, Kyoto has been an important religious city where head temples of various Buddhist sects have been located. Having formed their own society, leaders of these sects have historically contested, or compromised with, the local government of the day. Furthermore, a strong sense of autonomy has traditionally characterized this city, as reflected in the terms *machishu* (townsfolk) and *miyakobito* (people of the capital), of which the citizens of Kyoto have long been very proud. These features have contributed to its localism and distinctiveness.

Taking these facts into consideration, I will look at how citizens' lives in Kyoto changed as a result of the impacts of the Russo-Japanese War.

² *Kyotofushi Jo* (History of Kyoto Prefecture, Volume 1), (Kyoto Prefecture, 1915), p. 1.

³ The largest project was the hydraulic power station constructed on Lake Biwako Canal and completed in 1890. The first in Japan, it was a driving force behind the mechanization of the handicraft industry in Kyoto.

Financing the war and social welfare

Before the Russo-Japanese War, Russia's economic strength was significantly higher than that of Japan: GNP was 7.3 times greater and per capita 2.3 times greater. As it was assumed that this variation would inevitably affect the development and outcome of the war, a major issue for the Japanese government was how to fund military expenditure. Attempts to issue foreign bonds proved very difficult in the international financial market at the outset of the war because Russia was viewed more favorably.⁴ The Japanese government had no choice, therefore, but to raise the funds through domestic bonds and taxation increases.

The domestic bond market had virtually reached saturation point, though, as a result of the government bonds issued to finance the Sino-Japanese War and the recessions that had followed it. Taxation revenue was increased through consumption tax on commodities such as alcohol, sugar and soy sauce. The intention of the government was to shift the focus of the tax system away from direct taxation, such as land tax, to more stable indirect taxes in times of inflation, but this had a significant impact on people's lives. Furthermore, tight restrictions on local taxation and a reduction in subsidies, carried out to centralize tax revenue, inhibited the progress of public work projects at the local level, inflicting a harsh blow on local economies.

In a speech to local government officials on 10 February 1904, Prime Minister Katsura Taro announced: "I hope everyone will vie for the purchase of government bonds to reflect a common spirit of service to the country. It is hard to forecast the outcome of military affairs. Although this may not be the only time that the government will issue bonds to finance the war, our nation must now be prepared to endure this situation and go to great efforts to support the

⁴ As the war progressed in Japan's favor, 800 million yen, out of the total military expenditure that amounted to 1,700 million yen, was raised in the end through foreign bonds. For a report detailing how Japan financed the Russo-Japanese War see Keishi Ono, *Nisshinsengo Keieikino Gunji Shishutsuto Zaisei Seisaku* (Military expense and financial policy during the post Sino-Japanese War period) compiled by Gunjishi Shigakukai, *The Russo-Japanese War (1)—The International Context* (Kinseisha, 2004). For how military funds were raised in Russia, see Nobutaka Shinonaga, *Nichiro Sensoto Fransuno Tai Russia Shakkan* (The Russo-Japanese War and the loan to Russia by France) in the same volume. In English, see Ed Miller, "Japan's Other Victory" ed. Steinberg et al. *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective* (Leiden, 2005).

military fund. The government has an alternative plan concerning wartime finance and, when decisions are made, local finances may be affected. Local government officials should, according to instructions from the constituent minister, investigate local projects and local economies case by case and take appropriate measures.”⁵

Although war supplies were in greater demand, the Russo-Japanese War plunged all other sectors of industry into recession, as all finance was directed towards the war effort.⁶ This inevitably cast a dark shadow over traditional businesses in Kyoto, where there was little heavy industry. Suffering from the repercussions of this effect, the sales revenue in Kyoto fell from 382,000 yen, for the period Jan–Mar 1903, to 252,000 yen for the same period in 1904 because “Not only calligraphy and paintings, but furniture too is sold or bought by few people.”⁷ Similarly, revenue taken by the top restaurants in Kyoto fell by 16,377 yen to 22,680 yen between Apr–Jun 1903 and Apr–Jun 1904; *kaiseki* (set menu) restaurants, meanwhile, lost 19,702 yen in sales revenue over the same period.⁸

Among the major businesses in Kyoto, the largest was the textile industry, which accounted for 86.7% of premises and 86.2% of total employees.⁹ Most were producing silk and were located in the Nishijin and Tango districts. Demand for luxurious silk products dwindled, adding to the already strained circumstances and inflicting significant damage on Kyoto’s economy.¹⁰

⁵ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji 1* (Articles of situations in Kyoto Prefecture during the Russo-Japanese War 1) (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

⁶ According to the industrial classification, the following industries all prospered; iron, steel, wool manufacturing, leather-tanning, tobacco, canned foods, sewing, flannel manufacturing and artillery, but the decorative and textile businesses suffered.

⁷ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji 4* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives). *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* was produced in 1906 by Kyoto Prefecture based on the reports from Kyoto City and other rural areas. Consisting of six volumes of manuscripts without page numbers, it reveals situations in Kyoto Prefecture during the Russo-Japanese War.

⁸ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji 4* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

⁹ As of 1900 (Kyoto Prefectural Statistics).

¹⁰ The newspaper *Heimin Shinbun* (April 24 1904) describes how the recession afflicted weaving regions other than Nishijin. In Nagoya, the export of white cotton to Korea stopped, cotton blankets suffered a 20% price reduction and weavers were badly off with no accommodation loan from banks. In Isezaki, Kiryu and Ashikaga, there were many jobless weavers due to shutdowns or decreasing production. In Nagahama, the price of *Chirimen* crepe fabric was down by 10%, yet there was no dealing. In Kishu, cotton flannel production for domestic consumers

The newspaper *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 27 1904) compares figures from Feb 1903 with those from Feb 1904 and reports that in the Nishijin district, the revenue from cotton, cotton/silk mix and silk fell to 60%, 65% and 70% respectively. The number of manufacturers, which had been 1,052, 1,992 and 850, respectively, in Dec 1903, had fallen by 65% by Feb 1904. This resulted in a large number of unemployed poor. The devastation of the Itsutsuji Shichihonmatsu district was huge, however, where there were many piecework weavers; the situation was “like the Buddhist inferno of starvation . . . filled with young and old in dirty clothes, giving out a foul smell and too creepy to even touch.”¹¹ The *Chugai Nippo* newspaper (Feb 27 1904) reports that the number of unemployed poor in the Nishijin district totaled 3,116, from 538 households, while those that were less poor included 1,349, from 478 households, according to a survey by Kamigyo Ward Office.

Despite this situation, the government introduced an emergency special tax bill, which was cleared at the 20th extraordinary Imperial Diet in Mar 1904. The bill incorporated a new consumption tax on textile goods in addition to the tax increase on alcohol mentioned earlier. When the recession was at its worst, a campaign opposed to the newly introduced tax broke out since it would inflict further damage on the industry. On Mar 14, seven representatives from the Nishijin Textile Industrial Association presented a petition opposing the tax to the Governor of Kyoto, Shoichi Ohmori, citing the following reasons for their opposition: uncertainty of obtaining tax revenue; difficulty of tax collection; deviation in taxation levels; and a surplus of imported wool and silk.¹² On Mar 19, the association's representatives met with textile manufacturers from Tokyo, Hachioji, Kiryu, Ashikaga, Yuki, Tango at the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and decided “to oppose the silk tax, shelving the argument on the validity of the overall tax system,”¹³ and they established a national alliance opposed to the silk tax.

stagnated, and due to inactive maritime transport the demand for other cotton fabrics was low except for military supplies. In Kurume, manufacturers of the *Kasuri* splashed pattern fabric could not accept orders because of a shortage of steam ships even in the season when those fabrics should have sold very well.

¹¹ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 20 1904).

¹² *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 16 1904).

¹³ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 20 1904).

On the same date, Mar 19, owners of the large Nishijin textile companies met to coordinate their views on the silk tax, but they concluded that opposition was not the best course of action because they saw the tax as an impetus to improve the industry. By this time, the industrial revolution had come to the textile business in Nishijin, with modern Western technology having been adopted to upgrade traditional production methods. This difference of opinion between the association and the large manufacturers reveals that stratification in urban areas was occurring, even in Kyoto, as a result of the Industrial Revolution.¹⁴

Because of lower prices and the reduced demand for silk, Kyoto's textile districts, including Nishijin, "presented a disappointing picture, threatened with extinction" (*Dainippon Sanshi Kaiho Report*, Mar 1904), but Kyoto Prefectural Government was helpless with regard to this. Local governments were also forced to restrict their social policies due to lower tax revenue following the emergency special tax law and the reduction in subsidies. Because central expenditure was cut, Kyoto Prefecture's 1904 budget was exceptionally austere with a reduction of 186,900 yen out of 1,420,000 yen. The tax revenue in 1904 dropped by 185,490 yen compared to that of 1903, and in 1905 it dropped by 273,139 yen compared to that of 1903. Hence the movement to rescue the needy shifted to the private sector.

Volunteers from Nishijin textile businesses set up Nishijin Hokyukai (Nishijin Rescue Organization) to support their industry and for charity relief; at the same time, manufacturers founded Nishijin Chingyosha Kyusaikai (Nishijin Weavers' Support Group) to provide work. The latter borrowed a factory from Nishijin Orimono Company to commence their activity; later they merged with Kozenkai, an organization of almsgivers, and opened Nishijin Kyusaikai Daiichi, Ni, San Kozen, a vocational aid center. The training covered the following: *habutae* for export, cotton, ribbon, straw sandals, *susa* (used to make wall mud), and net-making; a worker's pay was 6 to 9 sen (6 sen = 0.06 yen) per day. According to a survey conducted by this group, the unemployed decreased from 653 people (from 121 households) in May 1904 to 163 people (from 38 households) in Jun 1904.

¹⁴ In *Nipponno Sangyo Kakumei—Nisshin Nichiro Senso Kara Kangaeru* (The Industrial Revolution from the viewpoint of the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars) (Asahi Shinbunsha, 1997), Ishii Kanji conducted a study in terms of the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars to analyze the Industrial Revolution in Japan, and this enables us to understand the meaning of the Russo-Japanese War in view of economic history.

Kyoto Hinode Shinbun and *Chugai Nippo* also report that Tokujiro Morita, a gambler nicknamed Yatsuikari Oyabun, donated 7 *koku* (about 180 l) of white rice to the needy and that there were similar charitable donations from Shokokuji Temple, Meijiza Theater, Kabukiza Theater, Chugai Nipposha Company, and a pawnbroker who took the misery very seriously.

The amount of bank lending in 1904 at the Kyoto Branch of the Bank of Japan was 1,210,000 yen, far less than 9,000,000 yen at the Osaka Branch, which explicitly shows how severely the recession affected Kyoto, having no businesses benefiting from the war. Osaka, on the other hand, experienced a boost to the local economy in the latter part of 1904. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Jan 3 1905) depicts the business situation at the beginning of the year with satirical haiku: ‘*Tumaito Omoedo Kyo No Fukeiki Kana*’, which translates as: ‘Although one should not say so, I inadvertently mention the recession of Kyo.’ Here “Kyo” is a double entendre meaning both Kyoto and today. In the midst of these difficult circumstances, a high consumption tax on textiles, set at 15% of the price for wool and 10% for other fabrics, became law on Feb 1, 1905.¹⁵

Nevertheless, to cover the 1,720,000,000 yen required for extra military expenditure, that available from the national budget as a result of tax increases was just 180,000,000 yen, and so it was necessary to raise funds from foreign and domestic bonds. On Feb 1 1904, the Minister of Finance, Sone Arasuke, secretly instructed governors from Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Kanagawa, Aichi and Hyogo to promote the selling of bonds.¹⁶ Following this instruction, the governor of Kyoto summoned city mayors and district councilors from around Kyoto Prefecture on Feb 15, instructing them on the necessity of funding military expenditure and placing restrictions on local finance.¹⁷ On that occasion, Governor Omori Shoichi pointed out to Naiki Jinzaburo, the Mayor of Kyoto, that the central government expected Kyoto Prefecture to raise eight to ten million yen,

¹⁵ According to *Kyoto Hinode Shibun* (Apr 9 and 10 1905), after the textile consumption tax was enforced there was a proliferation of tax evaders among the Nishijin weaving manufacturers and brokerages. *Kyoto Hinode Shibun* (Apr 18 1905) reports that tax revenue in the prefecture has barely increased.

¹⁶ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 1 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

¹⁷ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 1 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

adding pressure by saying that some seven million yen should be easy to raise within the urban area, even during a recession when people felt particularly hostile.¹⁸

During such hard times, government bonds were not a popular move, and the governor again called heads of cities and rural districts to the Prefectural Office on Sept 19, urging their cooperation.¹⁹ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* and other newspapers also ran a campaign to promote government bonds and fundraising by carrying a large article calling for donations for soldiers at the front and for their families. Meanwhile, the central government tried to win market favor and ensure applicants for bonds by shortening the period of redemption to five years for the first issue and to seven years for the second and third issues in that year. The first bond issue performed very well throughout the country, with the number of applications reaching five times the number of bonds issued, but applications dropped for the following issues and central government again called on all local governors to instruct on how to proceed with domestic bonds. Local administrative bodies were put under severe pressure to produce applicants for the bonds through instructions that went from central government to each prefecture, and then to cities and rural districts. Most of the public's post-office savings, however, were used to underwrite the government bonds, together with the compensation money paid by the Qing Dynasty after Sino-Japanese War. The Russo-Japanese War drew on all of the nation's wealth.

Mobilization of military personnel and support for families

Compulsory enlistment was introduced in Japan in 1873 with the principle of universal conscription. It advocated military service as the right of the people but it is well known that the general public did not welcome the new compulsory regime and there was a tendency to avoid being drafted into the armed services. When conscription was first introduced, a broad range of regulations left possibilities for legal draft avoidance, and there were many instances of so-called 'adopted sons' (men adopted by families who had no sons themselves), who exploited such regulations tactfully. Similarly,

¹⁸ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 16 1903).

¹⁹ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 16 1903).

many took advantage of flaws in the family register system. However, draft avoidance underwent a significant challenge between the late 1880s and the early 1890s. When the compulsory enlistment law was revised in 1889, a sweeping change took place, and previous exemption regulations were abolished; universal conscription, as prescribed by the law, was eventually put in place. Prior to the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) it had been necessary to increase the proportion of men drafted into the armed services to provide enough soldiers. Japan's victory in that war raised the public's opinion of the military dramatically and changed citizens' attitudes towards military service. A subsequent upsurge in nationalism at the community level meant that military service avoidance became riskier.

Despite the introduction of universal conscription, there remained many cases of draft avoidance and also desertion.²⁰ By 1903, the number had reached almost 70,000, more than one eighth of eligible personnel.²¹ Leading up to the Russo-Japanese War, the government had to search for draft dodgers to procure sufficient soldiers.

On Apr 7 1903, the governor of Kyoto Prefecture issued an instruction to counteract the effects of draft avoidance. According to the instruction, in Kyoto Prefecture 858 eligible men had not enlisted by 1896;²² only 22 of these were rounded up. Adding the 426 whose whereabouts were unknown from 1897 to 1901, minus the 22 who were found, meant there were 1,262 cases of draft avoidance. The prefectural governor attributed the large number to an inadequate search and he strongly urged administrative bodies to “make concerted efforts to succeed in their search and to cooperate with each other in view of the previous poor performance”²³ according to the procedure concerning draft dodgers that was stipulated separately.

Military service for students was temporarily deferred according to a regulation in the law; as a result there were many that claimed to be students to avoid conscription. On Jan 26 1904, Kyoto Prefecture

²⁰ Since avoiding conscription meant dropping out of the community and a life of banishment, the number that avoided the draft continued to gradually increase but the number per year fell. See Yukio Hiyama, *Kindai Nippon-no Keiseito Nisshin Senso* (Formation of modern Japan and the Sino-Japanese War) (Yuzankaku, 2001), pages 93–95.

²¹ The 10th instruction in 1903 by Kyoto Prefecture, *Kyotofu Kōho* (Kyoto Prefectural bulletin) (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

²² Although the bulletin in *Kyotofu Kōho* mentions “158 people”, it is a typo.

²³ The 10th charge in 1903, *Kyotofu Kōho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

issued an instruction, attached to the first instruction of Jan 9 by the Ministry of Education, to stringently supervise students in public and private schools across the region: "We hear of those who frequently claim to be qualified for exemption from military service by taking advantage of their status as a student, and we hear of schools that accept this situation and do not advise against it. Students' admission, attendance and withdrawal from the school must be strictly investigated and regulated, and when military service avoidance is suspected, the situation must be reported to the Education Minister immediately, adopting appropriate measures in accordance with related laws."²⁴

Although the pursuance of those avoiding military service grew in severity in this way, the government was forced to supplement the shortage of soldiers after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War by revising the conscription law to prolong the period of service in the first and second reserve, in addition to the stringent practice of the existing system, because the number of Japanese casualties had been far higher than anticipated in the Port Arthur operation and the battle of Liaoyang. The drafting of these soldiers, however, weakened the production capacity at the level of the community, and inflicted direct economic hardship on their families. Therefore various administrative measures were taken to alleviate the domestic concerns of newly recruited soldiers.

In Kyoto, the eligible number of military personnel from each township of the Yamashiro region mainly belonged to the Fourth Division; the rest to the Tenth Division. These two divisions were incorporated into II Corps and IV Corps respectively. The 38th Regiment of the second reserve infantry belonged to III Corps and the 20th Regiment of the second reserve infantry to IV Corps. In addition to these Corps, approximately 25,000 personnel were mobilized to the front from Kyoto Prefecture; they belonged to Konoe Division, Ohryokko Corps, and Hokkan Corps. Considering Kyoto Prefecture's population of almost 1,050,000 in 1904,²⁵ the social impact of the large scale of this draft was substantial.

Returning to the instruction by Prime Minister Katsura on Feb 10 1904: "Needless to say, military affairs rely on the power of a

²⁴ The 2nd charge in 1904, *Kyotofu Kôho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

²⁵ Figures are based on *Kyotofushi Jo Ge* (History of Kyoto Prefecture, Volume 1 and 2) (Kyoto Prefecture, 1915).

loyal and courageous army. It is essential to remove soldiers' concerns so that they can devote themselves to their mission. Although the government is ready to take various measures to this end, it is a part of one's obligation and service to the country for each family to push forward with their own livelihood, and for neighbors to support them. The instructions of local administrative officers should be done in complete detail in this respect."²⁶

Compared to the mostly rural Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City was an urban area and households depended for the most part on the labor earning potential of husbands who were serving in the war. As a result, it was impossible for family members to take on the husband's role as provider, and neighborhood organizations like those in the rural areas could not be formed. The prefecture therefore introduced detailed enforcement regulations of family rescue law on Apr 23 1904, stating that "it is most recommended to take all possible steps to help one another through mutual assistance to support the families of soldiers,"²⁷ whereas an instruction issued the following day established rules that would provide support for families of low ranking soldiers, taking into account urban residents. The rules focused on cash benefits but covered: support for families' livelihoods, benefits in kind and medical treatment.

Based on these regulations, cash benefits were categorized into four grades: Grade 1 included "the disabled and injured who cannot make a living on their own and those who need medical care but are incapable of make a living without assistance from someone else";²⁸ Grade 2 were "70 years and above or younger than 10 and who are poor and dependent on someone else"; Grade 3 were "60 and above or younger than 13 and who are poor and dependent on someone else"; Grade 4 were "those whose households are poor but have the possibility of supporting themselves in the future if aided temporarily". The cash benefits provided on a monthly basis were 1.5 yen per capita for Grade 1, 1 yen for Grade 2, 0.75 yen for Grade 3, and for Grade 4, 7 yen was paid as a temporary benefit.

²⁶ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji 1* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

²⁷ *Kyotofushi Ge* (History of Kyoto Prefecture, Volume 2) (Kyoto Prefecture, pp. 312–313).

²⁸ The 56th instruction in 1904, *Kyotofu Koho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives). Grades 2–4 described hereafter are also included in the same instruction.

Kyoto Hinode Shinbun (Aug 13 1904) reports that Kyoto City Council decided to exempt the families of soldiers at the front from local tax.

Owing to a growing number of casualties in Kyoto as the war intensified,²⁹ further measures were required for conscripts' families but these could not be met with the existing forms of aid. Again, due to the constraints of prefectural finance, a variety of measures to help families were set up by private organizations and semi-official groups in addition to those established by the prefecture. In view of its financial position and the ineffectiveness of cash benefits, Kyoto Prefecture issued an instruction on Aug 26 to the heads of cities and rural districts to implement effective vocational training rather than provide cash benefits to soldiers' families, as seen by precedent examples in Nagano City, Fukushima Prefecture and Kobe City.³⁰ I will now look at the family support activities of various organizations.

In Kyoto Prefecture, several organizations were involved in support activities for soldiers' families, but the Kyoto branch of Aikoku Fujinkai (National Women's Group) was most prominent. The group was originally set up in 1901 for the purpose of visiting soldiers at the front and assistance to their families. The organization's first director was Iwakura Hisako, the wife of Duke Iwakura Tomosada, and the group was later very grateful when Princess Chieko Kan-in-no-miya, a court noble, took over the directorship; it became the largest women's organization during the Russo-Japanese War. The Kyoto branch, founded on Mar 4 1901, worked actively during the war under the leadership of Omori Reiko, the wife of the then Governor of Kyoto. Opening two training centers in addition to its office in Tawaraya-cho in Kyoto, it was responsible for the introduction of new businesses such as knitted wood shavings, called *kyogisanada*, for the manufacture of hats.³¹

²⁹ The number of military-related deaths across Kyoto Prefecture as a result of the Russo-Japanese War totaled 1,814. See *Kyotofushi Ge* (History of Kyoto Prefecture, Volume2), p. 310.

³⁰ The 64th charge in 1904, *Kyotofu Koho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives)

³¹ The activities of the Kyoto Branch of Aikoku Fujinkai (National Women's Group) is detailed in *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji*, Volume 3 (housed in Prefectural Library and Archives) by Fumihiko Yumoto. According to the article, the association invited an instructor from the training center in Sakamoto village in Shiga Prefecture when commencing the training program for knitted wood shavings at a room of the Kyoto Branch in May 1905. It then opened two training centers in Kyoto city besides the one set up at Yurin Elementary School in Shimogyo ward

In Maizuru in Kyoto Prefecture, where a naval station is located, an organization to support the families of petty officers was set up by Hidaka Fukuko, the wife of the Commander-in-Chief of Maizuru naval station. A factory was opened in an unused room of the naval station, where flags, emblems, insignias, sails, and decorative items for marine vessels were manufactured; at the same time, vocational training for families of soldiers at the front was actively developed.

Vocational training in Kyoto Prefecture was not limited to this. In Feb 1904, Kyoto Fujin Kyofukai (a women's association to help improve lives) was contracted to sew clothing for soldiers by the army clothing factory, while in Jun 1904, Kyoto Fujinkai Hokokukai (a women's association with the spirit of the homeland) opened a factory for knitted wood shavings in the precinct of Myomanji Temple, and Soraku Gunjin Kazoku Kyugokai (an association to help families of soldiers) began towel manufacturing as a project to support families' livelihoods. Upon the request of the national government, conglomerates such as Mitsui Corporation also offered to employ the needy people of conscripts' families at its two factories in Kyoto.

The support for soldiers' families extended beyond vocational training. Following an instruction concerning the reduction and exemption of school fees for children of soldiers, issued by the Ministry of Education on Feb 20 1904, Kyoto Prefecture issued an instruction from Governor Ohmori on Mar 15 to the heads of cities, towns, villages and rural districts: "in order to get rid of the lingering concerns of soldiers, appropriate measures must be taken regarding the exemption or reduction of school fees and the provision of free school supplies for children of conscripts; this applies not only to elementary schools but other schools too, if finance allows."³² On Mar 18, exemption or reduction of school fees for such students was directed to schools operated by the Prefecture.³³ Because the prefectural

and encouraged women and children of soldiers aged between 10 and 60 to work there; they were given 12 sen (0.12 yen) per day during the training period and wages after the training. The activity lasted until April 1906 and the number of participants reached over 70 at one time.

The study of Aikoku Fujinkai during the Russo-Japanese War is described in detail in *Bano Chikara: Okumura Ihoko To Aikoku Fujinkai* (The power of an old lady: Ihoko Okumura and Aikoku Fujinkai) in *Nichiro Senso Studies* (Study of the Russo-Japanese War) by Komori and Narita.

³² *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 16 1904).

³³ *Kyotofu Koho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives) Notifications 112 to 116 in 1904.

educational budget had been substantially reduced during the Russo-Japanese War, the Basic School Asset was set up so that each school could manage without relying on subsidies. "Local governments should aim for better management by adopting appropriate methods as soon as circumstances allow, and in the hope of making school costs independent, establish a financial basis so that they are not adversely affected by natural disasters or states of emergency."³⁴ Afforestation projects, using national forests disposed of by the government, were embarked on in order to increase alternative resources.³⁵

Concerning the education of children of soldiers, the Jinenkai Group set up a rescue department and opened the first rescue center devoted to the care of such children at Jofukuji Temple in Kamigyo Ward in Kyoto, followed by five more within the city, and Kyoto Amashu Koyukai (Kyoto priests alumni association), of the Jodo sect of Buddhism, opened a night school. These activities played a vital role not only in providing education, but also with regard to support for mothers' employment.

In the medical arena, on Feb 18 1904, the Kyoto branch of the Kyoto Prefecture Medical Association decided to provide medical treatment for conscripts' families, as did the Amatagun Medical Association soon afterwards. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Apr 13 1904) reports that Dr Bunsyuku Miyake, a practitioner in Kyoto, administered free therapy and medication to soldiers' families; other doctors and midwives followed suit.

The activities of foreigners living in Kyoto should also be noted. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Apr 27 1904) reports that, at the suggestion of a Methodist missionary, W. U. Davis, foreigners in Kyoto donated money to help soldiers' families, and an article on Dec 12 1904 tells the story of Dr 'Street' (spelling unknown), a Christian, who offered free medical care for these families to Kyoto Prefecture and the Kyoto branch of the Japanese Red Cross Society. On Jan 27 1905, *Chugai Nippo* newspaper mentions Kelly Learnet of Doshisha University

³⁴ The 68th instruction in 1904, *Kyotofu Koho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

³⁵ The Basic School Asset in Kyoto Prefecture at the time was approximately 370,000 yen; merely 700 yen per school. Because only a few were expected to increase their Asset, focus was placed on afforestation as a wartime commemorative project. See Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 5 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

because of her dedicated rescue activities. It is conceivable that newspaper reports such as these came to embed a consciousness into the people that the anti-Russian war was even supported by foreigners.

Besides the efforts mentioned above, people from all walks of life instigated activities to help the conscripts' families and soldiers serving at the front. A number of charitable associations run by women, religious sects, patriots or supporters of the war effort were set up, including Hokogikai, Kyoto Fujin Jizenkyokai, Ohtaniha Fujin Howaikai, Tokiwa Fujinkai, Hyosei Fujinkai, Hoko Jujikai, Aikoku Doshikai, Dainippon Bukkyo Jizen Zaidan and Shusseï Gunjin Kazoku Izoku Kyosai Shoko in Kyoto City, and Shobugikai, Hokokai, Juppei Kyokai, Hokogikai and Hogokai in rural districts. Donations of cash and in kind up to 500 yen from 24,764 people from Kyoto Prefecture raised 31,764.48 yen.³⁶ Adding donations over 500 yen that were made, the total amount is assumed to be more than double. These combined activities of the army, of the government and of citizens encouraged the people of Kyoto to support the war both psychologically and materially.

The rise in nationalism

With regard to diplomatic policy during the Meiji Period, it has been pointed out that, whereas the government dealt with issues at hand in a "realistic" way without being obsessed by abstract concepts or moral qualms, the approach taken at a local level was more "idealistic or adventuresome" with a strong moral base.³⁷ To begin with, the Japanese government had been keeping an eye on the possible rise in fanatic nationalism during the Russo-Japanese War because xenophobic activities could have the effect of amicable European nations becoming opposed to Japan. This was an issue of utmost importance for the Japanese government because it had based its policy towards Russia on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and planned to ensure the provision of military finance through foreign bonds. In his address in Feb 1904, Prime Minister Katsura says: "Although

³⁶ *Kyotofushi Ge* (Kyoto Prefecture, p. 314).

³⁷ Akira Irie, *Nippon-no Gaiko* (Diplomacy of Japan) (Chuokoronsha, 1998), pp. 27-28.

it is natural for the people to worry about military affairs and the country at this time of emergency, temporary hostility must not result in lightheaded acts being taken too readily. Everyone must make it his duty to warn people in the rural districts that the only way to contribute to the state is to devote themselves to their own task. My hope is to increase the national strength through the hard work of the whole nation.”³⁸ The second instruction from the Minister of Education, Yuzuru Kubota, on the same day, focuses on a similar issue by cautioning school teachers: “With regard to the education of children, the greatest care should be taken so that, despite their drive of youth, students are discouraged from making derogatory comments about Russian people and thereby offending those from other countries.”³⁹

Following these instructions, Kyoto Prefecture urged the same wartime considerations in its first instruction on Feb 16. Amplifying the content of the instruction, *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* ran Governor Ohmori’s discourse on the front page: “It is no wonder that the people are wild with joy on hearing the news (of the victory of land battles); such a reaction is to be expected. All the same, lantern parades or open celebratory feasts should not be held for nothing, and it is out of the question for students, who require strong discipline, to participate in these events. We disapprove of such behavior and intend to ban citizens’ lantern parades as far as possible . . . In short, making it a principle to be diligent and frugal, we must engage in the affairs of the state with a sense of national unity.” Despite this, the war led to an upsurge in nationalism, with the media a driving force behind it.

At the beginning of the war, the Fourth Division, to which many people from Kyoto were attached, landed in Jiandayao, and fought in battles at Jinzhou, Nanshan and Telissu; after fighting in battles at Haicheng, Kaiping, and Anshan, it took part in at least ten more to the north of Liaoyang. During the Mukden campaign, the Fourth Division fought a fierce and successful battle near Xiaoguixingbubao. The Tenth Division, which fought as an independent division to start with, was incorporated into the IV Corps after taking control of

³⁸ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji 1* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

³⁹ Fumihiko Yumoto, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji 1* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

Zhemucheng, and distinguished itself in the battle at Liaoyang as the vanguard. The 38th Regiment of the second reserve infantry also gained military distinction with its Second Battalion. Newspapers in Kyoto regaled in detail the successes of local armed forces day after day, which led to the localism of the city becoming associated with nationalism. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* ran an article entitled 'Fund raising to support soldiers and their families' on its front page almost every day, calling for participation in a charitable fund activity that it was organizing. When the first domestic bonds were issued, the newspaper strongly supported chauvinism in its editorial: "Our enemy cannot issue domestic bonds and so, in this state of emergency, Russia is reliant on a hasty attempt to raise funds through foreign bonds. What a ludicrous situation this is! On the contrary, our country makes plans in advance for the issue of bonds and makes announcements when the time comes. It would be marvelous if we could let them know that the volume of our bond issue is several times as large as theirs, and that the courage of our people is not limited to just military affairs."⁴⁰

Day after day the newspaper carries a new column entitled 'War and Kyoto' on its seventh page to report how the war is affecting the city; this column contains a lot news items that inspire nationalism. For example, a 13-year-old girl visited Horikawa Police Station and offered 2.5 yen, saying: "This is money I have saved from whenever my elder brother has given me an allowance of 1 or 2 sen at a time. Please give this to soldiers going to the war against Russia."⁴¹ The column runs similar articles such as "donation by sick old woman", "apprentice to offer contribution to soldiers,"⁴² and "blind man to contribute towards soldiers".⁴³ In the column 'The Russo-Japanese War and public opinion,' on the same page, similar stories are introduced, including one telling of an 81-year-old woman living in Gifu Prefecture who contributed to the war fund one hundred *ryo* (an old monetary unit) of old gold and silver that she had inherited from her deceased husband, saying: "It is thanks only to the Emperor that I can live an easy life. On hearing that our nation

⁴⁰ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 15 1904).

⁴¹ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 16 1904).

⁴² *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 20 1904).

⁴³ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 6 1904).

goes on a punitive mission to conquer the cruel and unjust Russia, I want to donate this to repay my obligations.”⁴⁴ Through reports like these from all over the country, a patriotic love for the nation spread and developed.

When considering the citizens' situation in Kyoto, religious movements must be taken into account. Many religious organizations have gathered in Kyoto, including Buddhist sects whose head temples have traditionally been located there. Among other religions, Shinto has occupied a particular position. With its close relationship with the state, Shinto priests have been called upon to perform tasks such as giving morale-boosting speeches at send-offs for soldiers going to the front, and enlightening the general public in local communities. Kyoto Prefecture issued an instruction, especially to Shinto priests: “When the declaration of war was made by the Emperor, he dispatched imperial envoys to prestigious shrines, including Ise, to inform God about the war. Priests in shrines throughout Kyoto Prefecture must therefore bear in mind the Emperor's intention, respect it, and carry out their duties accordingly.”⁴⁵

In Shinto shrines across the prefecture, triumphal prayers were said every day and religious talismans were presented to soldiers going to the front. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 21 1904) reports that Imamiya Shrine offered triumphal prayers for a week and the government-operated Izumo Shrine, at Chitose village in Tanba, gave talismans to soldiers in seven rural districts across Tanba.

With the majority of believers, Buddhism overwhelmed other religions. Here again, almost all the Buddhist sects cooperated with the war effort. Day after day *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* reports on the cooperative activities of various Buddhist sects. The Jodo Shu Nishiyama sect, for example, held a sutra-reciting meeting with triumphal prayers, which was attended by twelve directors of temples from the prefecture and a number of high-ranking priests.⁴⁶ A large-scale prayer meeting for the victory of the country, and surrender of the enemy, was held at Joshoji Temple in Fukuchiyama, which was attended by representatives from the Nichiren Shu sect.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 16 1904).

⁴⁵ The 2nd instruction of Kyoto Prefecture in 1904, *Kyotofu Koho* (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

⁴⁶ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 19 1904).

⁴⁷ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 21 1904).

Christian churches in Kyoto City also said triumphal prayers with one accord. On Mar 13 1904, a public meeting to awaken the nation was held at Kyoto City Assembly Hall entitled: 'The Russo-Japanese War and Christianity (Hiromichi Kozaki)'.⁴⁸ "The number of people at the meeting who opposed the war was limited, such as Uchimura Kanzo and Kashiwagi Gien, while many advocated a pro-war argument, such as Kozaki, Ebina Danjo, and Honda Yoichi."⁴⁹

Various representatives from Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity, who supported the war, held a meeting attended by Japanese religious people on May 16 1904, proclaiming: "The war between Russia and Japan arose for the good of world civilization, justice and society, with the intention of guarding the security of Japan and promoting eternal peace in the Orient; it has no connection with religious or racial differences. Hence we religious people meet here regardless of our differences in religion and race, hoping to express a conviction in justice and show the world that we are fighting the war to see glorious peace restored."⁵⁰ This religious movement, incorporating all races and religions, represented an argument against the so-called 'yellow peril theory' from abroad and, from a domestic point of view, it represented a declaration of national union by the religious circles towards the war effort.

Movements among new religions, in addition to these, are interesting because of their connection to the history around the time of the Russo-Japanese War. Konkokyo, whose independence as a Shinto sect had officially been recognized in 1900, actively cooperated with the war and directed its affiliate organizations in its first special instruction under the name of the then head of the sect: "While it is important to be reliable and well-loved citizens for the military and the state, we must make our followers believe and understand that we are strong believers. In other words, the essence underlying our religion is that our religious teachers must strive to evoke the

⁴⁸ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 13 1904).

⁴⁹ Researching Israeli history in the Old Testament, Ebina Danjo claimed that it is impossible to argue for or against war using the bible, and that wars should be treated on an individual basis, thereby criticizing Uchimura's anti-war argument and condoning the Russo-Japanese War. See Akiko Yoshifuru, *Ebina Danjo-no Seiji Shiso* (Political thought of Danjo Ebina) (Tokyo University Press, 1982), especially Chapter 3, Section2: "Teikoku Bochorontono Kyomei (Understanding the argument of the expansion of the Japanese Empire)".

⁵⁰ Kozaki Hiromichi, *Nippon Kirisuto Kyoshi* (History of Christianity in Japan), (Kozaki Zenshu Kanko-kai, 1938) pp. 190-191.

spirit of a soldier preparing himself for death as a public service. Accordingly, instructors should perform their duties with their usual sincerity. This is the duty of all instructors in the world, who must enlighten the general public; there is no better way than this to reward the country.”⁵¹

At the same time, Konkokyo issued its second special instruction for a festival to be held to increase national prestige. It was also actively involved in activities to support soldiers and their families. Their third special instruction (Feb 18 1904) was issued to subordinate organizations: “With regard to the Russo-Japanese War, it is a case of boosting morale to remove the domestic worries of soldiers at the front. Our instructors should visit their families as much as possible and, when finding those who are struggling, help them appropriately, whether through churches, groups, or individuals.”⁵² Upon such orders, the women’s association of Konkokyo contributed 5,000 towels to the department of Kyoto Prefecture that was organizing support for soldiers.⁵³

Tenrikyo supported the war effort even more enthusiastically. Condemned as a devious religion, and without official approval at the time, Tenrikyo created the Holy Scripture of Tenrikyo in 1903. This religion sees the ten gods of the Emperor’s ancestors as their deity, and it changed its course radically from founder Nakayama Miki’s concept that “the emperor is a human like us, with the same soul.”⁵⁴ At the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the then head of Tenrikyo, Nakayama Shinjiro, announced conditions for the people of the Japanese Empire during wartime, stating that “we always share interest with our country, and any national peril is that of ourselves and our family,”⁵⁵ thus encouraging the cooperation of its followers. Aiming to get official approval, it promoted such tremendous activities that *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 6 1904) reports its sweeping activity as a surprise: “In order to demonstrate the sincerity of public duty, Shinto Tenrikyo’s Kyoto branch will hold a prayer festival to

⁵¹ *Konkokyo Kyodanshi Oboegaki* (Memoirs of Konkokyo History) (Konkokyo Fushimi Church).

⁵² *Konkokyo Kyodanshi Oboegaki* (Konkokyo Fushimi Church).

⁵³ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Mar 6 1904).

⁵⁴ Taizo Hamaoka, *Tenrikyo—Zonmeino Kyoso Nakayama Miki* (Miki Nakayama: Founder of Tenrikyo in-life), (Kodansha 1985), p. 183.

⁵⁵ Junko Oguri, *Nakayama Miki—Tenrikyo* (Miki Nakayama and Tenrikyo), (Shin-Jinbutsuoraisha, 1970), pp. 221–222.

pray for the well-being and success of the Emperor's soldiers on Mar 10; this festival will be attended by approximately 3,000 believers from all over the country, including the leaders of every regional branch. Together, all the branches will underwrite a million yen of government bonds, attempt to elicit donations for the support of soldiers and their families, and hold a fundraising activity once a month at each branch." As a result of all these activities, its fervent desire to obtain official approval as a Shinto sect was realized. A group of people who were against this kind of compromise, which involved appealing to state power, left and set up a different sect. These people later suffered from the crackdown that was termed 'A Case of Blasphemy' by Tenrikyo Research Workshop.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, the religion Oomoto-kyo, founded by Deguchi Nao in Ayabe, Kyoto Prefecture, was growing, with an increasing number of believers, through its teaching that advocates the reconstruction of the present world and the realization of the Miroku world, while rescuing the poor in a realistic way. Its tenet was based on a mysterious prophecy but the state authorities began to keep an eye on their activities since Deguchi had predicted the defeat of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War. Because her prediction turned out to be wrong, mistrust among the believers grew and it lost its power. Later, on his return from the war, Deguchi Onisaburo revived Oomoto-kyo but, because underlying the fundamental tenet was the rebuilding of the world by the general public, and, because the national authorities continued to keep an eye on them, Oomoto-kyo underwent further restrictions in 1921 and 1935. The latter involved one of Japan's largest suppressions in its religious history, and the entire facilities in Ayabe and Kameoka were all blown up.⁵⁷

As described above, most religious organizations found a way to expand their influence by adapting themselves and their believers to the system, whereas people who refused to adapt were viewed as heretics by the state.

As seen in Governor Omori's discourse on current affairs in *Hinode Shinbun* (Feb 15 1904), both central government and Kyoto Prefecture were cautious about the rise in wartime nationalism. However, the

⁵⁶ Shigeyoshi Murakami, *Kyoso* (Founder of Tenrikyo) (Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1975), pp. 182–183.

⁵⁷ Deguchi Eiji, *Oomoto-kyo Danatsu Jiken* (The Oomoto Incident) in *Deguchi Eiji Senshu Dainikan* (Selected works by Eiji Deguchi, Volume 2) (Kodansha, 1979), p. 25.

prefectural authority counted on significant patriotic support from its residents in order to sell bonds for the war effort. Furthermore, continuous Japanese victories reported at the beginning of the war automatically raised people's national spirit.

In the educational arena, a history teacher at the First Prefectural Junior High School lectured on the history of the Liaodong peninsula, and the portrait of a war victim from the school was hung in the auditorium "to repose the soul of the loyal soldier forever and to encourage the young men of the future to have reverence and affection."⁵⁸ In these days the number of students who wanted to proceed to military schools was increasing sharply.⁵⁹

In the second instruction of the Ministry of Education (Feb 10 1904), mentioned previously, the government expressed a negative opinion concerning students' attendance at send-offs for soldiers leaving for the front, stating: "needless to say, it is inevitable that people wish to bid farewell and show their admiration for the loyal and brave conscripts when they go to the front on behalf of the state, none of whom expect to return alive. However, this should be admonished if students are required to give up time helping their family business in order to attend such events, because that is not what the soldiers expect of them."⁶⁰ In Kyoto Prefecture, though, such send-offs were enthusiastically carried out at each school, and this instruction was ignored. The whole of the Second Prefectural Junior High School came out to bid farewell to the 38th Regiment of the second reserve infantry on Apr 14 1904, and when the train of the Commander in Chief, Iwao Ohyama, was passing through Kyoto Station, teachers and students from the school went to wish them well.⁶¹ In addition to these send-offs, contributions like blankets and bags of supplies were made on a large scale at different schools.

⁵⁸ Yumoto Fumihiko, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 5 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

⁵⁹ Yumoto Fumihiko, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 5 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

⁶⁰ Yumoto Fumihiko, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 1 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

⁶¹ Yumoto Fumihiko, *Kyotofu Nichiro Jikyoku Kiji* 5 (Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives).

Conclusion

In Kyoto Prefecture, when newspapers reported the success of the Port Arthur operation on Jan 3 1905, Kyoto Hokogikai (Kyoto association for public service), chaired by Governor Ohmori (Vice Chairman: Mayor Kikujiro Saigo), decided to hold celebratory ceremonies at Kyoto Imperial Palace on Jan 4 and at the City Assembly Hall on Jan 5. Intoxicated with the victory, people flooded into the streets of the city carrying lanterns. *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* reports on Jan 4 that "there is neither a house without a lantern nor a corner without someone standing there . . . shouting is heard before long; some are trying to awake neighboring houses by beating an oil canister while others are dancing around with bells and drums. Without the gun salute, it would have looked as though a big fire had broken out." The newspaper depicts the wild atmosphere as "the behavior of people gone mad".⁶²

What can be discerned from the celebratory articles of *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* is that class variation in the urban area was apparent, which is interesting. Of the victory ceremonies proposed by Hokogikai, only the one on Jan 4 was open to the general public; the ceremony the following day was limited to "Hokogikai executive officers and those of higher ranks, Aikoku Fujinkai (National Women's Group), Tokushi Kango Fujinkai (women's association of diligent nurses), honorary staff of the City, members of the Chamber of Commerce and the higher ranks of influential citizens."⁶³ Even at the ceremony held on Jan 4, those attending had to wear formal dress, and those invited to both ceremonies were restricted to those above a certain class. The general public spontaneously formed separate groups and gathered at Maruyama Park or in the precinct of Kitano Shrine, carrying lanterns and beating oil canisters, metal basins and clappers.

It is said that people without national consciousness cannot be called a nation, but the formation of the nation at this time did not come about in the same way by sharing wartime nationalism. The patriotic love of the people was certainly cultivated through the influence of newspapers, religious organizations and educational institutions, bringing wartime nationalism to its peak, but the formation

⁶² *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Jan 4 1905).

⁶³ *Kyoto Hinode Shinbun* (Jan 4 1905).

of the nation advanced by filling the cracks inside the nation because wartime nationalism had expanded in such a way so as to conceal class variation in urban society. Kyoto's traditional localism, which may be described as ethnic nationalism, was absorbed into the country's nationalism as a result of the war with Russia that was a big national event.

WHY DID JAPAN FAIL TO BECOME THE “BRITAIN” OF ASIA?

Tadokoro Masayuki

The rise and fall of the Imperial Japanese Navy symbolizes both the glory and tragedy of Japanese history from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The arrival of the modern steam-powered American navy in Edo Bay shocked the Japanese and triggered the complicated process of rapid modernization during the Meiji restoration. Building a modern navy capable of countering Western imperialism, naturally, became one of the most pressing goals for the Japanese leaders of the early Meiji period. By the mid-nineteenth century, technological innovation provided all navies with the capability to transform their wooden sailing ships into modern vessels, which were to be built with iron and propelled by coal and steam. This process of naval transformation was challenging as well as expensive even for the Western countries. It was all the more so for the fledgling Japanese regime with no modern technological infrastructure and very limited financial resources.

Therefore, Japan's victory at the Battle of Tsushima in 1905, a mere fifty years after the Japanese first set eyes on steam ships, justified the cost and sacrifice of Japanese modernization. The decisive duel between the two modern fleets turned out to be an unusually decisive victory in world naval history. It demonstrated that Japan had mastered modern naval warfare at an amazing speed and, as a result of this victory, had emerged as a world power less than fifty years after Commodore Perry made landfall in Japan. The battle also marked the start of a long self-destructive process for Japan. The Japanese sphere of influence on the continent, established in the wake of victory, eventually dragged Japan into endless and fatal confrontations with the Western powers, as well as rising Chinese nationalism. In other words, Japanese military leaders, despite their remarkable success in defending their fragile country up to the Russo-Japanese War, failed to develop an effective and cohesive national strategy after their stunning and magnificent victory against the Russians.

Japan's failure to adjust to the new international environment after its victory created a sharp contrast with the British success in establishing a "Pax Britannica" after the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Britain, unlike Japan, then refrained from costly commitments on the European continent despite its victory at Waterloo. Instead, it relied upon the balance of power in Europe for its security and, with the power of its navy, accumulated enormous sums of capital from the development of, and exploitation of the resources from its far-reaching overseas Empire. As Japan and Great Britain were both island nations with strong navies, the British provided the Japanese with a model for development at the beginning of the twentieth century. While some Japanese strategists wished to adopt the British model for Japan's postwar development, these ideas were rejected as the basis for Japan's national security strategy. In an effort to understand why this rejection occurred, this paper will examine Japanese strategic thinking after the Russo-Japanese War. After defining Japan's postwar strategic environment, this study will identify two contrasting schools of strategic thought, and then reveal the actual Japanese strategic posture set by the Meiji leaders. Finally, several hypotheses will be presented to explain why the Japanese behaved so differently after 1905 in comparison with the British, one hundred years earlier, after their major naval victory in 1805.

Strategic consequences of the Russo-Japanese War

With less than forty years between the Meiji Restoration and the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the leaders of the Japanese Government regarded its foundation as a modern state as far from safe, let alone robust. Moreover, the Russo-Japanese War was fought at the high tide of Western imperialism with most non-Western states subject to constant threats of colonialist and imperialist pressure. In this context, the war carried dual characteristics. Japan's victory over Russia represented its rise as a major imperial power competing with the already established Western powers. It also marked the first modern war in which an Asian country scored a major victory over one of the great colonial powers. In any case, strategically, Japan took a huge risk and managed to prevail on the battlefield. While Japanese forces fought skillfully and bravely, their victories owed much to an inept Russian army and a decaying Tsarist regime. The historic naval

victory of the Battle of Tsushima was no exception. The Russian fleet that was destroyed as it entered the Sea of Japan was poorly trained, badly commanded, and in poor mechanical condition because of its long voyage from the Baltic to Asian waters.

In addition, Japan's victory over Russia was far from complete. Indeed, the Japanese Navy practically wiped out the Russian naval presence in East Asia. But that certainly did not mean the end of Russia as a major military factor in the Far East. Despite the impressive victories of the Imperial Japanese army, by the end of the war, its logistics were overextended and its resources overstretched. On the other hand, the Russian army, despite its serious defeats and humiliating withdrawals, never exhausted its resources. Russia could have continued fighting on the land from a purely military standpoint. Their decision to accept the peace had more to do with domestic political difficulties in the center of the Empire rather than military conditions in the Far East. Russian military power in Asia was so strong that Japan had to satisfy itself with the Portsmouth Treaty even though it did not include indemnities. Japan's territorial gain was far less than what it had wanted out of a victory. In other words, despite the fact that the Japanese army defeated the Russian army in all major engagements, Japan only managed to secure its dominance in the Korean Peninsula. Russia remained a major military power in the region and with its potential combined with motivation, continued to be perceived as a major military threat by the Japanese army.

Despite Japan's incomplete victory over Russia, the politico-strategic consequences were quite significant. In the first place, Japan achieved its immediate security goal. Japanese leaders represented by Yamagata Aritomo regarded the security of the Korean Peninsula as a vital interest for Japan. Yamagata, in his well-known memorandum of 1890, which put forward the concept of an "interest line" and a "sovereignty line," claimed that Japan needed a neutral Korea or a Korea that did not pose a threat to Japan's territorial integrity.¹ Thus, the Siberian Railway, due to be completed in a few years, would put strong pressure on Japan's "interest line". After denying

¹ Oyama Azusa, *Yamagata Aritomo Ikensho*, (Yamagata Aritomo's Report), Harashobo, Tokyo, 1988, pp. 196-200.

Qing China's political influence over Korea in 1895, Japan drove Russia out of the region in 1905 to satisfy the paramount security issue requirement, as then understood by the Japanese leaders.

Secondly, in a broader context, with its triumph over Russia, Japan emerged as a major power in the Western-dominated international community of the day. To be a non-Western member of the international community was far more stressful and challenging than one can imagine today. The unequal treaties, concluded between the Tokugawa Government and the Western countries in the late nineteenth century, symbolized the humiliating weak position of Japan in international relations; and while they were gradually being revised, they were still in effect. Although it took another six years after the end of the Russo-Japanese War for Japan to complete the process of revision, the treaties had now become a permanent remnant of the past. Moreover, in order to be acknowledged as a full member of the international society, the Japanese leaders realized that military performance as well as manners beyond warfare must be in accordance with the established international norms. To set an example, the military treated Russian POWs with dignity and respect, something that was non-existent during World War II, in an effort to convince the West that Japan was an equal partner in international affairs. In 1905, Japan, allied with Great Britain, had become a regional military power as well as a "civilized" member of the international community despite its non-Western origin.

Japan's success on the Asian continent provided the Meiji leaders a degree of satisfaction in a hostile international environment, but it also inevitably created higher expectations in the minds of many Japanese people. The rise of the myth of invincibility in Japan's military forces contributed to such beliefs. For example, Admiral Togo, who commanded the combined fleet, became a 'divine military hero' (*gunshin*). His operational and tactical thinking became the bible for the Japanese navy. After the Russo-Japanese War, overconfidence in the skill of the Japanese forces spread widely and deeply. But on land operations, Japanese forces had been unable to score a complete victory comparable to that of the navy. On the contrary, the army had difficulties maintaining numerically superior forces in the field against an enemy with almost limitless strategic depth. Simply put, on the modern battlefield Japanese forces simply could not overwhelm Russians with firepower. After the war, however, the narrow and incomplete victory was memorized as a triumph resulting from

Japan's more intensive fighting spirit, which was believed to allow Japanese forces to win close hand-to-hand combats. Thus, a combat manual for the infantry, *Hohei Soten*, revised in 1909, emphasized the offensive spirit and close combat, which encouraged the myth that Japanese soldiers were always braver and better trained than their enemies, despite poor equipment and smaller numbers.²

The impressive achievement of the Japanese army in Manchuria led to a new, even more challenging strategic environment. First, victory in the Russo-Japanese War did not resolve Japan's severe economic situation. While the Japanese had to borrow extensively from the international capital market to finance expensive modern warfare, the Portsmouth Peace Treaty did not provide any indemnities to help repay these loans. In addition, relatively limited territorial gains did not produce any immediate and tangible monetary gains. Thus, the Japanese were left with a heavy international debt to service for the foreseeable future. The war, therefore, did not produce any visible financial rewards to the already overstretched Japanese economy.

Perhaps more seriously, since Japan had secured what Yamagata called the "interest line" with the use of military forces, they now had to defend a new expanded "interest line" on the continent. Russia had been repelled, but not totally defeated by the Japanese army. But Japan's limited victory served its interest in Korea as the international community recognized its sphere of influence in the Far East. On the other hand, Japan's special interests in Manchuria had not been well received by other Powers, especially by the United States that kept articulating its Open Door policy in China. In addition, Japan had to deal with Qing China in its involvement in Manchuria. Growing Chinese nationalism, as well, had become a heavy strategic burden for Japanese imperialism on the continent.

On the sea, Japan had not become the unquestionable naval master of the West Pacific despite its remarkable triumph against the Russians. Fighting naval battles across the Pacific, given the level of naval technology of the time, was merely a remote possibility. Political relations between the US and Japan were largely amicable then. Immediately after the end of the Russo-Japanese War, only alarmists

² Tobe Ryoichi, *Gyakusetsu no Guntai*, (Military Force in Paradox), *Chuokoron-sha*, 1998, pp. 150–152.

regarded the US as an immediate security threat to Japan. But the US, which had just colonized Philippines and annexed Hawaii, was rapidly increasing its naval presence in the Pacific while continually propagating its Open Door policy in China. In addition, the Japanese knew that there was growing American suspicion, if not hostility, toward Japan. American discrimination toward Japanese emigrants into the US, particularly, annoyed the Japanese far more than its material implications could suggest. The Japanese, who believed that they had become full and equal members of international society, found it humiliating to face racial discrimination. Thus, paradoxically, the strategic conditions surrounding Japan after the victory over Russia were not entirely favorable, but disquieting. With higher expectations at home, Japanese leaders found themselves in a position to defend newly gained “interests” on the continent with increasingly stronger budgetary constraints. Japanese strategic planners clearly needed a coherent national strategy to cope with the new strategic challenges.

Two Strategies and the Imperial Defense Policy of 1907

How did Japanese military leaders plan their national strategy in the post war period? One school, the navalists, traced their ideas to Sakamoto Ryoma who dreamed of a Japan that would build an exclusive maritime mercantile empire that was capable of playing the leading role in world trade. Shibusawa Eiichi, a major Meiji business leader and entrepreneur who was actively involved in many social projects, also saw Japan's future in the development of maritime commerce, which was largely under the control of the Anglo-American powers. This means controlling trade rather than setting up an exclusive market on the continent. Not surprisingly, Yamamoto Gonbe, the founding father of the Japanese Navy and a top naval strategist, supported Sakamoto Ryoma's idea for the future of Japan.

In fact, Yamamoto Gonbe had repeatedly challenged the primacy of the army in Japan's defense posture since the 1890s. He unsuccessfully tried to have a law passed based on the idea of a “navy first, army second (*Kai shu riku ju*)” doctrine by attempting to get the Diet to pass such a bill. This bill contained an article which clearly stated, “the navy is the most important instrument for defense of

the empire".³ He then challenged the army's superiority in the command structure, by trying to change regulations so that during wartime the Imperial Headquarters would be commanded by "a specially appointed general or admiral" instead of the army chief of staff. Yamamoto and Katsura (Minister of War) fiercely fought for control over the military establishment by resorting to the Right of Direct Reports to the Emperor (*Iaku-joso-ken*). This problem was never solved until shortly before the Russo-Japanese War when a compromise was reached that allowed the army and the navy to have their own chiefs of staff. While this compromise settled the issue, the Japanese went to war without a unified high command.

The differences between the two services resulted from two different visions of Japan's national strategy. Yamamoto defined Japan as an "Island Empire", which required Japan to defend itself on the sea rather than on the land. "Before an enemy fleet comes close to our sea coast, we surely intercept it, thereby secure safety or sea communication."⁴ A joint operation by the army and the navy would be needed only if the "navy should fail and Japan should find itself in a highly passive and unfavorable position". The logical corollary of this reasoning was, as Yamamoto is reported to have said shortly before the Russo-Japanese War, "We can afford losing Korea. It suffices that the Empire should defend its own proper territory."⁵ This, obviously sharply contrasts with Yamagata's concept of the interest line and the sovereignty line.

Sato Tetsutaro, however, best articulated the navalist doctrine after the Russo-Japanese War. Sato was born in 1866 in Yamagata. He had impressive academic credentials from the Naval Academy where he ranked 4th and, from the Naval College which he attended later and graduated ranked 1st. He served at the battle of Yellow Sea in 1895 where he was wounded in the right shoulder. After the war, he was posted to the first division of the Military Affairs Bureau of the Navy Minister, an elite post for promising officers. Sato was picked up by Yamamoto to be the navy's official ideologue. In 1899,

³ Saito Minoru bunsho; from Tsunoda Jun, *Manshumondai to kokubohoshin* (The Manchuria Problem and National Defense Policy), Harashobo, 1967, p. 132.

⁴ Ibid., p. 650.

⁵ Rikugunsho ed., *Meiji gunji shi* (A military history of the Meiji Period), vol. 2, Harashobo, Tokyo, 1966, p. 1058.

Yamamoto sent Sato to Britain and the US for intensive research. Sato, spent the first year and half in London where he intensively studied military history, and then went to the US where he spent another 8 months before returning home in 1901. The outcome of his two years' study in the UK and the US was drafted in a report entitled: "On the Defense of the Empire" (*Teikoku kokubo ron*), which was later submitted to the Emperor. After serving on the senior staff of the Second Fleet during the Russo-Japanese War, he was posted as an instructor at Navy College where he taught the history of naval defense. His lectures were developed into a book, "Teikoku Kokuboshiron" (A History of Imperial Defense), which was published in 1908.⁶

As a result of his research Sato drew geopolitical observations out of military histories of various ages and places. He emphasized the shared geopolitical conditions between Britain and Japan (and the US as well). He argues, "Among the Powers in the world, there are only three countries that can defend themselves primarily with navies. They are the UK and the US and Japan."⁷ He, therefore, criticized Japan's policy of maintaining a relatively large army despite this very fortunate geographical condition. Sato saw it merely as an error in setting national priorities stating that: "failure in operations on the continent would merely represent losing Manchuria and Korea while failure in naval operations would be fatal to our very national survival".⁸ Britain became a successful empire, only after it lost its territory on the continent and decided to develop into the oceans.⁹ Thus, Japan also had to avoid over-commitment to the continent as it would overstretch Japan's limited resources for the sake of unessential "interests."

The logical consequence of this view was that Japan's military posture must give priority to the navy while reducing the army to a secondary role in national defense strategy. He concluded that the

⁶ For a detailed account of Sato's life and discussion, see Ishikawa Yasushi, *Sato Tetsutaro Chujo Den (Life of Vice Admiral Sato Tetsutaro)*, Harashobo, Tokyo, 2000. A more analytical view on Sato's discussion can be found in Asada Sadao, *Ryotaisenkan no Nichibei Kankei-Kaigun to Seisakukettei Katei, (US-Japan relations during the interwar period—navy and decision making process)*, Tokyo University Press, 1993, Chapter 1.

⁷ Sato Tetsutaro, *Teikoku Kokubo Shiron (A History of Imperial Defense)*, vol. 2, Harashobo, Tokyo, 1979, p. 203.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

primary goal of Japan's defense should be to improve its military capability to secure the command of the sea. With such strength Japan could defend its country at a relatively low cost while avoiding exhaustion of national resources.¹⁰ Sato's idea was focused on Japan assigning top priority to the defense of its home territory. But, as a strategist strongly influenced by Mahan and, living in the age of imperialism, he certainly was no pacifist. On the contrary, he called for strengthening oneself (*Jikyo*) as a necessary condition for national defense.¹¹ On a tactical level, he emphasized offense toward enemy's forces. In referring to Mahan, he said that the primary goal of the navy was to destroy the enemy's battle fleet, thereby securing the command of the sea. Fighting another decisive naval battle like Tsushima was what he thought was the primary mission of the navy.

Japan, therefore, needed to maintain a force level that could contain the capabilities of all enemies at any time. Sato, in a highly technocratic way envisioned a defensive/offensive strategy for the navy so it could provide territorial defense, which was best achieved by intercepting and destroying the enemy as far away from Japan's sea coast as possible. Thus, rather than waiting for the enemy to come close to Japan's coast, the navy needed to be prepared to actively seek, locate, engage, and destroy the enemy's battle fleet. There are two corollaries to this argument: One, rather than defending Japan's maritime communication routes, the navy should launch an offensive operation against the enemy's force; Two, the standard level of forces for Japan should be set not by the force level of probable enemy but by capabilities of all potential enemies. He clearly believed that all other countries were potential enemies regardless of current political relations with them. The largest naval powers in the world therefore needed to be used as the standard when Japan considered future naval force levels.¹²

Sato's counterpart in the army was Tanaka Giichi. As Sato was a protégé of Yamamoto, Tanaka was a primary adviser for Yamagata Aritomo, who was the founder and developer of the army as a powerful state institution of the Meiji regime. Tanaka, who served as a

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 208–209.

¹¹ Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 85–86.

¹² Kitaoka Shinichi *Nihonrikugun to Tairikuseisaku (The Japanese army and Japan's continental policy)*, Tokyo University Press, 1978, pp. 10–11.

general staff officer both in Tokyo and Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War, was struck by a lack of cooperation between the navy and army during the war. For Yamamoto who thought Korea was not worth fighting over, the army's operation in the continent was not of critical importance. The navy, to his way of thinking, needed to focus primarily on a decisive battle with Russian naval forces rather than supporting army in the continent. Thus, Yamamoto sharply opposed Yamagata in refusing to support the army's plan to send two divisions to Korea to hold Russian movement in Manchuria in check in 1903.¹³ During the war, the navy refused to participate in any attempt to occupy Sakhalin and Vladivostok, instead concentrating its resources to fight the Russian Baltic Fleet which was headed for the theater of operations. Even after the battle of Tsushima and, despite army's repeated requests, the navy refused to support army's operation to land a division at Rajin, in a northern part of Korea referring to possible attacks by Russian torpedo boats and floating sea mines dropped earlier by the Japanese navy.¹⁴ In the end, the Sakhalin operation was conducted only after its favorable diplomatic impacts toward the ongoing peace negotiation with Russia became clear enough.

Tanaka in his attempt to establish a stable national strategy wrote a lengthy memo where he presented the army's strategic vision for postwar Japan. In this document the basis of his argument is the idea that Japan should "free itself from previous conditions of being an island (*Shimaguni-teki kyogu*) and develop its national future as a continental power".¹⁵ The hypothetical enemy for Japan, therefore, must be Russia, who could be allied with Germany and France, as had been the case with the Tripartite Intervention in 1895 that forced Japan to give up the Liaodong Peninsula, newly acquired from China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. This strategic posture required closer army-navy and civil-military cooperation. To overcome the army-navy split, there can be two options to follow: one was to set up an integrated command structure under which both services are to be subjected; the other was to work out a tight and stable basic strategic standard which would bind both services.

¹³ Kaigunsho ed. *Yamamoto Gonbe to Kaigun (Yamamoto Gonbe and the navy)*, Harashobo, 1966, pp. 143–150.

¹⁴ Tsunoda Jun, op. cit., pp. 651–655.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 662.

What Tanaka formulated was the army's version of a postwar national strategy. If Japan's future lies in expansion into the continent, her first priority was to secure Korea which was best done by pacifying and occupying Manchuria. Russia must be either deterred by military power or conciliated by diplomacy. Despite Russia's obvious superiority in human and material resources and in its strategic depth, Japan could overcome these handicaps by rapidly mobilizing forces in the Far East. Thus, he called for offensive posture to achieve rapid and decisive victory against the enemy's forces. In view of these basic ideas, the roles of navy would be mainly to defend and maintain logistical lines between Japan and the continent. Of course, the chance always existed that an enemy fleet would come to attack Japan from the sea. But given the relative geographical isolation of Japan from Powers in Europe and North America, it would take a long time before a large enemy fleet could threaten Japan. The navy, therefore could service the needs of the army while it waited for an enemy fleet to approach home waters. Tanaka's idea obviously is one based on an army first doctrine. The navy was basically relegated to a secondary position when its function was to support the army's main operations on the continent. This completely runs against Yamamoto and Sato's navalist doctrine. What Tanaka needed to gain a full endorsement of his continental strategy was to work out a general agreement on Japan's national strategy, one which the navy would also support.

In this context, the Imperial Defense Policy (*Teikoku kokubo hoshin*) was created in 1907. The document was discussed and drafted at the Army and the Navy Staffs Headquarters. Prime Minister Saionji later read the document without being actively involved in substantive discussion. It was then endorsed by the Emperor, which gave the document authoritative status within governmental and military circles. Based upon the Policy, the army and the navy were to decide separately their own force requirements. Then tactical details were to be left to each service. This type of basic policy document had never existed since modernization started with the Meiji restoration. The leaders of "fledgling" Meiji Japan were preoccupied with their survival with such limited resources in the Western-dominated imperialist world. Despite clear differences of views between Yamagata and Yamamoto, they simply could not afford bureaucratic turf battles in the face of pressing needs to overcome a series of crises. After the victory in the war with Russia, the minimum goals of the Meiji

Japan, eliminating the immediate military threat from Korea and gaining respectable status in the Western-dominant world by revising unequal treaties, were more or less achieved. Japanese leaders now had to define its security interests given the new strategic conditions after the Russo-Japanese War.

The Policy emphasized that Japan's grand strategic design was to secure its special interests gained after the Russo-Japanese War victory at the costs of tens of thousands lives of Japanese soldiers and a great deal of material sacrifices. In addition, the Japanese government needed to encourage the development of private activities in the Southern part of Asia as well as throughout the Pacific. It then states that although surrounded by the sea, Japan's defense stretches far beyond her home waters particularly because of the Empire's special interests to defend in Korea and Manchuria. In view of Japan's national characteristics, it is inappropriate to take a passive defensive posture as was the case during the Tokugawa period. Thus, Japan's defense policy must be "based upon offensive attitudes" (*Kosen o motte honryou to suru*). More concretely, the document identified Russia as the primary hypothetical enemy which was followed by the US, Germany, and France. It also warned against the formation of an alliance among Russia, Germany and France, which had jointly intervened and forced Japan to give up the Liaodong Peninsula to Qing China in 1895. Based upon these observations, Japan's force level was set at the level with which it could launch an offensive in East Asia against Russia or the US.¹⁶

This document attempted to serve as the foundation of a national defense strategy for both the navy and the army. By emphasizing their determination to maintain and defend Japan's interests on the continent, Tanaka's continentalist vision prevailed through the bureaucratic in-fighting of the post-war period. In addition, in designating Russia as the primary hypothetical enemy, the primacy of the army was reconfirmed. But the Policy failed to meet the strategic challenge

¹⁶ The original of this document was burned in 1945. The text of the document was later restored by Military History Department of National Institute of Defense Studies. The restored text can be found, in Shimanuki Takeharu, "Nichirosenso igoniokeru Kokubohoshin, Syoyouheiryoku, Heiheikouryou no Hensen, (Changed defense policy, required forces levels and principles of tactics after The Russo-Japanese War)", *Gunjishigaku*, Vol. 8, No. 4, March 1973.

Japan was facing. Although it saw Russia as the primary threat and the US second, it did not clearly prioritize Japan's security needs. Accordingly, both the army and the navy were supposed to start major build-ups to attain the force requirements set by the policy. It would not require enormous military expertise to understand that any country on the earth would find either Russia or the US a daunting enemy with almost indefinite strategic depth. But surprisingly, Japanese military planners, at least on paper, tried to confront both at the same time with infinitely less resources.¹⁷

More importantly, the Policy was narrowly military in its nature, all but ignoring social, political, and especially economic concerns. While it clearly stated its intention to maintain and develop newly gained special interests on the continent, the policy failed to decide whether or not Japan saw its future as a sea power or a continental power when it came to financing actual military buildups. The former options would have meant minimum involvement in the power politics on the continent, avoiding the attrition of Japanese national power while emphasizing the defense of its maritime interests. The latter option would have meant a much smaller navy whose mission was limited to defending Japan's coasts and lines of communication to the continent.

After Tsushima, after Trafalgar

Since the Defense Policy failed to clearly define this very basic point in national strategy, the actual defense policy was left largely to squabbles between the two services. Army first, Navy second, or vice versa was aggressively discussed between the two services; the critical choice of national strategy was left to endless inter-service bureaucratic disputes. The army and the navy were designated institutionally “equal” and each service pursued their own version of national strategy. Thus, the army started to increase its forces from seventeen divisions to twenty-five divisions while the navy also launched a very ambitious buildup. In fact, from the viewpoint of naval buildup, the Russo-Japanese War actually marked an important turning point in

¹⁷ Nomura Minoru, *Nihonkaigun no rekishi*, (A History of the Japanese Navy) Yoshikawakobunkan, 2002, pp. 83–84.

Japanese fleet developments.¹⁸ Previously, from 1897 to 1904 the Japanese navy had ordered the construction of an entirely new fleet based on its recent battle experiences. With six battleships, eight armored (heavy) cruisers, and eight protected (light) cruisers, as well as destroyers and torpedo boats. All but five smaller cruisers were built overseas, most in Britain, but some in Italy, the US, Germany, and even one in France.¹⁹ The Japanese steel industry was simply unable to provide the materials needed for the ships, and hardly any armor. Moreover, well into World War One, the Japanese navy relied upon its relationship with Britain to provide high quality coal (with one million tons stockpiled after 1902), and the latest optical range-finding technology from the Barr and Stroud Company.²⁰

At the same time the Japanese navy emerged from the war with Russia with a firm understanding of the importance of technological advantages. There had been some altered perceptions, notably of the importance of having robust capital ships following the pummeling that the *Mikasa* survived at Tsushima. The Japanese navy wanted to have the capability to outgun their opponents, having been briefly outranged by the best Russian guns. Gunnery optics, automated loading of shells, and torpedo technology had been proved twice in naval warfare within a decade, and defects had been detected in both Japanese and enemy vessels. The weight of shell was also greatly appreciated. The key lessons drawn from Tsushima in technological terms were the value of big guns, accurate gunnery control, the need for each unit of the Japanese navy to be 'invincible' in armor, internal sub-division, and firepower and, since they might well be outnumbered, in speed, for it was the two knot advantage

¹⁸ For Japan's advance in naval technology after the Russo-Japanese War, see Fukui Shizuo, *Nihon senkan monogatari I, Fukui Shizuo chosaku syu I* (A story of Japanese battleships 1, Collected Works by Fukui Shizuo 1) Kojinsha, Tokyo, 1992, chap. 7, and Hatano Isamu, *Kindainihon no gunsangaku fukugotai* (Formation of the the military-industrial-academic complex in science and technology field in modern Japan), Sobunsha, 2005, Ch. 2.

¹⁹ Roger Chesneau & Eugene M. Kolesnik (editors), *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships, 1860–1905*, Conway Maritime Press, London, 1979, pp. 217–238. All six battleships, 4 of 8 armored cruisers, 1 of 8 protected cruisers, and 16 of 23 destroyers were built in Britain, with the remaining destroyers built in Japan to Yarrow and Thornycroft designs.

²⁰ David C. Evans & Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887–1941*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 1997, pp. 66–67 & 79.

that allowed Togo to overcome the fleeing Russian fleet and cut off its retreat to Vladivostok in May 1905.²¹

Thus, after the war with Russia, Japanese tried to strengthen their naval power by building technologically advanced capital ships at home. Naval technology, however, was rapidly developing. When HMS Dreadnought was commissioned in 1906 it completely changed the landscape of navies all over the world, making all existing capital ships that had existed practically obsolete. In Japan the two ships of the Satsuma class were the first battleships to be built domestically, Satsuma being launched on 15th November 1906, and Aki on 15th April 1907. As they had been ordered before the emergency of Dreadnought, they were built with pre-Dreadnought concepts and are to be the last pre-dreadnoughts to be commissioned into the Japanese navy. Despite their impressive armament of 4 × 12 inch guns, and 12 × 10 inch guns, they were doomed to be obsolete at their birth. The following Kawachi class ships were the first true dreadnoughts in Imperial Japanese Navy service. Kawachi, which was launched in 1910 and commissioned after 1912, however, suffered from being built with 2 varieties of 12 inch guns, leading to inconsistent gunnery, barely resolving the problems of the Satsuma.²² After all by the time Kawachi was commissioned, it was the era of "Super Dreadnoughts" in the West.

The Kongo class was to mark the last major contribution of British yards to the Imperial Japanese Navy. The first of the class, Kongo, was laid down at Vickers' yard at Barrow in Furness in 1911, being launched in May 1912, and represented a radical change for Japan. It elevated the Imperial Japanese Navy to the level of the Royal Navy near the end of the Pax Britannica. The Japanese now had a

²¹ See Evans and Peattie, *ibid.*, pp. 116–132, Tanaka Ko, *Senkan No Seiki* (The Century of battleships), Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1979, pp. 213–215, and David K. Brown, *Warrior to Dreadnought: Warship Development 1860–1905*, Chatham, London, 1997, pp. 169–177. The 2 knot advantage was nominal, based upon the speed of the main types of battleship in each respective fleet. In practice, the Japanese fleet managed almost 15 knots, while the Russians could make only 9 knots, due to older ships slowing the line, and the effects of poor maintenance and training, sustained long-term sailing, soft French coal, and heavily fouled hulls unused to journeys through tropical waters.

²² See Fukui Shizuo, *Nihon no Gunkan*, Shuppan Kyodo Sha, 1956, pp. 10–12, H. Jentschura, D. Jung, P. Mickel, *Warships of the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1869–1945*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1977, *passim*, and Evans & Peattie, pp. 159–160.

vessel considered to be considerably superior to anything in the British inventory. The Kongo battle-cruiser was the first of her class and the first true battle-cruiser to be built for a navy other than the Royal Navy. It was a huge ship of over 32,000 tons (fully loaded), with eight 14-inch guns which would outgun even the latest battleships of the great powers, and represented both the cutting edge of British naval technology and British naval doctrine of the age. It was the epitome of Fisher's battle-cruiser concept, with ships of cruiser speed and battleship size and armament able to dictate whether to engage or not, and at what range, thus commanding the entire battle space by the possession of the initiative.²³ To the chagrin of the British, it would not be provided for joint operations with the Royal Navy in Europe in the Great War.²⁴

This class was also significant for providing Japan with its first domestically produced world-class capital ship, as Kongo's sisters, Hiei, Kirishima, and Haruna were all produced in Japan. While it was easier and might have been even cheaper to buy ships from abroad, the Government of Japan decided to produce 3 sister ships at home to learn advanced technology. Whereas the Kure and the Yokosuka yards had previously produced destroyers, cruisers, and smaller battleships, now they, and the Mitsubishi yard in Nagasaki and Kawasaki yard in Kobe, would produce a world class battle fleet capable of defeating any other navy in the world.²⁵

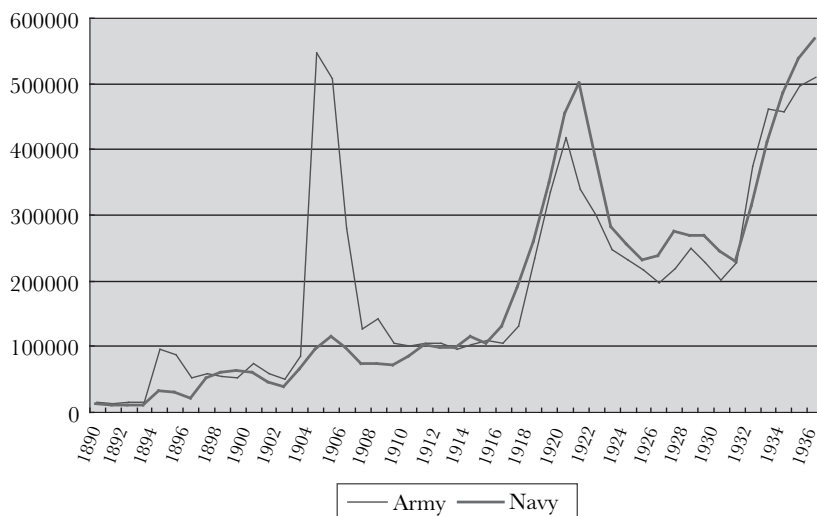
The Ise class ordered in 1914 and launched in late 1916 and early 1917 were possibly the most powerful battleships in the world at that time. They had as heavy a broadside as any other ship at the time (only the American Pennsylvania Class could match their 12 × 14 inch guns in broadside during the Great War), and yet were quicker than any other true battleship, except for the (smaller) HMS Queen Elizabeth class. The Nagato class was the first in the world to be equipped with 16 inch guns, and also the first to be completely designed in Japan. Launched in 1919, and commissioned in 1920. She was probably the fastest and most powerful battleship in

²³ For a study of Fisher's battleship and battle cruiser thinking, see Robert K. Massie, *Dreadnought: Britain, Germany, and the Coming of the Great War*, second edition, Pimlico (Random House), London, 2004.

²⁴ Andrew Gordon, *The Admiralty and Imperial Overstretch, 1902–1941*, p. 65. In, Geoffrey Till (ed.), *Seapower: Theory and Practice*, Frank Cass, London, 1994.

²⁵ Evans & Peattie, op. cit., pp. 159–178.

Graph 1. Japan's military expenditure



Unit; 1000 yen

Source: The graph was drawn from the data in Okurasho Zaiseishishitsu, *Okurasho-shi (History of Ministry of Finance): Meiji, Taisho, Showa, Vol. 2*, pp. 368–389.

the world until the new types from Germany, Britain, and the US emerged in the late 1930s.²⁶

Thus, postwar Japanese naval buildup took place while highly dynamic technological innovation was a constant in the construction of ships. In such a tough environment, the Japanese navy competed fiercely with other major navies, trying to construct capital ships at home that would be individually more powerful than the vessels of any other navy in the world. Japan's performance in this naval armament race is quite impressive. But needless to say it was a recklessly expensive effort.²⁷

To better understand how each branch of service prevailed in the budgetary battles, graph 1 reveals the allocations that the navy and army received on their regular accounts along with the extraordinary

²⁶ As for Japan's warships at the time, see H. Jentschura, D. Jung, P. Mickel, op. cit.

²⁷ The author is heavily indebted to the assistance given by Mr. Garren Mulloy (Daito Bunka University) for his expertise on military technology and English literature on warships of Imperial Japanese Navy.

expenditure caused during the periods of the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War and World War One. With the exception of the spike in army expenditures at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, the navy successfully secured and maintained relative parity in budget expenditure, despite its failure to block army's continental strategy and army-first principle embedded in the Imperial Defense Policy. This suggests that the navy had considerable political clout both in the Diet where budget bills were debated and passed and in the emerging political parties which were increasing their power.²⁸ The graph also demonstrates how after a period of recovery from the Russo-Japanese War, the general military budget level increased four-fold after World War I, then after a brief downturn after the Washington naval conference, military spending continually rose. However, without indemnities in the post-Russo-Japanese War period, Japan still had to defend newly acquired interests on the continent and compete on the sea with a huge emerging power across the Pacific with no additional hard currency available to the national treasury.

Japanese had to maintain a very high level of resource mobilization to finance the expensive naval and army build-up after the war with Russia. Effective tax burden on postwar Japanese became even higher while public debt was also at a perilously high level. Japan, obviously, was overstretching its resources beyond its capacity. In these economic conditions Japan would face inevitable financial constraints.²⁹ World War One, however, transformed Japan's economic outlook. Japan, by being located outside the main battle zone in Europe, enjoyed highly lucrative economic opportunities. Because of enormous demands for war making goods and material for Europeans to wage the war, the Japanese found themselves in a position to sell almost anything they could produce at inflated prices to the belligerents. As a result, Japan started to enjoy a surplus in its balance

²⁸ See Charles Schencking, "Interservice Rivalry and Politics in Post-War Japan" ed. Steinberg et al. *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, 2005), 565–590.

²⁹ For fiscal implications of Japan's naval buildup after the Russo-Japanese War, see Muroyama Masayoshi, "Nichirosengo no naisei to gaiko (Domestic Politics and diplomacy after the Russo-Japanese War)", in Inoue Mitsusada etc. ed., *Nihon Rekishi Taikei 4* (A Compendium of Japanese History 4), Yamakawa shuppan, 1987, pp. 1217–1253.

Table 1. Tax burden after the Russo-Japanese War

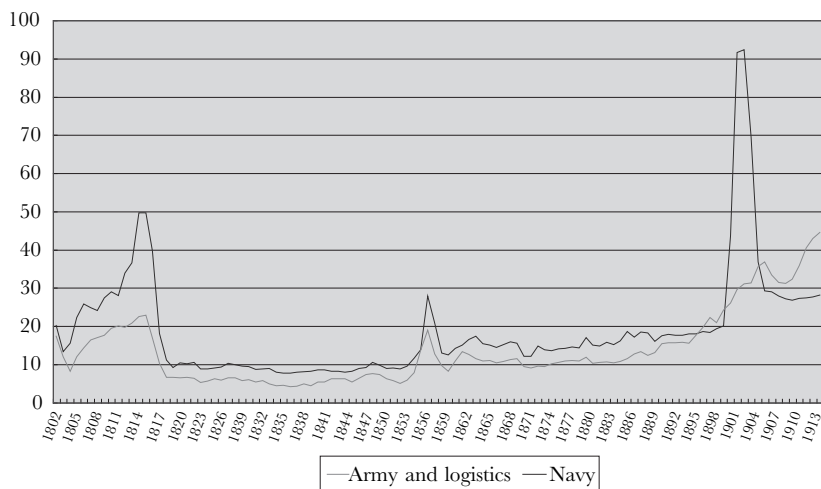
	Tax per capita (A) in yen	Tax Index (B)	Wholesale price index (C)	B/C
1897	3240	100	100	100
1898	3518	107	106	101
1899	4204	130	106	123
1900	4561	139	114	122
1901	4964	151	109	139
1902	5101	155	110	141
1903	4806	146	117	125
1904	5217	159	123	129
1905	5985	183	132	139
1906	6797	207	136	152
1907	7614	232	147	158
1908	8508	259	142	182
1909	8784	268	135	199
1910	8561	261	136	192
1911	8838	269	142	189
1912	9127	278	151	184
1913	8910	272	150	181
1914	8872	270	143	189
1915	8371	255	144	177
1916	8985	274	176	156
1917	10617	324	222	146

Source: Abe Isamu, *Nihon zaiseiron: sozeihen* (Japan's budgetary studies: tax revenues), Kaizosha, 1932, p. 545.

of payments which allowed them to service the national bonds that they issued to finance the Russo-Japanese Wars. This visitation of Providence (*tenyu*), remedied Japan's war debt and provided them with the opportunity to take over German colonial interests in Asia and the Pacific after the 1919 treaty of Versailles. Moreover, World War One profits paved the way for future investments in the military establishment.

Japan's naval buildup after Tsushima marks a sharp contrast with British attitudes after Trafalgar. While the Japanese tried to expand their military capabilities both on land and sea after the victory, Britain after the Napoleonic War did not pursue any territorial interests on the continent. The British, instead, saw their interest in maritime commerce for which their naval predominance was the key factor. This was exactly what Sato referred to as a secret of British

Graph 2. British military expenditure



Unit: million pounds

Source: Brian R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988) pp. 586–589.

success and the model for Japan. But the Japanese did not follow the British model of development, choosing instead to go their own route.³⁰

Graph 2 exhibits British military spending in the nineteenth century. The graph clearly shows a sharp decline in British military spending after the Napoleonic Wars. According to these figures, British military expenditure remained surprisingly stable after the Napoleonic Wars. The two major deviations in the graph represent an increase in military spending during the Crimean and Boer Wars. But for these exceptions the spending levels of the army and the navy remained similar throughout the nineteenth century; the British model of military development did not feature a bureaucratic/financial struggle over the question of army or navy first in spending priorities. Regarding army-navy balance, in the nineteenth century even

³⁰ For British naval posture in the 19th century, see Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, Allen Lane, 1976 ch. 3, Christopher J. Bartlett, *Great Britain and Sea Power 1815–1854*, Clarendon, 1963, Andrew Lambert, “The Shield of Empire”, in J. R. Hill ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Royal Navy*, Oxford UP, 1995.

in Britain, from a simple budget figures one would find it difficult to call British military posture as Navy First, Army Second. The balance may be made less important by the fact that both navy and army were cheap investment during the high time of Pax Britannica. The British army had never been a large force compared with its continental counterparts. The Royal Navy consisted of wooden sailing ships. Once the Napoleonic wars were over, many ships were decommissioned, literally left rotten in ports without receiving any maintenance service. Crews were no longer needed so seamen were simply discharged. With no retirement for officers, the list of commissioned officers seeking and eligible for promotion became so long that professional opportunities for younger officers became highly limited. Even worse, there was no need for new recruits.³¹

Despite the lamentable personnel conditions and with limited investment, the Royal Navy had the strength to secure British maritime interests largely because its rivals were under even worse circumstances. The French navy, though it had been badly defeated by the British, was still the second naval power in Europe up to the 1880s. The Russian navy, which ranked third, was handicapped in many ways even if it could possibly match the Royal Navy in number. Its need for separate navies in different geographic regions, combined with a forever lagging industrial base, complicated by constant bureaucracy in-fighting, had not yielded much of a maritime infrastructure, such as shipyards and a merchant navy and, together, prevented the Russians from developing a unified naval strategy. The German and the United States navies were practically non-existent until rather late in the nineteenth century. Maintaining the Royal Navy after Trafalgar was cheap, but renewed naval buildup 100 years later was not.

Japan's build-up and Britain's entrenchment: why?

Why then did the Japanese launch such an expensive build-up of both the navy and army despite their limited financial resources? One obvious explanation is that strategic conditions surrounding Japan after Tsushima were vastly different from those of Britain after

³¹ Michael Lewis, *The Navy in Transition 1814-1864, A Social History*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1965, chs. 3-5.

Trafalgar. For Japanese strategic planners, the situation on the continent was too unstable to allow them to foster the development of a system of relations that could support the European practice of "balance of power" politics. But in the minds of Japan's leaders, Russia represented a direct threat to their effective control over Korea. Japanese leaders, by recognizing that the Li dynasty was in its terminal phase, could not be optimistic about prospects for a stable and independent Korea; a Korea that required major reforms and investment to launch a modernization program. Qing China's weaknesses were apparent and disqualified her as a major actor with whom a stable "balance of power" could be constructed in the Far East. Rather, China was viewed as the last great possible conquest available to all imperial powers. Thus, Japanese military leaders like Tanaka Giichi feared that unless Japan actively tried to secure a part of the continent, it would fall under Russian control or perhaps be divided among the Western powers. Japan, therefore, had to defend itself by building its own empire, which would be the result of imperial competition for land and resources.

While Japan's fear of a hostile Korea under Russian rule combined with a desire not to be left out of the ongoing imperialistic competition in China generated support for the conquest of the continent in the discussions among Japanese military leaders of the time, it is also true that the Japanese by their discourse of the time, exemplified in Tanaka Giichi's discussion, were characterized more by hubris than fear. Thus, the second way of accounting for the difference attributes it to changed Japanese political leadership. There is no shortage of evidence to demonstrate that the capability of Japan's military forces became exaggerated because of the victory in Manchuria. Japanese soldiers were portrayed as braver and tougher than any foe. This superiority would enable Japan to overcome numerical inferiority and poorer equipment. Togo Heihachiro, who unlike Nelson, survived for another thirty years after winning his climatic battle became a living icon in the minds of hard-line navy officers who objected to arms limitation treaties and believed in a strategy plan built around the premise of "navy first".

While Japan's victory, in the popular conscience of the day was overwhelming, careful scrutiny of the sources reveals that the outcome of the war could have gone the other way very easily. Japan may have won the Battle of Mukden in late February and early March 1905. But the Japanese army, completely exhausted by the

end of the battle, could not encircle and destroy Russian military power in the Far East. The Russian commander, General A. N. Kuropatkin, broke off the fighting and withdrew his forces, rather than facing complete victory or defeat. If there had been another battle in Changchun, it is likely that Japan would have been defeated by the Russians who reorganized their troops after their withdrawal from Mukden. So bad was the condition of the army that Japanese leaders including General Oyama Iwao, the Army's chief of staff, strongly supported the opening of peace talks with Russians in the spring of 1905. While the Japanese military leaders maintained a public front of the superiority of their army, no one better understood than they that their nation was almost out of men, munitions, and the financial means to continue fighting the war.

In contrast to these cautious attitudes of war time leaders, Tanaka's postwar strategic assessment seems to be optimistic. While even Tanaka knew that Japan was no match against Russia because of the differences in strategic depth, he also believed that Japan could take advantage of its geographic proximity to Korea and Manchuria. That was one of the major reasons why he very much wanted the navy's active cooperation for rapid deployment to the continent. He also regarded China as ripe for imperialistic expansion rather than as a potential enemy that Japanese forces would have to confront on the battlefield at a later date.

The overconfidence of postwar Japan was reflected in the changing leadership within the Meiji Government. The Russo-Japanese War actually changed not only Japan's international status but also it accelerated political changes within the Meiji regime. While potential conflicts and struggles always existed within the Meiji Government, Ito, Yamagata and Yamamoto were all of the generation that had experienced confusion as the Tokugawa regime collapsed and the consequent shaky beginnings of the Meiji government. They risked their lives to overthrow the Tokugawa government, created the Meiji government and then nurtured it. Yamagata (b. 1838) and Yamamoto (b. 1852) had sharply different strategic views. Still they could closely work together for the survival of the young and fragile modern Japan they, themselves, had created.

Neither of them were educated and trained as modern military professionals. Yamagata actually fought in a series of battles at the end of the Tokugawa period: in 1863, Yamagata commanded the Kiheitai, a powerful revolutionary force that fought against the shogunate; and

during the British bombardment of Shimonoseki of 1864, he served in the Choshu force. Rather than being trained at the military academy, he was in charge of establishing the modern Japanese army while suppressing rebellions against the Meiji government. Yamamoto served in the Anglo-Satsuma War at the age of twelve. Later he joined the Satsuma force at the age of fifteen pretending to be eighteen in their campaign against the Tokugawa government. He was a graduate of the naval academy. But the academy then was far from a well-disciplined modern institution. During his school year, he was reported to have fought with instructors and, occasionally sneaked out of the dormitory to enjoy night life at a brothel. Yamagata, often sharply opposed to Yamamoto for his emphasis on an army first, continental strategy, was actually extremely cautious and sensitive to Japan's vulnerabilities. In 1917 Hara Takashi referring to the rising popularity of US-Japan war horror stories said, "A war with the US will never take place as long as Yamagata is alive. He is moderate on foreign affairs and very cautious on foreign policies . . . No matter how much noise young army officers make, as long as Yamagata is alive, it will be all right".³² In other words, the Meiji government of the day was still living in a heroic age. Yamamoto, Yamagata and Ito and the others in their generation had shared experiences and shared a sense of vulnerability which helped unite them to defend the Meiji regime regardless of their differences. They were also driven, seasoned statesman who were tempered by their tough experiences at the end of Tokugawa period rather than by formal academic training at a desk. Their realism made them very cautious and prudent with a strong appreciation of Japan's weaknesses.

The postwar military planners like Tanaka (b. 1863) and Sato (b. 1866) belonged to a younger generation who had formal education that created the opportunity to have a professional career. They tended to be confident in themselves and in Japan's international position. In contrasting Yamagata and Tanaka his protégé, the former was afraid of Russian revenge and racial wars between the yellow and white races; Tanaka seemed to be less fearful of Russia. Yamagata tended to see China as a potential ally; Tanaka never thought highly

³² Oka Yoshitake, *Yamagata Aritomo*, in *Oka Yoshitake Chosakusyu (Collected Works of Oka Yoshitake)* vol. 5, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1993, p. 130.

of China as a relevant player. Yamagata also thought highly of the Anglo-Japanese alliance whereas Tanaka had a negative view of the relationship since he thought the British typically got more out of the alliance than Japan did.³³ Thus, Tanaka was more confident in Japan's own strategic position and less sensitive to the need for diplomatic maneuvers to compliment Japan's strategic weaknesses.

The heroic age of Japanese history ended with the victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Japan was now a major rising power with large and increasingly well-organized modern military forces. Because of this bureaucratization or institutionalization of the Japanese government, political integration based upon personalities of a small number of senior politicians inevitably became increasingly ineffective.

Bureaucratization of the Japanese military services and narrow-minded professionalism that pursued effectiveness only on the battlefield was encouraged by naval technological innovation symbolized by the launching of HMS Dreadnought. The importance of this ship cannot be exaggerated because, to keep up with this new class of ship, all navies required new, expensive construction. If such reinvestment in the navy did not occur, then the nation that made such a decision immediately admitted that their fleet was obsolete. In addition, naval strategic thinking of the day, deeply influenced by the writings and ideas of Alfred Thayer Mahan's teachings, became focused on the technical requirements of their service, thus giving rise to the technocrats. Sato's argument, despite its historical approach, was not free from the numerical obsession of the force level standard, which later would cause a huge and bitter dispute in the navy concerning the London Naval Reduction Treaty of 1930.

After the Russo-Japanese War, there was no navy that could realistically challenge the Japanese in the Western Pacific. So, opposition to the argument of a "navy first" strategic doctrine wondered why Japan needed a large and expensive navy? Japanese naval power now easily surpassed that of the European powers in the region. The American navy was growing rapidly but the Russians had just demonstrated that given the level of technology of the day, it would be very difficult to sail around the world and then fight a decisive battle.

Sato's discussion was based on the assumption that Japan would defend its territory by intercepting an incoming enemy fleet. To win

³³ I relied upon Kitaoka *op. cit.*, pp. 14–16, for discussion here.

a decisive naval engagement like the battle of Tsushima, Japan would need to maintain the capability of her navy at 70% of the largest navy in the world. Here, the navy's mission was to defend Japan's territorial integrity from foreign aggression. The problem was the difficulty in maintaining the 70% because of the fear of growing U.S. power combined with the belief that Japan would never be able to match the economic might of a mobilized United States motivated Sato and his supporters to invest their nation's resources in naval construction. Like the army's inability to win a complete victory over the Russians, (who ever could?) Japan would never be able to overwhelm Americans on the sea. In other words, Japan could only be a regional naval power.

While Pax Britannica was cheaply maintained by the Royal Navy after Trafalgar, navies had become very expensive investment areas by the beginning of the twentieth century. Graph 2 exhibits the steep rise in the British naval budget after the Boer War. At that time more money began to be spent on the navy rather than the army for the first time. As a result of the pace of technological innovations, *HMS Dreadnought's* commissioning in 1906 shocked navies all over the world. With its size, 28 cm thick armor, 21 knot speed from turbine engines, all ten 12 inch guns, combined with its completion at breakneck speed, within a year, it made existing battle fleets immediately and completely obsolete; global capital ship construction virtually ceased for 1 year upon her completion. The overwhelming superiority of this epoch-making, expensive battle ship, however, did not last long. By WWI the Dreadnought itself became obsolete; moreover, its only victory in battle occurred when she rammed a U-29 in 1915. Thus, unlike after Trafalgar, naval construction projects were costly but viewed as necessary for national defense despite the pressure they placed on budgets and economies. Even the Royal Navy became an increasingly heavy burden for Britain from the late nineteenth century.

If such was the economic implication of naval buildup for Japan, there was no chance for her to become naval master of the Pacific. Japan's naval strategy needed to be separated from western ideas as they were articulated through the British model and the teachings of Mahan. Whether its mission was to protect Japan's territory, sea-born commerce, or maintaining logistics for Japanese armies on the continent, the navy had to be more compact and economical. Its naval strategy would have to be based on the fact that Japan could

not achieve its goals by military means alone. Nevertheless, under the conditions where rapid development of naval technology constantly made existing fleets obsolete, it is not difficult to imagine how difficult it was for military professionals focused on winning a decisive naval battle like Tsushima to see their glorious fleet dropping out of the competition, no matter how expensive it was to keep competing.

Conclusion

The Japanese navy after the Russo-Japanese War failed to define an effective mission for their service. It is true that the strategic challenge they were facing was a more difficult one than the British had experienced 100 years earlier. Japan's victory against Russia was far from complete and situations on the continent were too unstable to leave the situation to the functioning of the balance of power. But at the same time, grand strategy and the adoption of a suitable doctrine was not the navy's primary concern in the post-Russo-Japanese war period. Instead, the navy was becoming increasingly technocratic and bureaucratic. Japan, therefore, ended up with a navy that was too big and too ambitious for her immediate strategic needs and at the same time too small to achieve the Mahanite dream of naval mastery in the Pacific, if not of the whole world.

There were some outstanding Japanese naval strategists who based their discussion on the uncomfortable recognition of Japan's strategic limitations. For example, Admiral Kato Tamosaburo, who signed the Washington Naval Limitation Treaty in 1922 despite strong objections within the navy including that of Sato Tetsutaro, accepted a 60% ratio for Japan's capital ships to the US by saying that the treaty is to limit American naval force at merely 150% of that of Japan. He said:

National defense is not a monopoly that belongs to military men. War cannot be fought by military men alone. . . . Simply put, no war can be fought without money. After the War (WWI) which politically transformed Russia and Germany, the US is the only country with which there is probability of war. Even if we could match the US in terms of military power, we would not be able fight the war with the US with such a limited amount of money as we had at the time of the Russo-Japanese War. Then, where would we get the money. The US is the only country from which Japan can borrow money. If the US

is the enemy, this is impossible and we would have to make money for ourselves. Unless we are prepared to do so, we can never fight . . . Thus, war with the US is simply impossible".³⁴

About 20 year later, Admiral Inoue Shigeyoshi, well known for his strong objection to the Tripartite Treaty and the following war against the US, foresaw the outlook of the coming US-Japan war with surprising accuracy. In his memo entitled "The New Defense Plan," submitted to Navy Minister Admiral Oikawa Koshiro in 1941, he sharply criticized the big ship, big gun policy and called for a radical transformation of the battleship centric navy into one emphasizing air power based on small islands in the Pacific. The departure point of his discussion was an observation that it was simply impossible to win a war against the US for evident reasons. Since the US has such a large territory, it would be impossible for Japan to occupy its capital to say nothing of its whole territory. Japan could not destroy American naval forces. There was no way to blockade American coastlines as they stretched the length of the nation on both the Pacific and the Atlantic. Inoue went on to recognize that the United States, on the other hand, had the capacity to do all of these things to Japan.³⁵

Kato and Inoue never completely gained control of naval strategy after the Russo-Japanese War. Their arguments were basically self-defeating for the navy; less budget and fewer battleships were naturally unpopular ideas in the minds of naval officers. The transformation of their force structure in a way different from what had been responsible for their glorious victory at Tsushima was psychologically unfeasible. Sato's argument, in contrast, actually prevailed and the navy received more money for more and newer vessels. While Sato was put into reserve by Kato in 1923 presumably because of his strong objection to the naval limitation treaty that did not satisfy his 70% criterion, his views remained widely shared within the navy. In fact, even after his retirement, Sato continued to advocate his navalist doctrine. He was sharply opposed to Japan's continental expansion in the 1930s which he foresaw would result in a tragic

³⁴ Quoted in Ikeda Kiyoshi, *Japanese Navy, Vol. 1*, Asahi Sonorama, 1987, pp. 84-85.

³⁵ Inoue Shigeyoshi Denki Kankokai ed., *Inoue Shigeyoshi*, Inoue Shigeyoshi Denki Kankokai, Tokyo, 1982, p. 127 in the document section.

consequence for Japan, comparable to the Hundred Years' War to England. He, however, kept calling for naval buildup based upon the assumption that Japan could match the US on the sea until he died in 1941 without seeing the Pearl Harbor attack and the subsequent defeat of Japan.

A century after the end of the Russo-Japanese War, strategic conditions surrounding Japan are evidently different. Japan, having been defeated by and now closely allied with the US, is not an independent strategic actor in the same sense that it was in the early twentieth century. China is emerging as the large economic and military power in the region. Russia, suffering from serious difficulties, simply cannot afford even limited initiatives in the Far East. The Southern part of the Korean peninsula, which had been a major security concern for the early Meiji leaders like Yamagata, has been protected by the US forces for more than a half century. This has relieved Japan from its traditional security dilemma and allowed it to have a prosperous and democratic neighbor. Thus, for post-World War Two Japan, military expansion onto the continent was impossible, unnecessary and unattractive; and the earlier debates between navalist and continentalist became irrelevant.

Given, however, ongoing tension and instability on the Korean peninsula, Japanese may find themselves in a position to ask themselves where Japan's critical national interest lies. Japanese naturally want to enjoy economic opportunities out of the rising Chinese economy and access to the global economic and political arena currently lead by the US, all at the same time. Given the more limited strategic depth of Japan in comparison to that of China and the US, Japan's strategic limitations as an independent power remain a frustrating reality, the same as it was in 1905, 1918, and 1941. Thus, balancing and harmonizing maritime and regional interests is once again emerging as a major challenge for Japanese foreign policy makers, although today the question is posed less for the strategic-military arena than regarding political and economic affairs.

UNSUCCESSFUL NATIONAL UNITY: THE RUSSIAN HOME FRONT IN 1904

Tsuchiya Yoshifuru

The purpose of this paper is to examine the Russian home front in terms of its integration of social strata to achieve wartime unity.¹ My argument is based on the following presupposition. As armed forces of a country were increasingly drawn from its system of universal conscription, war also became the work of the people themselves who had to either go to the front or watch their fathers, brothers, and sons do so. As a result, the role of the home front became much more indispensable not only economically but also socially and psychologically, and the nation had to strive for organization of the home front for its successful war effort, and at the same time, to urge the people to act spontaneously and energetically toward that purpose.

Little is known about the Russian home front during the Russo-Japanese war, particularly during 1904, though a large number of works have pointed out that the war set the stage for the first Russian revolution. Therefore, in the first part of this paper, I examine the situation just after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war, and point out that the Russian government had a chance to exploit the spontaneous outrage of the mass toward Japan to augment the formation of its national unity. In the second part, however, I reveal that some factors, especially the repressive policies of Pleve, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and repeated unsuccessful battles prevented the government from holding on to the support of society for the duration of the war. In the third part, I explore the concrete aspects of the estrangement of the people from the war and the appearance of anti-war movements in some places in the Russian Empire. And finally, in brief comparison, I describe and analyze the situation on the Japanese home front.

¹ The author expresses his deep gratitude to Professor Hara Teruyuki of the Slavic Research Center of Hokkaido University for organizing the Sapporo conference at which the first draft of this article was presented in February 2003.

The Outbreak of War and the People's Response

The Russo-Japanese war was started by a Japanese surprise attack, yet without a declaration of war, which aroused Russian indignation against Japan and gave rise to spontaneous patriotic actions. Patriotic demonstrations and prayer meetings for the victory of Russia were held in various places, war funds were raised, and many proclamations of loyalty to the Tsar and the Fatherland were sent to the government. Referring to the social situation just after the outbreak of that war, *Russkii Vestnik* reported that spiritual uplift among the people was much greater than during the Crimean War or the Russo-Turkish War (1877), the major reason for this was the "dastardly Asiatic attack by the Japanese".²

The patriotic fever seized not only many city dumas, but also students and zemstvos, which had increasingly criticized the government until then. On January 30th the students of St. Petersburg University held a meeting with the rector's permission, where the Imperial Manifesto of war was read out and the participants gave loud shouts of "Ura". After the meeting, the students walked in procession through the streets to the Winter Palace square, singing the national anthem and crying out "May the Russian army and navy succeed! Hurrah for Russia!" Many citizens joined the procession.³ The students of St. Petersburg University presented a statement of loyalty through the superintendent of the St. Petersburg Educational district. In it, they stated that the time Russia spent was critical not only for Russia, but also for Europe in general, and that Japan was supported by the hidden enemies of Russia who had recklessly opened a war in spite of the Tsar's will to preserve peace. In addition they expressed unlimited devotion to the Emperor and the Fatherland and their preparedness to do all to the last drop of their blood.⁴

Students actively responded to the Imperial Manifesto of war also in other places. For example, in Khar'kov, the masses, many of whom were students, came to the governor's house after a prayer meeting at the Pokrovskii monastery and asked him to send a telegram

² *Russkii Vestnik*, 1904, No. 3, pp. 363-364. See also, *Niva*, 1904, No. 7, p. 136.

³ *Peterburgskaia Gazeta*, January 31st 1904, p. 3. Nicholas II appeared on the balcony of the Palace in response to the actions of the public, which was in striking contrast to his attitude toward Gapon's and the workers' petition a year later.

⁴ *Pravitel'stvennyi Vestnik* (hereafter *PV*), February 1st 1904, p. 2.

with which to express loyalty.⁵ At Kiev University a large meeting was held, the participants, the students of the university and the polytechnic school, sang a national hymn and an orchestra played "Kol' Slaven". The superintendent and the rector spoke to the students, referring to the significance of the current situation.⁶ According to a letter published in *Iskra*, factory workers in St. Petersburg were surprised and bewildered at the fact that students, whom they had always considered social-democrats and revolutionaries, now manifested patriotism, singing "God, Save the Tsar" and holding up portraits of the Tsar.⁷ Student support of the war made an impression on the public.⁸

The response of zemstvos was also remarkable. Even before the outbreak of the war, when Japan broke off diplomatic relations with Russia, the Saratov Provincial Zemstvo assembly passed a resolution to express unlimited devotion to the Tsar and the Fatherland and the readiness to make the supreme sacrifice in case of war.⁹ As soon as the war began, many zemstvos, besides expressions of loyalty, decided to appropriate a large amount of extraordinary expenditure for the war; Petersburg Provincial Zemstvo decided on 100 thousand rubles for the aid of families of the soldiers, who hailed from the district and were wounded or killed; Moscow Provincial Zemstvo, 300 thousand rubles, including 50 thousand rubles for the reinforcement of the Russian fleet; Khar'kov Provincial Zemstvo, 260 thousand rubles for the cost of equipment and maintenance of field hospitals and 140 thousand rubles for the aid of families of the wounded or killed soldiers and reserves in active service at the front; Kaluga Provincial Zemstvo, 100 thousand rubles, including 30 thousand rubles for reinforcement of the Russian fleet.¹⁰ Thus, zemstvos decided to set aside about five million rubles in total for the war needs within only one and a half months of the outbreak of the war.¹¹

⁵ *PV*, January 30th 1904, p. 3.

⁶ *Niva*, No. 6, p. 114; *PV*, February 1st, p. 2.

⁷ *Iskra*, No. 62, p. 3.

⁸ There seem to have been very few student anti-war actions. An article in *Iskra* reported an anti-war resolution by the students of St. Petersburg Mining Institute. *Iskra*, No. 60, p. 4.

⁹ *PV*, January 28th 1904, p. 2.

¹⁰ *Russkaia Mysl'*, 1904, No. 3, pp. 177-179.

¹¹ K. F. Shatsillo, *Russkii liberalizm nakanune revoliutsii 1905-1907 gg.* (M., 1985), p. 213; idem, "Liberaly i russko-iaponskaia voina" *Voprosy istorii*, 1982, No. 7, p. 104. According to the official calculation, 15 province zemstvos donated 4,710

Zemstvos, as well as cities, had responsibility for the care of the families of the rank and file and the reserves in active service at the front.¹² It might be natural that many zemstvos decided to disburse such a great deal of money. But the fact that many of their decisions included some direct military objects such as expenditures for the reinforcement of the Russian fleet aroused controversy in the press. *Russkoe Bogatstvo* struck a note of warning against the zemstvos' large expenditures for the war needs, because a lot of peasants needed help as a result of the poor harvest in 1903. Above all, the journal criticized the expenditure for the reinforcement of the fleet. It stated that care for the residents suffering from the war was doubtlessly within the competence and obligation of the zemstvos, but that it was difficult to consider a zemstvo concerning itself with state armament policy as a legitimate undertaking.¹³ *Russkaia Mysl'* also stated that it was unsuitable to appropriate zemstvos' money for reinforcement of the fleet.¹⁴ *Saratovskaia Zemskaia Nedelia* reprinted an open letter written by a member of the Yalta County Zemstvo and published in a central newspaper; a columnist of the zemstvo journal agreed with the assertion of the letter, insisting that zemstvos' money must be used exclusively to aid the people suffering from the war.¹⁵ Thus the

thousand rubles for the war, the items of which were the following: for the wartime needs—1,475 thousand rubles; for reinforcement of the fleet—760 thousand rubles; for the aid of the sick and wounded members of the armed forces—1,150 thousand rubles; for the aid of the soldiers' families—1,325 thousand rubles. B. Beselovskii, *Istoriia zemstva*. Tom 3, (S-Pb., 1911), p. 590, f.n.2.

¹² *Denezhnye vydachi v voennoe vremia chinam voennogo i grazhdanskoe vedomstv i obespechenie ikh semeistv*. (S-Pb., 1905), pp. 80–81. Strictly speaking, a county zemstvo should be charged with the care of the families of the soldiers in active service, but a province zemstvo assembly had the right to recognize it as its own task. Thus, Saratov Province Zemstvo did so during the Russo-Turkish war. *Saratovskaia zemskaia nedelia*, 1904, No. 2, p. 55. In all probability, there were many similar cases.

¹³ V.A. Miakotin, "Khronika vnutrennei zhizni" *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, 1904, No. 3, pp. 154–155.

¹⁴ *Russkaia Mysl'*, 1904, No. 3, p. 179. In the same column, though it regarded donations as a natural sign of patriotism, the journal stated that the war fever had made not only an individual but also society blind to domestic misfortunes that were more dreadful and more difficult to overcome than any war, and claimed that the true patriotism of the Russian people and society should also be directed against defects within the country. *Ibid.*, pp. 180–182. Both articles of *Russkoe Bogatstvo* and *Russkaia Mysl'* are written from a critical viewpoint of the war, but on the problem of zemstvos' expenditure for the fleet, there was criticism by such conservative and nationalistic publications as *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and *Grazhdanin*. Their claim was caused by a fear of the expansion of the zemstvo's assumed responsibilities. See, *Russkaia Mysl'*, No. 5, pp. 201–202.

¹⁵ *Saratovskaia Zemskaia Nedelia*, 1904, No. 2, pp. 53–58.

Table 1. Sources of Written Expressions of Loyalty

Social Groups/Organizations/Strata	The number of written expressions of loyalty
Provincial Zemstvos	25
County Zemstvos	60
City Dumas/Municipal boards	345
Nobility	82
Peasants (village or district assemblies)	258
Townsmen	77
Factory Workers	40
Jews	90
Old Believers	41
Muslim	20
Others*	539

* This category includes cases in which some of the above groups sent expressions of loyalty together.

problem concerning the way to use zemstvos' money gave rise to controversy, but there was no dispute over their patriotism. Moreover, zemstvos undertook to organize a joint work force for the relief of the wounded soldiers in the Far East, about which I will discuss later.

The social response to the war against Japan may be gathered from expressions of loyalty from various strata and social groups. In March 1904, the Ministry of Internal Affairs published a book in which about 1,570 proclamations of loyalty sent to the government by that time were collected.¹⁶ They can be classified as in Table 1.

Twenty-five of the thirty-four Provincial Zemstvos, that is about three fourths, expressed loyalty to the Tsar. Though County Zemstvos did not so actively respond, we can consider that zemstvos definitely backed the Tsarist government about the war, at least just after its outbreak, taking into account the abovementioned expenditure of large sums of money and other actions.

Table 1 above and Table 2 below show that city dumas responded to the war as enthusiastically as zemstvos, or more so. As the zemstvos did, so did a lot of city dumas, deciding to disburse a large sum of money for the wartime needs:

¹⁶ *Otkliki russkoi zemli na tsarskoe slovo o voine s Iaponiei*. (S-Pb., 1904). It is my understanding that all positive proclamations sent to the government were published in this book because it was government propaganda and had no reason to exclude any patriotic expression.

Table 2. City Dumas and their War Contributions¹⁷

City Duma	Amount Disbursed
St. Petersburg	one and a half million rubles
Moscow City	one million rubles
Tula	50 thousand rubles
Rostov-on-Don	50 thousand rubles
Kazan	50 thousand rubles for the wartime needs and 10 thousand rubles for organization of the sanitary squads
Astrakhan	50 thousand rubles
Tver	20 thousand rubles for the wartime needs and 5 thousand rubles for the Red Cross
Nizhegorod	25 thousand rubles
Nakhichevan	20 thousand rubles
Tambov	10 thousand rubles

The professions of loyalty from Jewish people and Old Believers were impressive, partly because the minority groups, including Muslims, could be exposed to the danger of excessive Russian nationalism. It seems that the Jewish people felt the threat all the more for the pogrom in Kishinev in 1903. In fact, just after the outbreak of the war, there was a rumor that Jewish people cooperated with Britain and Japan against Russia.¹⁸ In Odessa as Easter was approaching, the rumor of an imminent pogrom became so widespread that the British Embassy in St. Petersburg unofficially requested Count Lamsdorff, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to take measures to prevent it.¹⁹ As I will refer to later, the pogroms against Jewish people occurred frequently in the latter half of 1904.

Another feature revealed in Table 1 is that factory workers did not respond to the war so much as peasants did. Indeed, there were expressions of loyalty and patriotic demonstrations by factory workers in some places. For instance, workers held demonstrations for the war in Moscow, Odessa, Rostov-on-Don, Sormovo, Revel' and

¹⁷ *Russkaia Mysl'*, No. 3, pp. 177–179; *Peterburgskaia Gazeta*, January 30th, p. 5, January 31st, p. 5; *PV*, January 30th, pp. 3–4, January 31st, pp. 2–3, February 1st, p. 2.

¹⁸ *Voskhod*, 1904, No. 7, column 16, No. 8, column 8.

¹⁹ Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), British Foreign Office, General Correspondence Russia, FO 65/1679, Dispatch No. 172 from St. Petersburg; Dispatch No. 184 from St. Petersburg.

the Donbass-Dnepr Bend.²⁰ However, it appears that as a rule factory workers were not affected very much by the war fever. *Iskra* No. 60 (February 25th) reported that factory workers did not participate in patriotic demonstrations in St. Petersburg.²¹ Another article in No. 64 (April 18th) said that factory workers were interested in the process of the war, but there was no patriotic excitement among them, which was proven by the fact that there had never been any patriotic demonstrations in the workers' districts of St. Petersburg since the outbreak of war.²²

But the factory workers were exceptions. By and large, Russian society was swept up in a patriotic mood. Admittedly, parts of professions of loyalty and patriotic mass demonstrations might have been organized by the police or other governmental authorities²³ and the attitude toward the war in the regions inhabited by other ethnic groups was very cool. But it is not plausible that most of the mass patriotic actions were mobilized by the authorities because the government did not have the power to mobilize such a large wave of war fever, and moreover, feared any mass movement, as I will show later. "An unpopular war before the outbreak suddenly has become popular", as a member of the St. Petersburg City Duma evaluated the effect of the Japanese surprise attack.²⁴ Conservatives, moderates, and liberals agreed that any "initiative for new reforms" should be postponed until "after the defeat of the foreign enemy".²⁵ It is all the more remarkable that liberal elements like zemstvos expressed their loyalty and support to the government very quickly because liberals' criticism of the regime had been getting louder and louder just before the war.²⁶ Therefore, the kind of national unity that

²⁰ *PV*, January 30th, p. 4, February 4th, p. 3; L. E. Kritsman, "Bor'ba protiv russko-iaponskoi voiny" *Istoriia Proletariata SSSR*, 1930, sb. 3-4, pp. 79-80; Charters Wynn, *Workers, Strikes, and Pogroms: The Donbass-Dnepr Bend in Late Imperial Russia, 1870-1905*. (Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 174.

²¹ *Iskra*, No. 60, p. 4.

²² *Iskra*, No. 64, p. 7.

²³ A memorandum dated February 18th from the British Consulate in Batumi reported, "As far as the Caucasus is concerned, all so-called spontaneous demonstrations of popular enthusiasm and patriotism are, in reality, stage-managed by the authorities." PRO, FO/181/826/4, Dispatch No. 7.

²⁴ *Izvestiia S-Peterburgskoi gorodskoi dумы*. 1904, No. 10, p. 1245.

²⁵ Edward H. Judge, *Plehve: Repression and Reform in Imperial Russia 1902-1904*. (Syracuse University Press, 1983), p. 209.

²⁶ This was illustrated by the two congresses of the professionals held in early January; one was the third congress of the activists for technical education and the

developed at the time must have been a windfall for the Russian government. The government ought to have paid attention to maintaining it throughout the war against the outside enemy, but it paid little attention to this support as it dwindled away.

Factors of Popular Estrangement from Support for the War

The abovementioned war fever did not last long. S. R. Mintslov, a publicist, wrote in his diary already on March 4th that the patriotic fever evidenced at the outbreak of the war was cooling off.²⁷ One of the most important reasons for the Russian government failing to maintain the support of the public seemed to be the progress of the war itself. Russian armed forces had not been able to win a victory and Russian society was gradually becoming pessimistic about the war in the Far East.

N. I. Astrov, a liberal member of the Moscow City Duma and later one of the leaders of the Kadet party, described the transition of public opinion about the war in his memoirs. According to him, at first all the people were convinced of an early and decisive victory, and newspapers were saturated with jingoism and stated that the Japanese army was no match for the Russian army which could concentrate nimbly and efficiently in any place in the Far East. However, in reality, one defeat followed another on the battlefields. "Society" asked how such disgrace had happened, but in answer it only received the word "endurance". Before long, every defeat and every retreat provoked the people and caused protests. People became convinced that their great Russia was being defeated by little Japan because Russia was inferior, stagnant, and unsuited to conditions of technical progress. This formulation of accusation united the people,

other was the ninth congress of the Pirogov Society. Each congress connected their professional difficulties with a flaw in the regime, and claimed that they needed the liberal reforms in order to realize their professional objectives. The former was suspended before the due date by the government, and some leading members were arrested. See about details of these congresses; I. P. Belokonskii, "Zemskoe dvizhenie do obrazovaniia partii Narodnoi Svobody" *Byloe*, 1907, No. 10 (22), pp. 246-251; Nancy Mandelker Frieden, *Russian Physicians in an Era of Reform and Revolution, 1856-1905*. (Princeton University Press, 1981), chapter 10. See also, *Iskra*, No. 58, pp. 4-5.

²⁷ S. R. Mintslov, *Peterburg v 1903-1910 godakh*. (Riga, 1931), p. 73.

and soon their resentment against the government turned into that against the basis of the regime of the country.²⁸ A description of Russian society then can be found in the diary of a monarchist, L. Tikhomirov. He wrote in his diary that the situation of the war was very bad; the government was losing its authority²⁹ and that in St. Petersburg everyone criticized the regime and said it would be necessary to reconstruct it fundamentally. He was very pessimistic and thought that all the present depraved and disorganized Russia could bring about would be anarchy.³⁰

Pessimistic opinions and anxiety also began to appear in newspapers and journals. In late April, the ultraconservative *Novoe Vremia* conceded that the early defeats were demoralizing,³¹ and on July 30th, *Peterburgskaia Gazeta* said that all Russian society was surprised at the bravery of the Japanese soldiers and that they were a very dangerous enemy.³² V. Miakotin wrote in the June issue of *Russkoe Bogatstvo* that now nobody doubted about the great difficulties of the war and even the most nationalistic publications ceased to tempt readers with the soothing words that the war would be finished early and easily.³³ Almost at the same time as this article, a paragraph on the insufficiency of preparations for the war in Russia appeared in the conservative journal *Russkii Vestnik*, the tone of argument of which had been very belligerent before.³⁴ As these cases show, the progress of the war obviously exerted influence on public opinion, and the support of the government was waning with the news of a series of unsuccessful battles. Yet there seemed to be other factors that mitigated the people's war fever and that dulled the national unity as a result.

Such factors had been latent in the structure of the rule of the Tsarist regime and came to the surface during the crisis of the war. The Empire system itself was a big obstacle to establishing national

²⁸ N. I. Astrov, *Vospominaniia*. (Paris, 1940), pp. 280–282.

²⁹ 25 let nazad. Iz dnevnikov L. Tikhomirova. April 3rd. *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, 1930, 1(38), p. 47.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, April 26th, p. 54.

³¹ A. Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: Russia in Disarray*. (Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 52.

³² *Peterburgskaia Gazeta*, July 30th 1904, pp. 1–2.

³³ V. Miakotin, *Khronika vnutrennei zhizni. Russkoe Bogatstvo*, 1904, No. 6, pp. 175–176.

³⁴ *Russkii Vestnik*, 1904, No. 6, pp. 856–861.

unity whether at the front or at the home front. While the ethnic groups had little interest in the Russian's war, the latter sometimes missed opportunities to gain the support of the former. For example, the Jewish people often expressed loyalty to the Tsar, as above-mentioned. Moreover, they donated a sizeable sum of money for the wartime needs and offered their assistance, working as medical doctors and nurses for the Red Cross Society. However, the Odessa local branch of the Red Cross Society rejected the Jewish feldshers' proposal to work as nurses, and Jewish girls were not accepted in the short training course for nurses.³⁵ Or, at the front—according to a report from the British Consul General in Warsaw, the Poles “who form a very large proportion of the permanent garrison in Eastern Siberia” were always treated with peculiar harshness, and never allowed to forget that they were foreigners in Russian bondage. For instance, Russian soldiers were allowed to strike the Poles in the mouth if they used their native language even among themselves. Moreover, the Polish soldiers particularly complained of the want of chaplains and of means of practicing their religion, and as a result, they, being devout Catholics, were very unwilling to run the risk of dying without confession and did all they could to stay away from danger. The Consul properly pointed out that because of such a situation, the Polish soldiers felt no solidarity with the Russian cause, nor even regimental esprit de corps, which is a fatal state in time of war.³⁶

Thus, in addition to the lost battles, these cases were factors that estranged the people from the war.³⁷ Among the alienating factors, Pleve's repressive policies were the most harmful to the integration of the public into the war fervor and the war effort. Soon after his inauguration to the post of Minister of Internal Affairs, Pleve began to attack the zemstvo liberalism. Late in 1903 he set about the inspection of some zemstvos. The first target was the Moscow Provincial

³⁵ *Voskhod*, 1904, No. 6, column 13, No. 8, columns 1–3, No. 9, column 13.

³⁶ PRO, FO 65/1690, Dispatch No. 18 from Warsaw dated September 10th, 1904.

³⁷ It does not follow from such cases that there was no effort to unite the people at that time. In Bessarabia the Governor requested the Orthodox church to cooperate to calm the anti-Semitic feelings among the public, saying that the Jews in Bessarabia expressed loyalty to the Throne and readiness of devotion for their Fatherland from the beginning of the war. *Voskhod*, 1904, No. 13, columns 10–11.

Zemstvo, which the Ministry of Internal Affairs considered to be a typical zemstvo with the wrong tendency in its activities because of its centralization.³⁸ The inspection of the Moscow Provincial Zemstvo was carried out by N.A. Zinov'ev, the Assistant Minister of Internal Affairs, in October of 1903, and the report was published in May of 1904. In the report, Zinov'ev focused on the intention of the Provincial Zemstvo to watch over the county zemstvos and on the increasing participation of the alien elements, or "the third elements", in the local initiatives, and concluded that the general tendency of the activities of the Moscow Provincial Zemstvo hardly conformed to the law nor the local cause.³⁹ *Iskra* stated that with this report the autocracy had concluded that an inner enemy had appeared, which constituted a serious attack on the democracy of the zemstvo intelligentsia, and that such a government policy would drive them toward revolution.⁴⁰ The report was so critical of the zemstvo, and it must have had an influence on the problem of the General Zemstvo Organization established at the initiative of the Moscow Provincial Zemstvo. Furthermore, at the end of 1903, the inspection was carried out in Tver' Province, where the Provincial Zemstvo and some county zemstvos, especially the Novotorzhok County Zemstvo, had long had a reputation for liberalism.⁴¹ On January 8th 1904, Pleve presented Nicholas II with a report, in which he criticized the activities of the Tver' Provincial Zemstvo and suggested that the minister himself should be permitted to appoint the members of the Tver' Provincial and Novotorzhok County Zemstvos boards for three years, 1904–1906. He also wanted to ban those persons who had a harmful influence on the course of zemstvo administration from the province. Nicholas agreed with Pleve, and the government appointed a provincial zemstvo board in place of the elected board.⁴²

³⁸ Beselovskii, *Istoriia zemstva*. Tom 3, p. 548.

³⁹ I used a version of Zinov'ev's report reprinted in the journal of the Ekaterinoslav Provincial Zemstvo, "*Vestnik Ekaterinoslavskogo Zemstva*", 1904, No. 27–28, pp. 820–828. See also; Veselovskii, *Istoriia Zemstva*, Tom 3, pp. 548–549; K. Arsen'ev, "Moskovskoe gubernskoe zemstvo i administrativnaia reviziia" *Vestnik Evropy*, 1904, No. 9; Judge, *Pleve*, pp. 205–207.

⁴⁰ "Rekrutskii nabor revoliutsii" *Iskra*, 1904, No. 71, pp. 1–2.

⁴¹ On the liberal tendency of the Tver province and governmental concern about it, see; Charles E. Timberlake, "The Tsarist Government's Preoccupation with the 'Liberal Party' in Tver' Province, 1890–1905" in Mary Schaeffer Conroy (ed.), *Emerging Democracy in Late Imperial Russia*. (University Press of Colorado, 1998), pp. 30–59.

⁴² Veselovskii, *Istoriia zemstva*. Tom 3, pp. 549–551; Judge, *Pleve*, p. 207.

After the outbreak of the war, Pleve's hostile policy toward the zemstvos remained unchanged and was even applied to their patriotic actions, for instance the organization of the General Zemstvo Organization for the purpose of caring for wounded and sick soldiers at the front. The Moscow Provincial Zemstvo took the initiative in promoting the program. At its assembly of February 10th, the Moscow Zemstvo decided to organize medical aid for wounded and sick soldiers at or near the battlefield, and elected a committee in order to make a plan of action and consult with other institutions over the matter. On the same day, the Provincial board and the committee set to work and D. N. Shipov, who had just been elected to his fifth three-year term as chairman of the Provincial board, informed fourteen provincial boards of the decision of the Moscow Zemstvo.⁴³ Maintaining its contact with the Red Cross Society, the Moscow Provincial Zemstvo made a plan. In early March it presented, with seven other provincial zemstvos, a note covering six points to I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, chairman of the executive committee of the Red Cross Society. In the note, the representatives of the zemstvos stated that a united organization of zemstvos was necessary for the fruitful work of aiding wounded and sick soldiers, and that they would organize a special executive body in Moscow for relations both with the Red Cross Society and with the zemstvos boards and agents in the Far East.⁴⁴ In this manner the General Zemstvo Organization was established.

The first meeting of the General Zemstvo Organization was held on March 10th at the Moscow Provincial Board, in which 11 representatives from 8 zemstvos took part. After that meeting, five meetings were held from March 17th to May 2nd, in which from 19 to 28 representatives from 11 to 14 zemstvos were present. In these meetings they decided to send medical detachments according to the sum of the donations from each zemstvo, while each zemstvo maintained its autonomy, to organize a committee in Moscow so that each zemstvo could order necessary equipment, and to elect D. N. Shipov as special commissioner to unite the activities of each zemstvo.⁴⁵

⁴³ T. I. Polner, *Obshchezemskaiia organizatsiia na Dal'nem Vostoke*. Tom 1, (M., 1908), pp. 6-7.

⁴⁴ Polner, *Obshchezemskaiia organizatsiia*, pp. 7-13.

⁴⁵ Polner, *Obshchezemskaiia organizatsiia*, pp. 16-18. About the minutes of meetings on March 10th, 17th, and 18th, see "Soveshchanie predstavitelei zemstv, pristu-

The role that Shipov played in this project was very distinguished. His patriotic devotion to the cause was so impressive that almost all zemstvos published his statement at the meeting on March 10th; "The task is very difficult, it needs great energy, but zemstvos can give [something] to people in difficulty, and it can concentrate the powers of society."⁴⁶

Pleve reacted to this movement by the rejection of Shipov's reelection as chairman of the Moscow Provincial Board and by a circular that placed restrictions on further development of the General Zemstvo Organization. Pleve considered it politically dangerous for Shipov to continue his efforts to defend the independence of local self-government and to form an interregional zemstvo union.⁴⁷ On April 20th, the non-confirmation of Shipov was formally announced. Just before it, on April 17th, Pleve sent a circular to all the provinces, in which he banned any new zemstvos from participating in the General Zemstvo Organization. According to this circular, the Moscow governor notified the Provincial Board that it must inform him in advance of any meeting of representatives for the cooperative aid to wounded and sick soldiers, and that no new contact would be permitted with zemstvos that had not yet participated in the General Zemstvo Organization by that time. Furthermore, the governor, also according to the circular of Pleve, ordered the Board to present a list of names of the medical detachments' staff for prior approval.⁴⁸ Thus several zemstvos could not join the General Zemstvo Organization, and its magnitude was greatly restricted, though its medical detachments began to arrive in the Far East in the middle of May and to become operative.⁴⁹ Pleve's policies not only made even "the most moderate zemstvos"⁵⁰ furious, but turned all the strata of the society against him.⁵¹

paiushchikh k sovместnoi organizatsii pomoshchi bol'nym i ranenym voenam na Dal'nem Vostoke," *Saratovskaia Zemskaia Nedelia*, 1904, No. 2, pp. 59–69.

⁴⁶ Polner, *Obshchezemskaia organizatsiia*, p. 61; *Saratovskaia Zemskaia Nedelia*, No. 2, p. 59.

⁴⁷ Thomas Porter and William Gleason, "The Zemstvo and the Transformation of Russian Society" In: Mary Schaeffer Conroy (ed.), *Emerging Democracy in Late Imperial Russia*, p. 70. In the report of Zinov'ev, Shipov was accused because of the important role he played in the centralization of county zemstvos' activities in the Provincial Zemstvo. See *Vestnik Ekaterinoslavskogo Zemstva*, Nos. 27–28, pp. 822ff.

⁴⁸ Polner, *Obshchezemskaia organizatsiia*, pp. 36–37.

⁴⁹ Polner, *Obshchezemskaia organizatsiia*, pp. 37–40; finally twelve provincial zemstvos and one county zemstvo took participate in the General Zemstvo Organization.

⁵⁰ Belokonskii, *Zemskoe dvizhenie do obrazovaniia partii Narodnoi Svobody*, p. 264.

⁵¹ Belokonskii, *Zemskoe dvizhenie do obrazovaniia partii Narodnoi Svobody*,

Moreover, hostility toward social spontaneity made Pleve restrain the masses from staging even patriotic demonstrations. Though it was reported in the newspapers that patriotic demonstrations were orderly, there seemed to be collisions between the demonstrators and the police. On January 30th, Mintslov wrote in his diary about a patriotic demonstration that evening; "at about 11 o'clock in the evening, the police interfered and began to disperse the most restless (demonstrators), and some people had to extinguish their patriotic blaze in the police-station."⁵² Probably in the face of such cases, the police prohibited demonstrations.⁵³ Indeed, from the viewpoint of the maintenance of public order, the policy of prohibition of public demonstrations and manifestations may be regarded as proper, but it must have acted negatively on the public integration into the war effort by suppressing the spontaneous patriotic feeling of the people. Pleve's repressive policies caused antipathy toward him especially among the educated. Together with the unfavorable course of the war, demands for a general reform of the whole regime surfaced by autumn 1904.⁵⁴ As I describe below, the policy was in striking contrast to the wartime situation in Japan.

The General Population and the War

In order to make farewell speeches to the detachments leaving for the Far East, Nicholas II went around to Belgorod, Kremenchug, Poltava,

p. 267; Judge, *Pleve*, pp. 216–217. P. Miliukov mentioned a complaint of a military officer; "Is not every spontaneous action doomed? Is there any room left for conscious patriotism? Has not even the humble attempt of the self-governing assemblies to unite in helping the sick and wounded been denounced as criminal, and forbidden by Pleve?" Cited in: Thomas Porter and William Gleason, *The Zemstvo and the Transformation of Russian Society*, p. 70.

⁵² Mintslov, *Peterburg v 1903–1910*, pp. 60–61.

⁵³ *Iskra* said in the report dated February 4th that the police prohibited demonstrations because they feared counter-demonstrations in St. Petersburg. *Iskra*, No. 60, p. 4. The Moscow Governor-General proclaimed to the population that judging from the serious situation of Russia, they should return to a calm daily life because their patriotic feeling had already been approved by the Tsar. This proclamation was in reality a prohibition against mass demonstrations. *PV*, February 5th, p. 3.

⁵⁴ In autumn students also began to express their anti-war demands, and late in November there was one demonstration in St. Petersburg, when the police beat students severely. See; Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905*, pp. 67–68; *Rabochee dvizhenie v Rossii v 1901–1904 gg. Sbornik dokumentov*. (Leningrad, 1975), pp. 310–312.

Tula and so on early in May, and Kolomna, Penza, Morshansk, Syzrani, Zlatoust', Samara, Tambov, Novgorod and so on from late June to early July.⁵⁵ Such visits should have brought about joy and excitement among the local people. However, a correspondence from Samara published in *Iskra* reported that; (1) The mobilization made people restless; (2) The poor in the city were furious with the rich that allegedly escaped enlistment; (3) During the draft of reservists, there were not a few clashes with the police and also conflicts between officers and reservists; (4) The mood of the soldiers was not warlike at all and words "Why do we go to war? The war is not necessary for us!" caught people's ear without letup; (5) On the occasion of the visit of the Tsar, no patriotic animation was noticeable.⁵⁶ According to another paragraph of the journal published on August 1st, distrust of the authorities and bureaucrats prevailed and expectation focused on the Tsar-Batiushka (the Tsar, our Little Father) was not heard then, although people had talked about the war without any irritation and had believed in the Russian invincibility three months before.⁵⁷

A report from Podol'sk province in *Revoliutsionnaia Rossiia* published on August 25th said that the long-awaited birth of "Tsarevich" Aleksei Nikolaevich had not produced satisfactory results under the threat of Japanese cannons. Even the ordinary people were indifferent to the Imperial manifesto that was issued as a result of the birth of the Crown Prince; it prohibited the corporal punishment of peasants and soldiers. However, the people were silent, being preoccupied with the beginning mobilization, and their discontent found expression in their silence.⁵⁸ These reports show that authoritative force of the Tsar was declining even among the mass population late in the spring or early in the summer of 1904, and that the mobilization of a great number of reservists⁵⁹ was a significant mitigating force against the public support of the war.

⁵⁵ *Polnoe sobranie rechei Imperatora Nikolaia II, 1894–1906*. (S-Pb., 1906), pp. 43–50.

⁵⁶ *Iskra*, No. 72, p. 5.

⁵⁷ *Iskra*, No. 71, p. 5.

⁵⁸ *Revoliutsionnaia Rossiia*, No. 51, p. 15.

⁵⁹ During the Russo-Japanese war, reserves were mobilized in 673 counties and 8 Cossack-districts in total. 116 counties of 673 were mobilized twice and 15 counties three times. The number of mobilized reservists was 1,754,146, of whom 1,669,544 appeared at the mobilization depots and 1,174,913 went into the service. See: Jan Kusber, *Krieg und Revolution in Rußland 1904–1906*. (Stuttgart, 1997), p. 62.

Moreover, the reservists themselves caused social disturbances. According to an investigation by John Bushnell, between the time reservists arrived at the mobilization depots and their inscription on unit rosters, they were involved in 123 serious disorders, 107 of which occurred during the mobilizations of September, October and December 1904. In 1904, regular troops, which were sent out against civilian disorders 62 times, were called out 67 times against rioting reservists.⁶⁰ And the pogrom against the Jewish people followed a parallel course with the reservists' disorder because the reservists found vent for their pent-up feelings in Jewish people. The number of pogroms in 1904 began to increase in August, peaked in October and remained not insignificant in November, though they were decreasing.⁶¹

For example, on September 7th, as soon as the soldiers stopped over at the Gomel station (Mogilev Province) on the way to the Far East, they began to loot small neighborhood shops. The goods they plundered were exclusively foodstuffs such as sausage, white bread, sugar, tea and so on. Jewish shop owners closed their shops in fear of a recurrence of a pogrom, but they became a little relieved to see them plunder only foodstuff and also loot the shops of Russians.⁶² Thus in Gomel Jewish people were not a direct target of the reservists; however, in other places in the same province, Jewish people seemed to be the direct target of the agitated reservists.⁶³ A report from Ekaterinoslav also reveals a similar situation. There 35 thousand reservists were mobilized, including many Jewish people, but 600 of the Jewish reservists evaded the draft, and the rumor that Jewish people were sending their relatives abroad spread in the city. This situation combined with the rise in the price of vodka aggravated the soldiers. They went around in the city, whistling and shouting, struck anyone whom they came across on the street or forced the

⁶⁰ John Bushnell, *Mutiny amid Repression: Russian Soldiers in the Revolution of 1905–1906*. (Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 42.

⁶¹ Shlomo Lambroza, "The Pogroms of 1903–1906," eds. John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*. (Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 227–228. According to Lambroza, the number of pogroms in 1904 was 43, of which 24 were related with the war in some sense. In December 1904, pogroms decreased, as a new mobilization rule covering reserves was introduced as a result of the proposal by Kuropatkin.

⁶² *Iskra*, No. 74, p. 6.

⁶³ *Voskhod*, No. 21, columns 19–20.

person to show the cross. Six Jewish people were slaughtered. A chief of police who tried to persuade the crowd to desist was struck, and a student who wanted to distribute leaflets was severely beaten nearly to death. Jewish people were forbidden to go out into the city.⁶⁴ In this incident the Jewish people were the obvious object of the attack by the reservists.

The important point to note is that a serious situation resulted, in which the social unrest caused by mobilization of reserves would soon coalesce as an anti-war movement.⁶⁵ A correspondence from Mariupol' in *Iskra* said that the partial mobilization revolutionized the local people. On September 2nd, worker-reservists and people accompanying them for send-off walked along the streets, singing revolutionary songs. On the same day in some places of the city, there were cries "Down with the autocracy!" or "Down with war!" Another report from Elisavetgrad said that the draft of reserves brought about a very strong movement among the peasants. In many villages meetings were held and a question was put point-blank; "Should we go to war?" Many decided to protest and refuse the enlistment of their children. They decided that they should demand material provisions from the government for the families of the draftees, if the general refusal was not successful, though the peasants themselves were supposed to take care of the families of the drafted reservists in reality. Moreover, it reported that on the occasion of the mobilization of 300 reservists, 40 of them would not enter the train, and at the moment leaflets were distributed, and from among the reservists cries resounded; "Down with war, down with the autocracy!"⁶⁶

⁶⁴ *Iskra*, No. 74, p. 6. As for Jewish draft evasion, Robert Blobaum touched upon cases in Poland. He stated that evasion of military service was particularly widespread among the Jewish population, whose communities traditionally preferred to pay heavy fines rather than deliver recruits to the Russian army. Robert E. Blobaum, *Revolucja: Russian Poland, 1904–1907*. (Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 47. On the other hand, a Jewish journal, *Voskhod*, reported that on the occasion of conscription in Belostok, which ended on October 18th, 103 Christians and 31 Jews went into the service and that 61 Christians and 35 Jews of those who were called up to active duty did not appear and thus the number of draft evasions for some reason was larger among Christians than among Jews. *Voskhod*, 1904, No. 22, p. 22.

⁶⁵ For more on the special role of the reservists in the dynamics of 1904–5, see John Bushnell, "The Specter of Mutinous Reserves: How the War Produced the October Manifesto" ed. Steinberg et al. *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, 2005), 333–348.

⁶⁶ *Iskra*, No. 75, p. 6.

Similar incidents occurred on the occasion of the mobilization of reservists in early September in Odessa. Almost every time at the railway stations, when thousands of people gathered, there happened striking clashes with the police. Owing to the increasing activity of the revolutionary organizations and the successful distribution of leaflets among the masses, the cries, "Down with the Tsar!" "Down with the autocracy!" "We do not want war!" mixed with the wail of going into the jaws of death.⁶⁷

It was in Poland that social unrest brought on by the war was distinctly linked with the anti-war movements. From the beginning, the attitude toward the war in Poland ranged from indifferent to hostile.⁶⁸ In addition to that, its economy, especially the textile industry, was severely hit by the war, mainly because the outbreak of war caused the curtailment of German credits.⁶⁹ By late May the deterioration of the financial condition in Warsaw touched off chain reactions that spread into the provinces that had got funds in Warsaw. Industry was stagnant and many enterprises reduced or stopped their operations. At that time, 15,000 workers had lost their jobs in an important industrial center, Lodz.⁷⁰ Though there was variation among regions, unemployment or partial employment affected one third of the employees in industrial and commercial enterprises, that is, about three hundred fifty thousand in Russian Poland in total. Social conditions were further deteriorated because of a rise in food prices.⁷¹

Furthermore, the fact that Poland provided a disproportionate share of recruits for the war⁷² strengthened the growing anti-war movement. Thus opposition in urban areas was more active, par-

⁶⁷ *Revoliutsionnaia Rossiia*, No. 54, p. 18. A report from the British Consulate General in Odessa in early September said that there was no enthusiasm anywhere, indeed everyone seemed to hate the war, and another reported about an incident; "There was disorder in the station, windows broken, and women and children on the rails in front of the train". PRO, FO/ 65/ 1689, memorandum on September 15th and 20th, and see also a letter of October 28th (the Gregorian calendar).

⁶⁸ Blobaum, *Revolucija*, p. 44.

⁶⁹ Pavlovich, "Vneshniaia politika i russko-iaponskaia voina" *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachale XX veka*. Tom 2, chast' 1, (S-Pb., 1910), p. 23; *Russkaia Mysl'*, 1904, No. 3, p. 188.

⁷⁰ Miakotin, "Khronika vnutrennei zhizni" *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, 1904, No. 6, pp. 185-186. See also, "Vnutrennee obozrenie" *Russkaia Mysl'*, No. 5, p. 218.

⁷¹ Blobaum, *Revolucija*, pp. 55-56.

⁷² Blobaum, *Revolucija*, pp. 46-47.

ticularly in Warsaw, which by early summer had become the focal point of the growing discontent against the war.⁷³ The new mobilization of reserves in October exacerbated the anti-war movement still more. In the last week of October, there were large demonstrations in some places of Warsaw, Lodz, Zwiercie, and Czestochowa, almost all of which were accompanied by violent clashes between the police and demonstrators. The situation was so critical by the end of November that the Warsaw governor-general was forced to seek authorization from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to proclaim a state of intensified security in Warsaw, Warsaw county, and all of Piotrkow Province.⁷⁴

As has been noted, discontent among the lower classes with the war manifested itself most obviously in disturbances and pogroms started by the drafted reservists in autumn. Evasion and the workers' movements against the war and mobilizations likewise reflected the increasing anti-war feeling in the society. Flight and evasion prevailed especially in the western and southwestern regions. According to a paragraph of *Revoliutsionnaia Rossiia*, eleven thousand people fled abroad in the Odessa military district alone.⁷⁵ A dispatch from the British Consul General in Warsaw reported that in the Suwalki Province of Poland, only eight out of three hundred reservists presented themselves, and that reservists, together with a few deserters, were crossing the Western frontier literally in the hundreds in spite of the strict watch kept by the Frontier Guard who would fire on them without hesitation.⁷⁶ As for the workers' anti-war movements,

⁷³ See a series of dispatches in July from the British Consulate General in Warsaw. PRO, FO/ 65/ 1690.

⁷⁴ Blobaum, *Revolucja*, pp. 48–50. See also a dispatch by the British Consul General in Warsaw dated November 14th (Gregorian calendar), PRO, FO/ 65/ 1690. In that dispatch he wrote; "Unfortunately, these disturbances caused by the distress now prevailing in this district and the disorder attending the mobilization have accustomed the people to the idea of demonstrations and resistance to authority and hardly a day passes without a riot being reported either in Warsaw or in one of the provincial towns."

⁷⁵ *Revoliutsionnaia Rossiia*, No. 53, p. 11.

⁷⁶ PRO, FO/ 65/ 1690, dispatch dated October 28th (Gregorian calendar). As to flight and evasion from April to October 1904, we have the following information, though without a source, in the book: Carl Joubert, *The Truth about the Tsar and the Present State of Russia*. (Philadelphia & London, 1905), p. 68.

there were 44 workers' demonstrations against the war and mobilizations in 1904, of which 38 (86.4%) occurred from September to December. There also occurred 19 demonstrations for other causes, but at the same time with the anti-war slogans, 16 demonstrations of which were held between September and December.⁷⁷

The preceding arguments show that the war fervor evidenced in the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war had ceased by summer 1904, and that almost all strata of the society were disgusted with the war. The two diagrams in the Appendix, which show the decline in donations for the wartime needs, corroborate these points.

In Comparison: Japanese Society during the War

If we consider some aspects of the situation in Japan during the war, we might presume that social disorder similar to that in Russia would also occur in Japan. The fighting spirit of the soldiers, especially those who were fighting hard in the field, was depressed, and so many soldiers wounded themselves in order to escape a sortie.⁷⁸ The morale of the soldiers and drafted reservists both at the front and at home was weakened and crimes committed by them were increas-

	Regular troops	reserves
Vil'no	900	3,120
Smolensk	340	1,100
Peterburg	700	5,600
Orenburg	90	612
Orel	1,400	2,800
Mogilev	690	3,200
Minsk	72	1,700
Livonia	9	1,400
Kherson	245	4,985
Khar'kov	716	14,000
Kovno	157	16,000
Ekaterinoslav	—	922
Don Military District	1,400	7,000
Chernigov	720	3,945
Bessarabia	114	967

⁷⁷ Iu. I. Kir'ianov, *Perekhod k massovoi politicheskoi bor'be*. (M., 1987), p. 160.

⁷⁸ Oe Shinobu, *Nichiro senso-no gunjishi-teki kenkyu* (Iwanami shoten, 1976), pp. 243–268; Ohama Tetsuya, *Meiji-no bohyo* (Shuei shuppan, 1970), pp. 187–191.

ing rapidly.⁷⁹ Social conditions also deteriorated. After the outbreak of the war, the Japanese people suffered from very heavy taxes and practically forced contributions of money for the war effort. In these circumstances the Japanese socialists and some Christians started an anti-war movement, which was disregarded by the government, at least in the early stage of the war.⁸⁰ Serious social disturbances, however, did not occur until the end of the war in Japan. Why did the Japanese home front endure the difficulties caused by the war with Russia?

First, the enemy was very obvious for almost all Japanese people. In Russia the surprise attack by Japan aroused their war fervor, but many people seemed not to have had any distinct hostility toward Japan before the outbreak of war. On the contrary, the Japanese ruling class had considered Russia a potential enemy already early in the Meiji period, and hostility toward Russia among the masses increased after the Triple Intervention by Germany, France and Russia in 1895. It is well known that after the incident a slogan "Gashin shotan" spread widely among the Japanese people, which reflected a feeling that they would get their revenge on Russia someday.⁸¹ A recent study reveals that the resentment caused by the Triple Intervention was not an important factor for the war.⁸² However, there is no doubt that the masses perceived Russia to be a Japanese enemy.

Second, the public opinion in Japan, except the anti-war opinion of a small number of socialists and Christians, had been united for the war even before its outbreak. In the latter half of 1903, when

⁷⁹ Oe, *Nichiro senso-no gunjishi-teki kenkyu*, pp. 269–290. Oe's study detailed various problems in the Japanese army enough to refute the view that one of important factors of the Japanese victory lay in the superiority of Japanese soldiers over their Russian counterparts.

⁸⁰ Arahata Kanson, *Heiminsha jidai*, (Chuko bunko, 1977), pp. 45–46; idem, *Kanson jiden* (Iwanami bunko, 1975), vol. 1, p. 91. Arahata Kanson pointed out that the government could not but wink at the anti-war propaganda by socialists because it tried to persuade Western countries to believe that civilized Japan was fighting against uncivilized autocratic Russia that had neither democracy nor civil liberties.

⁸¹ This incident was explained even in primary schools and children were imbued with the slogan. See, *Tokyo hyakunen-shi*, vol. 3 (Tokyo, 1972), pp. 891–892.

⁸² Kato Yoko, *Senso-no nihon kingendai-shi* (Kodansha Gendai shinsho, 2002), pp. 142–143. Kato concluded that the concept of the open-door policy was accepted as a principle of the civilized world among the Japanese people and that they came to consider Russia as an enemy of civilization, which intended to monopolize Manchuria by flouting the Open Door.

the negotiations with Russia reached an impasse, the masses came to support the war with Russia eagerly. In his memoirs, Ubukata Toshiro, a journalist and novelist, wrote that in spite of the fear of Russia as a great military power, the people got bolder and bolder because they thought the war with Russia was inevitable and that, if they had to fight at all, they would like to defeat Russia.⁸³ On the other hand, the majority of the industrial capitalists did not necessarily support this activism, because export was increasing satisfactorily and they thought they did not dare to take a risk. However, when the press that had been against the war with Russia changed its attitude late in 1903 and the passion for the war among the masses increasingly swelled, the capitalists came to fear the stagnation that would be caused by the prolonged unstable situation and decided to solve it by force.⁸⁴ Thus, on the eve of the outbreak of the war, Japanese public opinion was united in favor of opening hostilities against Russia. Such unity, however, was not solid, and all aspects, social, economic and military, of the war afflicted the people. Therefore, the government needed to maintain the unity and to continue driving them into the war effort by various means.

Thereupon, various institutions and devices in Japanese society fulfilled their functions in serving the purposes of the government. Consider now two phases of this point. One is the support for the families of conscripted soldiers and reservists, and the other is the problem of mobilization and participation of the people in such festivities connected with the war such as congratulatory meetings and lantern parades.⁸⁵

As a universal conscription system was being established in Japan, the support for the families of draftees began as an additional task of local administrative bodies in the 1880s. These laid the foundation

⁸³ Ubukata Toshiro, *Meiji Taisho kenbunko* (Chuko-bunko, reprinted edition, 1978, originally published in 1926), pp. 143–144. According to one historian, the reason for the public support for the war with Russia was a desperate sense widespread among the masses early in the twentieth century, which resulted from the distress of the peasants and the difficulties of artisans and factory workers. The despair turned into public chauvinism. See, Fujimura Michio, “Kaisen seron-no kozo,” in Shinobu Seizaburo & Nakayama Jiichi eds., *Nichiro senso-shi-no kenkyu*. (Kawadeshobo shinsha, 1972, revised ed.), pp. 189–193.

⁸⁴ Fujimura, *Kaisen seron-no kozo*, pp. 180–186, 211–212.

⁸⁵ The funeral of a fallen soldier is an important function, but it will not be covered herein.

for the support activities during the Sino-Japanese war. After that war, various types of associations of reservists were organized and became rapidly widespread all over the country. These organizations disseminated military ideas among the local citizens and served to strengthen the relationship of the armed forces with the local society.⁸⁶ The support for the families of the drafted soldiers and reservists during the Russo-Japanese war was based on such experiences during the Sino-Japanese war and after that. On May 1st of 1904, the law that regulated the support for the families of the rank and file was promulgated, but according to the regulation, the state was to support the families only when they could not receive help from their relatives, friends, neighbors, or local support organizations. Thus, the state support for the families of the draftees was limited to a minimum. Therefore, not much changed.⁸⁷

Support ranged over a number of spheres such as financial aid, offers of work, exemption or reduction of primary school fees and local taxes, free medical examinations at public hospitals, work training and so on.⁸⁸ It is remarkable that these actions began systematically just after the outbreak of the war. The authorities regarded the support as important first of all in order to raise the fighting spirit of the soldiers and to encourage the people to actively participate in the war effort and to be able to relate to the soldiers at the front. The governor of Miyagi prefecture definitely stated in a memorandum to the mayors in that prefecture that the families of draftees must be supported to free soldiers from anxiety about their families because that might exert not a little influence on the spirit of the nation in wartime.⁸⁹ Indeed, the allowance that the families of the

⁸⁶ Arakawa Shoji, *Guntai-to chiiki* (Aoki shoten, 2001), pp. 31–38, 48–49, 59–63.

⁸⁷ Arakawa, *Guntai-to chiiki*, p. 75; Kitadomari Kentaro, “Nichiro senso-chu-no shusse gunjin kazoku engo-ni kansuru ichi kosatsu” *Machikaneyama Ronso*, 1999, No. 33, pp. 51–73.

⁸⁸ *Aichi kenshi: Shiryō-hen 32, Kindai 9, Shakai-Shakai undo* (Aichi-ken, 2002), pp. 92–93, pp. 381–383; Arakawa, *Guntai-to chiiki*, pp. 76–77; *Tokyo hyakumen-shi*, vol. 3, pp. 992–999; Iguchi Kazuki, *Nichiro senso-no jidai* (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1998), pp. 140–142; Work training sometimes accompanied organization of a day nursery by patriotic women’s organizations. In Osaka nurseries were organized mainly by benevolent women’s associations. The support activities by the local administrative bodies could be expanded with such participation of voluntary benevolent organizations. See, Kitadomari, “Nichiro senso-chu-no shusse gunjin kazoku engo-ni kansuru ichi kosatsu,” pp. 68–69.

⁸⁹ *Tohoku shimbun*, May 3rd 1904, cited in Anzai Kunio et al. (eds.), *Nihon-no kindai: Kokka-to minshu* (Azusa shuppansha, 1984), p. 118. A chairman of the reservist

draftees received from the state and local organizations was not satisfactory enough to lighten the difficulty of their living.⁹⁰ Therefore, tragic cases sometimes happened. For instance, in Kumamoto prefecture, a widower draftee killed his own two children because he was pessimistic about their future after his going to the front.⁹¹ Nevertheless, the network of aid activities functioned as one of the important factors that sustained the war effort of the state.

Festivities such as congratulatory meetings and lantern processions were another important factor that integrated the people into the war effort at the home front.⁹² At the beginning of the war on the news of victorious battles at Chemulpo and Port Arthur, congratulatory lantern processions were staged in many places. In Tokyo, students and pupils of Keio Gijuku (a famous private school and university), employees of Ebisu Beer Company and so on, staged processions, the number of participants of which was about 2,300. The police authorities of Tokyo prohibited lantern parades after this case. The Ministry of Education also issued an order on the day of the outbreak of the war, instructing teachers to do their ordinary duty lest pupils and students should fluctuate between hopes and fears about the progress of each battle. Some days after that, the Ministry prohibited parents and students from participating in lantern processions. The Ministry of Internal Affairs gave notice that money should not be wasted on meetings and processions for sending the troops off nor congratulations for a victorious battle. In this manner, the Japanese government and the police considered that the congratulatory meetings and parades were undesirable activities, as the Russian government was afraid of the spontaneity of the masses.

association in a village of Aichi prefecture sent a letter to the soldiers, in which the chief informed them of the careful support for their families by the association and urged them to fight boldly. *Aichi kenshi*, pp. 387–388.

⁹⁰ For example, while the average annual income of the draftees themselves in a town of Shizuoka prefecture was about 120 yen, 20 yen per year was the average sum of the allowance given to each household of the draftees. Arakawa, *Guntai-to chiiki*, p. 76; In Tokyo city, the situation was not so different. See, Nogawa Yasuharu, *Nichiro senso-ki-no toshi shakai*, *Rekishi Hyoron*, 1997, No. 563, p. 29, table 2; also, *Tokyo hyakunen-shi*, vol. 3, pp. 999–1003; *Aichi kenshi*, pp. 388–389.

⁹¹ Iguchi Kazuki, *Nichiro senso-no jidai*, pp. 138–139.

⁹² On this problem, my argument is based mainly on the following: Sakurai Ryoju, “Nichiro senji-ni okeru minshu undo-no ittan: Kokumin-no ‘Genki’-to kodo-no jiyu, shukusho gyoretsu-wo daizai-toshite,” *Nihon Rekishi*, 1984, No.436, pp. 71–81; Nogawa, “Nichiro senso-ki-no toshi shakai,” pp. 30–33.

Some newspapers severely criticized the attitude of the police about the lantern parades because they regarded the parades as an important action, connecting with “the spirit of the nation (Kokumin-no genki)”. The prohibition by the Ministry of Education also met with opposition from teachers and parents of students. The police authorities of Tokyo were forced to change their policy to allow lantern processions under some conditions late in April.

On May 8th, a congratulatory meeting was held in Hibiya park in Tokyo, which was sponsored by newspaper offices, news agencies and magazine companies in Tokyo.⁹³ Military support associations of each district and other groups, the number of which was from 80 to 90 in total, took part in it. Tens of thousands of people gathered. For the first time in Tokyo after the case on the day of the outbreak of war, each group paraded with lanterns through the center of the city in front of the Palace and the Ministry of Army. The confusion of the parade caused by participants and spectators resulted in the death of twenty people. Therefore, the police authorities intensified control of lantern parades, and the sponsor of civic congratulatory meetings was shifted to the Tokyo municipal office. Thus, congratulatory meetings and lantern processions were under control of the police and administrative bodies.

But even if these activities were such, so many people participated in them. For example, about 586,000 people took part in the seven congratulatory meetings from February 1904 to June 1905 in Tokyo. It was because lantern processions and congratulatory meetings had the characteristic of a festival in that a number of people gathered to take part in or to see them. At the abovementioned meeting on May 8th, food and drink were served for free, and people could enjoy a film slide show and paintings of battle scenes.⁹⁴ Besides such

⁹³ Newspaper offices and news agencies played an important role also in the provinces in such war support activities such as appeals for donation and organization of congratulatory meetings and lantern parades. Above all, detailed reports by the local newspapers about the local draftees were very important, because they must have strengthened the connection of the front with the home front. See, Arakawa, *Guntai-to chiiki*, pp. 84–85.

⁹⁴ Visual war propaganda spread full scale during the Russo-Japanese war. The role of visual media is an important problem for the study of the wartime society, but the author is not ready to examine it. Here only note that one and a half thousand people gathered every night to see a slide show sponsored by the local branch of the Japanese Red Cross Society in Shizuoka city and that about one thousand people gathered even in the small villages in that prefecture. See, Arakawa, *Guntai-to chiiki*, p. 79.

entertainment, there were various programs that might inspire their national identity and their hostility toward Russia. Congratulatory meetings and lantern parades were both a pastime and a place for the formation of national identity. People could forget the difficulties of war during the meetings and parades. At the same time, people felt themselves to be members of a nation that was faced with the crisis, and identified themselves with the soldiers who were fighting at the front, thus reconfirming their readiness to support the war effort from the home front. Recent studies point out that congratulatory meetings and lantern parades that the masses actively participated in brought forth conditions for the popular movement against the peace treaty for the Russo-Japanese war.⁹⁵ But we can conclude that, at least during the war, they functioned as a device for national unity for the support of the war.

Conclusion

The surprise attack of Japan aroused the spontaneous patriotism of the Russian population and war fever seized various social strata. However, the Russian government failed to maintain the support of society for the war, because of the repressive policies of Pleve and the repeated defeats in battles. Pleve's policies hindered society from exerting its spontaneity for the war effort and forming a national unity based on spontaneous patriotism. Such a situation was in a remarkable contrast to that in Japan, where in spite of the first idea, the government was forced to allow the people to organize and participate in congratulatory meetings and lantern parades.

In addition to the repressive policies of the Russian government, repeated defeats drove educated society to examine the unsuccessful war in the light of the defects of the regime, so that it came to demand reform more than it had before the war. On the other hand, the anxiety and discontent of the masses resulted in pogroms and disturbances caused by the drafted reservists from the summer of 1904 on. There was support for the families of the draftees in

⁹⁵ It is also important to note that the total formation of the society for the war effort during the Russo-Japanese war lead up to the militarization of Japanese society.

Russia,⁹⁶ but a large number of the disturbances caused by the drafted reservists showed not only that they were displeased with going to the front, but also that they did not rest assured of their family's fortune.

There were also various sorts of cultural mobilization to encourage patriotism in Russia. A good example is popular painting. Here I can give another case. It is a welcome ceremony to the crew of two Russian navy ships, *Variag* and *Koreets*, which were sunk in the Japanese attack at Chemulpo, but the government and the St. Petersburg city municipality organized each ceremony, and the guests from foreign embassies were also invited to the ceremony by the government.⁹⁷ It is my understanding that it was very difficult to allow ordinary people to participate in the war effort on their own initiative under the practical prohibition of mass action.

Thus, in spite of early war fever, the Russian government failed to form the national unity that was indispensable to continuing the war successfully. The situation that we have examined so far produced at least two conditions for the first revolution; in the first place, the gulf between the government and the whole society was being formed even before "Bloody Sunday", and in the second place, the society that regarded lack of national unity as a crisis was to seek for it in the form of a representative system of the people, which was the most important demand of the first Russian revolution.

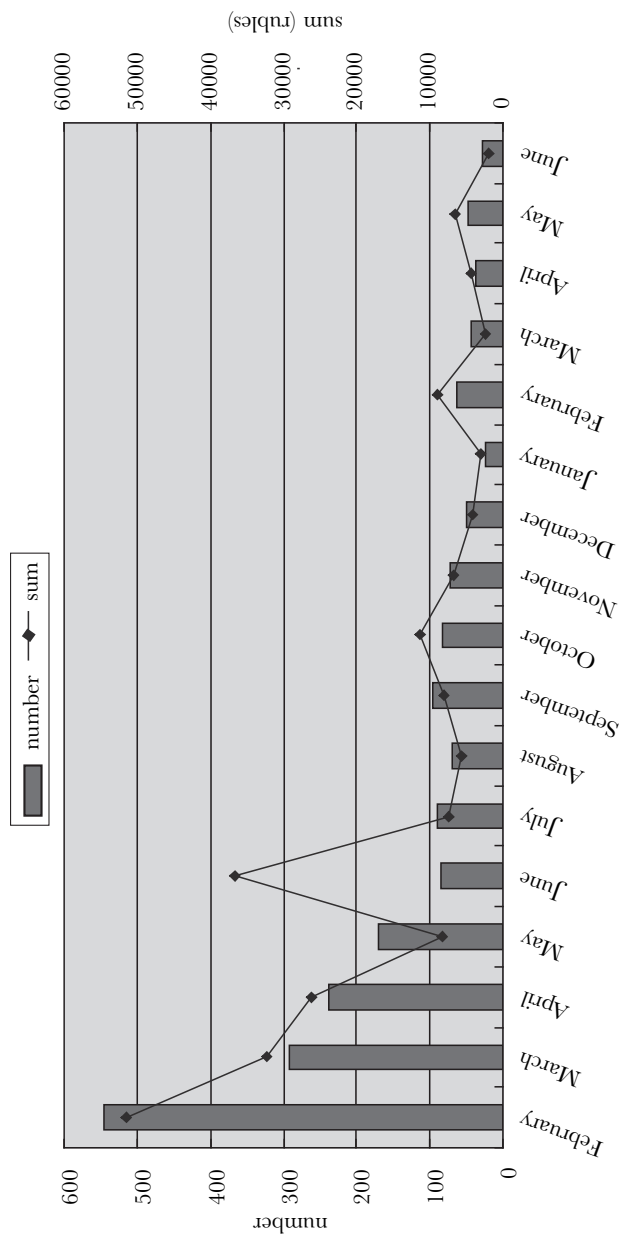
⁹⁶ The financial support for the families of the drafted rank and file was regulated by the statute on conscription, by which cities and village communities must take charge of the families in need. *Denezhnye vydachi v voennoe vremia chinam voennogo i grazhdanskogo vedomstv i obespechenie ikh semeistv*, pp. 79–93. It seems that according to this regulation, each municipality and organ decided how it would support the families of draftees, mainly on the basis of the experience of the Russo-Turkish War. For example, Khar'kov Provincial board assumed that if the number of draftees was 30 thousand, it would need 220,500 rubles every month. In Moscow city, where there had not been any mobilization by October 1st, the sum of financial support was small. Only 42 families received 1,842 rubles (average 44 rubles), in the form of a monthly or lump-sum allowance. So we may conclude that each family of the drafted rank and file received 5 to 7 rubles per month. See; *Vestnik vladimirskogo gubernskogo zemstva*, Nos. 5–6, 1905, pp. 21–22; on the regulation of Moscow city, *Izvestiia moskovskoi gorodskoi dumy. Otdel obshchii*. March 1904, pp. 34–35; October 1904, p. 39; on the regulation of St. Petersburg, *Izvestiia s-peterburgskoi gorodskoi dumy*, 1904, No. 21, pp. 1005–1008; No. 28, 1107–1109; No. 30, pp. 1471–1478, pp. 1494–1495; 1905, No. 10, pp. 1902–1906.

⁹⁷ *Izvestiia s-peterburgskoi gorodskoi dumy*, 1904, No. 10, pp. 1244–1251; PRO, FO/181/801.

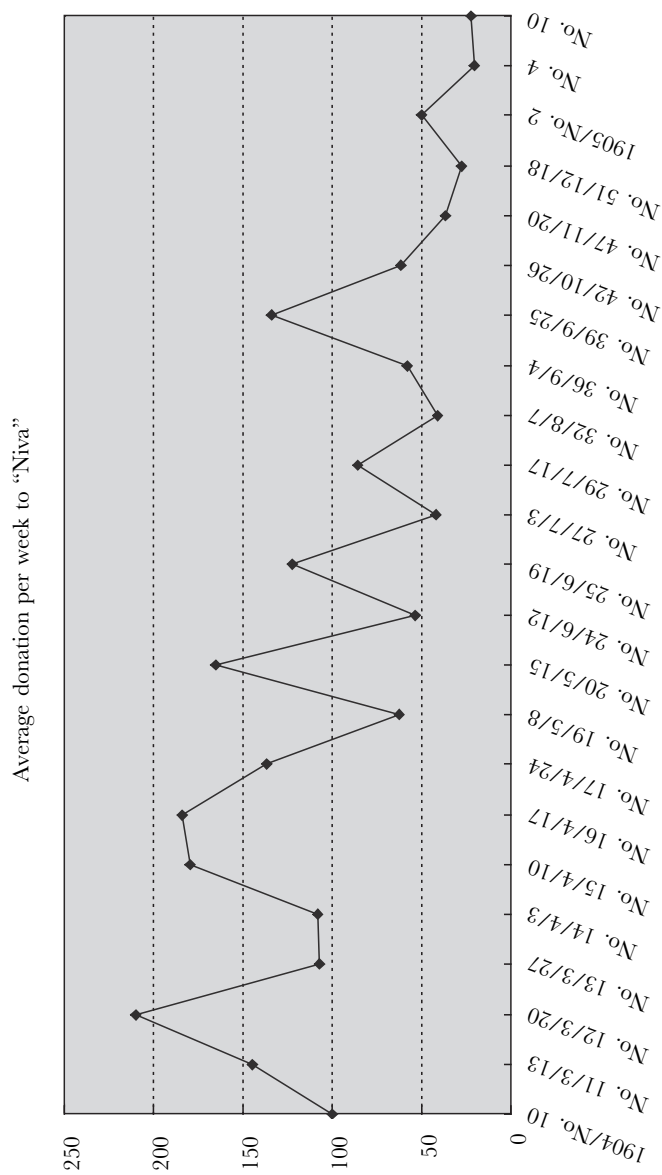
APPENDIX

Diagram 1⁹⁸

Donation to Ekaterinoslav Branch of the Red Cross Society



⁹⁸ Based on the data published in the 1904–1905 issues of *Vestnik Ekaterinoslavskogo Zemstva*.

Diagram 2^{*99}

* The sum (352 rub. 91 k.) published in No. 10 (March 6th) = 100

⁹⁹ Calculated by the author on the 1904–1905 issues of *Niva*.

PART III

THE CULTURAL PRISM

SHIFTING CONTOURS OF MEMORY AND HISTORY, 1904–1980

Chiba Isao

The French scholar Pierre Nora, in his introduction to *Realms of Memory*, a pathbreaking collection of essays on history and memory in France, writes of the need to scrutinize the enduring symbols of a nation's past: however central they are to the imagination of the people, they have “washed up from a sea of memory in which we no longer dwell.”¹ “The whole dynamic of our relation to the past,” he continues, is embodied by our interpretation of these symbols.² Although their initial purpose “is to stop time, to inhibit forgetting, to fix a state of things, to immortalize death, and to materialize the immaterial . . . , [they] thrive only because of their capacity for change, their ability to resurrect old meanings and generate new ones.” It is the job of the historian to recognize that they act on the national mindset as “distorting mirrors” and to explain what lies behind the resulting perceptions and misperceptions, which themselves influence the direction of political life.³ The symbols of French historical memory placed under the microscope by the various authors in Nora's book are obvious ones, among them the Franks and the Gauls, Joan of Arc, gastronomy, the Eiffel Tower, Verdun, and Vichy. The strongest thematic undercurrent is that of warfare, which always has a profound impact on a nation's psyche, both because of its immediate effect and its long-lasting, often highly contentious, legacy as symbol of national pride or national disgrace depending on the nature of a given conflict.

Nora's approach can be fruitfully applied to any country, and this article does so by analyzing Japanese memory and the Russo-Japanese War. A thorough examination of the war as evolving historical

¹ Pierre Nora, ed., *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, vol. I (New York, 1996), 7.

² *Ibid.*, 12.

³ *Ibid.*, 15.

symbol—in other words the changing Japanese perceptions of the war—will contribute to an understanding of the dramatic transformations of Japanese society that took place over the course of the twentieth century. While the article builds on the work of other scholars, this is the first comprehensive overview of the subject, unique in its coverage of both the pre- and post-World War II eras as well as a multitude of cultural forms, from monuments and commemorations to academic works, fiction, and film.

*Per-World War II Commemorations of the Russo-Japanese War*⁴

The wild enthusiasm exhibited by the Japanese during the war proved to be ephemeral and faded quickly. In part that was because some of the enthusiasm was artificially generated by the government to whip up the nation's fighting spirit—which was no longer necessary when the war was over. A case in point is the Naval Commander Hirose Takeo, whose reputation as a war hero was manufactured from above. At the outbreak of the war, Lieutenant Commander (later Rear Admiral) Ogasawara Naganari was ordered to collect materials about the naval battles between Japan and Russia from official sources for the propaganda purposes of the military. When Ogasawara received information in March 1904 that Hirose Takeo had died at the Battle of Port Arthur, he provided journalists with details of Hirose's heroic demise along with moving anecdotes of his life.⁵ The funeral was also an internationally publicized affair with all the trappings of a state ceremony, held at the Navy Officer's Aid Society (*Suikosha*) and attended by an imperial envoy as well as the Minister of the Navy, Yamamoto Gonbei.⁶

⁴ For this section as well as the next, see Chiba Isao, "Nichiro senso to Nihon shakai [The Russo-Japanese War and Japanese society]," in *Ajia no teikoku kokka* [Asian Empire State], ed. Kokaze Hidemasa (Tokyo, 2004).

⁵ Tanaka Hiromi, "Nisshin Nichiro kaisen shi no hensan to Ogasawara Naganari [Ogasawara Naganari and the Historiography of the Naval Battles between Japan and China, and Japan and Russia]," *Gunji shigaku*, vol. 18, no. 3 (1982) and no. 4 (1982); *Boei Daigakuko kiyo: Jinbun shakai kagaku hen*, 47 (1983); Tanaka Hiromi, *Togo Heihachiro* (Tokyo, 1999), 18–19.

⁶ Oe Shinobu, "Gunkoku bidan wa donoyoni tsukuraretanoka [How Were Militaristic Episodes Fabricated?]," in *Nihon kindai shi no kyoza to jitsuzo* [Virtual and Real Images of Japanese Modern History], ed. Fujiwara Akira et al. (Tokyo, 1990), 278–279.

Hirose's warrior image was largely formed through the military's manipulation of the press, but more important in the public's mind than his contribution in combat was his concern for the safety of his subordinates, which made it seem as though he embodied the Japanese code of values. Separate from the government's efforts to heroize Hirose, leading Japanese artists produced woodblock prints of Hirose's death, and the newspaper *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun* started a fund-raising campaign in April 1904 to erect a bronze statue in commemoration of him that was well subscribed.⁷

At the same time, the army also entered this game, rivaling the navy's efforts on behalf of Hirose with an attempt to establish its own officer, Tachibana Shuta, who had fallen in the battle for Liaoyang, as a war hero. But the general public's enthusiasm was largely monopolized by the cult of Hirose, as exhibited by the frenzied crowds at his funeral and the contributions made for his statue. The wide recognition of Tachibana Shuta's name had to wait for a change in the elementary-school program of a later age—on which more below.⁸

Public jingoism exhibited itself as well, in the lantern parades and other triumphal celebrations held in Tokyo after the Japanese won major battles in the war. Over 200,000 people came out after the capture of Mukden, and over 100,000 after the battle of Tsushima. Many of the lantern parades started near the marchers' houses and ended in front of the Imperial Palace. Then people would gather in nearby Hibiya Park, a Western-style garden that had just opened a year before the war started, before finally dispersing for the night.⁹ These were festival-like occasions. For example, at triumphal celebrations sponsored by Tokyo City there were fireworks, sword-play tournaments, and film screenings. The government was even alarmed by the people's excessive war fever, and the Metropolitan Police tried to ban lantern parades at night. In response, all the general newspapers (socialist ones being an exception), in particular *Toroku Choho*

⁷ Yamamuro Kentoku, "Gunshin ron [An Essay on War Heroes]," in *Kindai Nihon bunka ron* [Essays on Japanese Modern Culture], vol. 10, ed. Aoki Tamotsu et al., (Tokyo, 1999), 96–98. On artists' prints of Hirose, see James Ulak, "Battling Blocks: Representations of the War in Woodblock Art," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, ed. John W. Steinberg et al. (Leiden, 2005), 389–390, and figure 2.

⁸ Yamamuro, "Gunshin ron," 100.

⁹ Sakurai Ryoju, *Taisho seiji shi no shuppatsu* [Political History of the Early Taisho Era] (Tokyo, 1997), 22–25.

and *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, published scathing criticisms of the government's ban because they considered these events to be the "source of the people's energy."¹⁰

But the government was right to be concerned, for some of these demonstrations were directed against it. The Russo-Japanese War ended with the Treaty of Portsmouth, which was a major disappointment for the general public, whose anger was whipped up by arch-nationalists eager to see the peace negotiations fail. The populace had expected an indemnity from Russia to cover the costs of the war, but when this did not materialize many vented their rage at the Japanese government. A mass meeting with a crowd of 30,000 took place at Hibiya Park on September 5, 1905. Police attempted to control the crowd, which only provoked the demonstrators into three days of rioting in which seventeen people were killed, 500 wounded, and most police boxes in the city as well as several police stations were put to the torch. When the homes of politicians came under attack, martial law was declared and 2000 people were arrested. At that point the mobs dissipated, and what was left of the frenzy was channeled into official pageants commemorating the war—the Triumphal Naval Review held on October 23, 1905 and the Triumphal Military Review held on April 30, 1906.¹¹

These were great public propaganda spectacles. In the first the emperor reviewed two hundred war vessels—virtually the entire Japanese Navy plus ships captured from Russia and China—taking four hours to cruise by all of them. In the second he reviewed over 30,000 soldiers arrayed to represent all seventeen divisions and standing in a line that stretched for more than 15 kilometers. Weapons that were on display for six nights at the Imperial Palace Plaza included several hundred artillery cannon, over a thousand sabers and spears, 70,000 guns, 2,000 horses and wagons, and an enormous amount of ammunition—a good portion captured from the Russians. In addition, the emperor was accompanied by a prince of

¹⁰ Ibid., 25–38.

¹¹ Yamamuro Kentoku, "Nichiro senso no kioku [Memory of the Russo-Japanese War]," *Teikyo daigaku bungakubu kiyo: kyoikugaku*, 26 (2001), 257–271; and see Sandra Wilson, "The Russo-Japanese War and Japan: Politics, Nationalism, and Historical Memory," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective, 1904–05*, ed. David Wells and Sandra Wilson (London, 1999), 179–182.

Korea, now a Japanese protectorate, whose presence was intended to exhibit Japan's newly enhanced position in the global order.¹² The triumphal marches of the army and navy passed under an enormous concrete arch adorned with military regalia, and the trains of Tokyo were decorated for the occasion. The size of the crowd was unprecedented with over one million in attendance.¹³ As the *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun* reported, “near Yasukuni Shrine, spectacular exhibitions were put on, including a circus, ball-balancing acts, and sword play. Business was as good as the hooting was loud. The left side was filled with eateries that featured sushi and sweet bean soup for non-drinkers and bottled sake for drinkers, and one could hear loud street cries of ‘Get your food here! Get your food here!’”¹⁴

However, Russo-Japanese War fever passed almost as quickly as the festivals themselves. In 1904 and 1905, 80% of all movies shown in the country were about the Russo-Japanese War—such was the demand that production companies even made numerous fake war documentaries. By 1906, though, interest collapsed and only one movie on the subject was shown, and that one had been filmed the previous year.¹⁵ Attendance at the war museum of the Yasukuni Shrine, peaked in 1905 at 11 million and declined thereafter.¹⁶ The desire to erect a statue of Hirose evaporated as soon as the war was over, and it became very difficult to obtain the necessary land (although the statue was eventually raised in Tokyo's Kanda section).¹⁷ Newspaper coverage of Army Memorial Day (March 10, commemorating the battle of Mukden) and Navy Memorial Day (May 27, commemorating Tsushima), rapidly decreased after the second anniversary. By 1920, events included a mere luncheon with the heir

¹² T. Fujitani, *Tenno no pageant* [Imperial Pageant] (Tokyo, 1994), 148, 150, 152–153.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁴ *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, May 2, 1906; cited in Yamamuro, “Nichiro senso no kioku,” 263–264.

¹⁵ Komatsu Hiroshi, “Some Characteristics of Japanese Cinema before World War I,” in *Reframing Japanese Cinema*, ed. Arthur Nalletti, Jr. and David Dresser (Bloomington, 1992), 231, 238–239, 242.

¹⁶ Frederick R. Dickinson, “Commemorating the War in Post-Versailles Japan,” in *Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, ed. Steinberg et al., 526.

¹⁷ Tanaka Hiromi, “Chukun aikoku teki Nichiro senso no densho to gunkoku shugi no keisei [Loyal and Patriotic Folklore on the Russo-Japanese War and the Formation of Militarism],” *Kokushigaku* 126 (1985), 40–41; Dickinson, “Commemorating the War,” 527.

to the throne, Prince Hirohito, at the Naval Officer's Aid Society (*Suikosha*), at which a ceremony for the conferral of some imperial awards was held along with *kagura* music and a sumo wrestling match.¹⁸ It was only after 1930, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the war, that the newspapers returned to giving full treatment of the memorial events that were being carried out by the army and navy—a reflection of a new political climate and the imminent invasion of Manchuria.

The one exception to the lack of public interest in the Russo-Japanese War involved General Nogi Maresuke, but that was obviously because of the poignancy of his story. Nogi had been distressed by the number of soldiers who had died under his command at the Battle of Port Arthur and submitted his resignation to the Meiji emperor. The emperor refused to accept the resignation and absolved him of responsibility. But on the day of the emperor's funeral in 1912, Nogi and his wife committed *seppuku* (ritual suicide). After his death, the Nogi Shrine was erected in 1923, and a dagger and mirror were placed there to represent the spirits of the Nogis. Nogi's level of national respect was second only to that of the Meiji emperor, whose own shrine had been built in 1920.¹⁹ Nogi's fate struck a chord in a modernized Japan, rife with political and social tensions, that looked back to the glories of the Meiji era and romanticized even older, now rarely witnessed samurai values.

School textbooks also played a role in keeping memory of the war alive, even though one cannot say that they fed any great public thirst for that knowledge. Between the Russo-Japanese War and the start of World War II, the government approved texts for the teaching of subjects such as Japanese history, geography, language, and morals. Much of the process for the selection of course materials is unknown, but the inclusion of Hirose in these books was largely due to the influence of Ogasawara, who authored one of them and also served on the committee for textbooks at the Ministry of Education.²⁰ Besides Hirose, other war heroes who appeared in government-

¹⁸ Yamamuro, "Nichiro senso no kioku," 274–277.

¹⁹ Ohama Tetsuya, *Meiji no gunshin: Nogi Maresuke* [War Hero in the Meiji Era: Nogi Maresuke] (Tokyo, 1967), 271.

²⁰ Tanaka, "Chukun aikoku teki Nichiro senso no densho to gunkoku shugi no keisei," 41.

approved textbooks from 1910 through the Pacific War included Tachibana and Nogi.²¹ Examples from their personal lives as much as from their military careers illustrated moral lessons and were used to inculcate Japanese values. “The Childhood of General Nogi,” for instance, was a story that was supposed to help teach “integrity,” “social ethics,” and “sincerity”: according to this edifying tale, Nogi’s parents threw cold water on him when the crybaby future military commander complained of being cold. This lesson in endurance was reinforced when three times a day his parents forced him to eat foods he couldn’t stand. Similarly, Hirose was praised for his “loyalty,” and Tachibana was held up as a role model for his exemplary day-to-day behavior.²² Elementary school songbooks also celebrated these heroes in tunes composed by the Ministry of Education.²³

If interest in the war had waned over the preceding decades, when the mood in Japan changed in the years preceding World War II, memory of the Russo-Japanese War was purposely rekindled. The first such sign was during the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of 1929–1930.²⁴ On Army Memorial Day in 1930, a commemoration was held by the Army Officer’s Aid Society (*Kaikosha*) that was attended by the emperor. Sixty-eight airplanes of the Army Air Force flew overhead in formation, festivals were held at shrines, sermons were read aloud at temples, and memorial lectures were given at the *Hibiya Kokaido* Public Hall as well in elementary schools. To quote the *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, “the Mitsukoshi and Matsuya department stores, along with other shops, exhibited memorabilia such as army weapons and war trophies in their show windows. The department stores also held exhibitions, prepared altars for the fallen soldiers, had lively events featuring trained military dogs and carrier pigeons, and even served military rations in their dining halls. At night, the Shirokiya and Matsuzakaya stores illuminated the sky with search lights borrowed from the Army Ministry and installed on their roofs.” Movie theaters in Asakusa and elsewhere featured movies on the

²¹ Nakauchi Toshio, *Gunkoku bidan to kyokasho* [Militaristic Episodes and Textbooks] (Tokyo, 1988), 33.

²² *Ibid.*, 20–21, 25–26, 28–29, 36–37, 42–50, 100–105; Ohama, *Meiji no gunshin*, 274–275.

²³ Dickinson, “Commemorating,” 527–528.

²⁴ Yamamuro, “Nichiro senso no kioku,” 277–278.

Russo-Japanese War—films like “The Army’s March” and “Successive Victories” whose titles reveal their jingoistic theme. Nationwide, war veterans and youth organizations joined divisions and regiments in parades through town. At night, radio stations broadcast live coverage of the tactical exercises of the six regiments that fought in the Battle of Mukden during the Russo-Japanese War.²⁵

Two months later, Navy Memorial Day was also celebrated in grand style. From then on, a custom was established in which elementary school students would visit Admiral Togo Heihachiro’s residence every Navy Memorial Day and give “three cheers” for the naval commander who destroyed the Russian fleet.²⁶ Moreover, newspapers began inviting officers from both land and sea forces who had been responsible for military successes during the Russo-Japanese War to events where they would reminisce about the conflict and remind the nation of half-forgotten military heroes and battles.

Several reasons account for the military’s attempt to revive mass interest in the Russo-Japanese War. For one, the two memorial days offered an opportunity to teach large numbers of the younger generation about the glorious days of the past. A quarter century had gone by and many Japanese had no direct connection to the war that had given Japan great power status. Two, as a result of the Russian Revolution and a decade later the Great Depression, Marxism had become prevalent among the intelligentsia, and this was one of many efforts designed to counteract it. For example, a “Sea and Sky Exhibition” commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Tsushima was held in Ueno Park. Its objective was to “develop a national consciousness, promote industry and trade, and contribute to proper direction of the contemporary worldview . . . through a recollection of the sincere spirit that united the nation” in the time of the Russo-Japanese War.²⁷

In the years following the Manchurian Incident, even more lavish events took place and memorial publications were issued for the thirtieth anniversary of the war. A newspaper, the *Jiji Shimpō*, featured recollections by sailors, soldiers, diplomats, and financiers, which were

²⁵ *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, March 11, 1930, cited in Yamamuro, “Nichiro senso no kioku,” 277–278.

²⁶ Tanaka, *Togo Heihachiro*, 220.

²⁷ Yamamuro, “Nichiro senso no kioku,” 280–281.

later published as a three-volume booklet. As the introduction explained, “this is the year we took the first step into the global crises of 1935 and 1936. From now on, we, the Japanese people, have to make a significant effort to educate Manchukuo. At this time, we believe that reading the recollections of the statesman, financiers, and military commanders directly and indirectly involved in the Russo-Japanese War, where much precious blood of our ancestors and our fellow countrymen was shed, provides us with noble moral lessons, and at the same time, it instills in the Japanese people a firmness of mind that is appropriate for the current situation.”²⁸

As the artificially revived memory of the Russo-Japanese War became a spiritual prop for rising militarism in the 1930s, the near deification of the old public heroes of the war—Hirose, Nogi, Tachibana, and Togo—moved forward. The energetic and ubiquitous military propagandist Ogasawara had also been a close aid of Admiral Togo and now made a large effort to create a “sacred” Togo by once again exploiting the mass media, which published his hagiographic writings on the naval great. Many other authors also profiled Togo in a considerable number of books and articles, and in 1940 the Togo Shrine was erected—in the same year as was the Tachibana Shrine.²⁹ As for Nogi, a series of films made in the mid-1930s portrayed him as a “Loyal Retainer” of the emperor but also as a man of the people who rescues the families of Russo-Japanese War veterans from ruination at the hands of greedy capitalists—stock themes of far-right propaganda for the masses.³⁰

The Nationalist Perversion of Historical Memory: Honda Kumataro's Diplomacy of the Spirit

It was only after the Pacific War that fairly dispassionate studies of the causes and diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War began to appear, for instance Shinobu Junpei's archival-based *History of Komura Diplomacy* [*Komura gaiko shi*].³¹ Before that, the major Japanese treatment of the

²⁸ Jiji Shimpo sha, *Kaiko sanju nen Nichiro senso o kataru: Rikugun no maki* [Reminiscence of the Russo-Japanese War Thirty Years Earlier: Book of the Army] (Tokyo, 1935), 1.

²⁹ Tanaka, *Togo Heihachiro*, 8–21, 30–32, 218–219; Dickinson, “Commemorating the War,” 538–539.

³⁰ Gregory Barrett, *Archetypes in Japanese Film* (London, 1989), 161.

³¹ Shinobu Junpei, *Komura gaiko shi* [History of Komura Diplomacy] (Tokyo, 1966).

subject was the tendentious but highly influential book by Honda Kumataro, *Diplomacy of the Spirit* [*Tamashii no gaiko*].³² Honda had served as Secretary to Komura Jutaro, two-time Minister of Foreign Affairs and chief Japanese negotiator at the Portsmouth peace talks. Honda was devoted to Komura's memory, but became a political opponent of all moderates in the foreign ministry. After retiring as a diplomat in 1926, Honda became deeply involved in the "*Kokuhonsha*," which was an anti-democratic, right-wing nationalistic organization. He strongly opposed the conclusion of the London Naval Treaty by the Hamaguchi administration and launched into a criticism of the "flaccid Shidehara diplomacy." After the Pacific War, he was prosecuted as a Class-A war criminal, and his twisted analysis of Komura and the diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War era illuminate the aggressive attitudes of an increasingly powerful segment of Japanese society in the 1930s.

Diplomacy of the Spirit was a collection of Honda's articles and speeches from 1930 to 1935. The interpretations of Komura's policies therein are attempts to use the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War to justify Japan's imperial project on the Asian mainland, and they build on a body of right-wing writings that portrayed the war as an essential step in the rise of Japan as a great Asian and world power.³³ In December 1931, following the Manchurian Incident, Honda gave a radio address on the "Late Marquis Komura Jutaro and Manchuria" in which he claimed that his former mentor had been a "prophet of the Manchuria issue" who "did not expect success from the Russo-Japanese negotiations. At the bottom of his heart, he was prepared for war."³⁴ To prove that all along Komura wanted Japan to go to war against Russia over the Manchuria issue, Honda brought up a striking episode. It occurred when he and Yamaza Enjiro, Political Director of the Foreign Ministry, visited Komura at his vacation house in Hayama in spring 1903:

after having an evening drink, Yamaza started to argue heatedly and said "Minister, I assume Russia won't give up Manchuria. Let's defeat Russia while enthusiasm for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance lasts." Marquis

³² Honda Kumataro, *Tamashii no gaiko* [Diplomacy of the Spirit] (Tokyo, 1938).

³³ For an example of these writings, see Wilson, "Russo-Japanese War and Japan," 184–186.

³⁴ Honda, *Tamashii no gaiko*, 57–73.

Komura replied: “do you know how the Ainu in Hokkaido capture bear? The Ainu put out some herring roe on the beach to dry. Then, when the bears troop out to eat it they get thirsty, and once they get thirsty, they walk towards the sea and drink the sea water. This makes them even thirstier and they drink even more sea water. Meanwhile, the herring roe starts to expand in the bears’ stomachs, and they start to suffer. Then the Ainu easily capture them. Russia is now eating a lot of ‘herring roe.’ We will capture them when they get thirsty and drink the sea water.” I was quietly listening at his side, and I was impressed with the very nice way he told the story and at the same time I understood that Marquis Komura’s attitude toward Russia was very firm.³⁵

Of course, there is no way to confirm whether Komura really told this story, but even if the episode were true, Honda’s interpretation, that Komura intended to go to war with Russia over the Manchurian issue from the very beginning, largely reveals Honda’s own imperialist desires.

Likewise, in another speech he explained the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War as a legitimate Japanese response to Russia’s interference in the affairs of Korea. In line with contemporary militarists, he considered Korea to be Japan’s “lifeline” (*seimeisen*), and as such he could claim that Japan’s war against Russian hegemony was a legitimate act of “self-defense.” This argument, he felt, refuted claims by those Japanese who were infected with internationalism after World War I and “misunderstood” the Russo-Japanese War as a product of their government’s intrinsically belligerent behavior.³⁶ It also allowed him to project the past onto the present and provide justification for the Japanese takeover of northeastern China. His application of the contemporary nationalist slogan “*Sen-Man ichinyo*” (Korea and Manchuria are inseparable) to Komura’s diplomacy is indicative.³⁷

But Honda went beyond the self-defense argument and used his understanding of the 1904–05 war to further rationalize Japan’s break with the established international order. In a February 1935 article, Honda argued—ignoring the historical evidence—that Komura

³⁵ Ibid., 65–66.

³⁶ Honda Kumataro, “Nichiro senso no shin igi” [True Meaning of the Russo-Japanese War], in *ibid.*, 101–149.

³⁷ Honda Kumataro, “Nichiro senso to Komura ko” [The Russo-Japanese War and Marquis Komura], in *ibid.*, 243–246.

recognized the importance of “the use of force to accomplish a breakthrough (*genjo daha*)” and believed that to resolve the problems of Manchuria and Korea “war with Russia was unavoidable.”³⁸ Then as in Honda’s own day, he argued, Japan was required to adopt an aggressive diplomatic stance to undermine the dominance of the “haves” such as England and France . . . whose state policy was the maintenance of the status quo.” The “have-nots” require a different approach, one that would allow them to “break through [the status quo] and establish an international environment that supports the value of their own ethnic existence.” In Honda’s view, Japanese diplomacy needed to fit the latter mold, as it had—supposedly—under Komura.³⁹

Scholarly Disputes

After World War II, the “scientific study” of the Russo-Japanese War flourished and disputes arose over the causes of the war.⁴⁰ These disputes originated in debates over the issue that were rooted in the Marxism of the early Showa-era intelligentsia. In some ways the conclusions reached by leftist academics were similar to the arguments of right-wing nationalists, but without the pro-war sentiments of the latter.

The debate began in 1927 when the economist Takahashi Kamekichi developed the “petty imperialism” theory regarding the nature of the Russo-Japanese War. Following the Leninist interpretation of imperialism, Takahashi argued that Japan had not reached the stage of monopolistic capitalism and, therefore, could not be considered a full-fledged imperialist power. Rather, it was as yet a “petty imperialist” nation that was still being exploited by the Western great powers. Following this rigid logic, in his eyes the series of conflicts from the Sino-Japanese War through the Siberian Intervention of 1918–22, and including the Russo-Japanese War, had to be seen as

³⁸ Honda Kumataro, “Nichiro senso to Komura ko” [The Russo-Japanese War and Marquis Komura], in *ibid.*, 233–306.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 241–243.

⁴⁰ For more on this, see Chiba Isao, “Nichiro senzen ki (1900–4) gaiko shi kenkyu no genjo [Survey of Studies on Japanese Diplomacy, 1900–4],” *Shigaku zasshi*, vol. 106, no. 8 (1997).

“nationalist wars” in which Japan sought an outlet for its own excess population instead of serving to prolong the reign of capitalism, which was the underlying driving force of any “imperialist war.” Takahashi’s line was roundly rejected by the contemporary Marxist theoreticians Inomata Tsunao and Noro Eitaro. They took the position that imperialism as elucidated by Lenin was a stage in the development of “capitalism as a global system” and a “global category.” Since all nations were affected, it was a mistake to categorize a country according to a sliding scale of imperialism. As a lesser-developed country, Japan had to rapidly enter the imperialist fray in order to survive the ruthless interstate competition of the age, and, hence, Japan was an imperialist power and the Russo-Japanese War an imperialist war.⁴¹

The Japanese political historian Shinobu Seizaburo developed a thesis about the war that was consistent with the views of Inomata and Noro, but at the same time converged with those of the nationalist Honda. As many Japanese youth of the pre-war period he was strongly influenced by Marxism,⁴² but his wartime writings reflect the nationalistic atmosphere. Shinobu wrote his *Japanese Diplomatic History* (*Kindai Nihon gaiko shi*) in 1942,⁴³ and sought to understand “which one, Korea or Manchuria, was the leading cause of the Russo-Japanese War.” He concluded that “the Manchurian issue (*Mansyu mondai*) was far more important than the Korean (*Kankoku mondai*).” Japan made cotton fabrics and yarns that were inferior to those produced in England and the United States, and thus was forced to “eliminate the power of the advanced nations by establishing the Japan-Manchuria Economic Bloc (*Nichi-Man keizai bloc*).” In his eyes, the “Russo-Japanese War was not only literally a war between Japan and Russia” but also “equivalent to eliminating the influence of England and the U.S., . . . [which] could only be achieved when Russia was eliminated from Manchuria. . . . Driving Russian military power out of Manchuria was a mere stage in the process of eliminating Anglo-American economic power from Manchuria.”⁴⁴

⁴¹ On Takahashi, Inomata, and Noro, see Nagaoka Shinkichi, *Nihon shihon shugi ronso no gunzo* [Disputing Japanese Capitalism] (Kyoto, 1984), 18–37.

⁴² Shinobu Seizaburo sensei tuito bunshu henshu iinkai, eds., *Rekishika Shinobu Seizaburo* [Historian Shinobu Seizaburo] (Tokyo, 1994), 5–49.

⁴³ Shinobu Seizaburo, *Kindai Nihon gaiko shi* [Japanese Diplomatic History] (Tokyo, 1942).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 133, 136, 141.

Although the repressive political climate of the early 1940s prevented him from making it explicit, there is no doubt that he was on the side of those who saw the Russo-Japanese War as a by-product of imperialism. Nonetheless, he was also in agreement with the right-wing nationalist Honda on the causes of the conflict—they only differed on the question of whether the war was good or bad.

After 1945, scholarly understanding of the Russo-Japanese War continued, at least for a time, to be divided along these same basic lines. For example, the historian Inoue Kiyoshi agreed with Shinobu's position that Manchuria was the key to the outbreak of war, which meant it was imperialist in nature.⁴⁵ On the other hand, historians Shimomura Fujio⁴⁶ and Fujimura Michio⁴⁷ argued that Korea was more important, with the former asserting that it was a defensive war and the latter that it was the fruit of the belligerent nature of absolute monarchies. Shimomura was no different than all the other historians we have discussed: first they decided whether or not this was an imperialist war of aggression (Manchurian emphasis) or a justifiable war of self-defense (Korean emphasis) and then found the facts to fit their preconceptions of Japan and Japanese foreign policy goals.

A study published in 1959 by the historian Nakayama Jiichi sought to resolve these near-meaningless oppositions.⁴⁸ He explained that in January 1901, during the negotiation of the Sino-Russian agreement regarding Manchuria, Russia proposed to Japan that they make Korea a neutral zone. The "Manchurian-Korean issues" (*Man-Kan mondai*) were therefore "combined" from the start, and both Russia and Japan fought over both. This was indeed a war for imperial hegemony, but according to Jiichi it was neither an imperialist war

⁴⁵ Inoue Kiyoshi et al., *Nihon Kindai shi* [Japanese Modern History], vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1950).

⁴⁶ Shimomura Fujio, "Nichiro senso to Manshu shijo [The Russo-Japanese War and the Manchurian Market]," *Nagoya daigaku bungakubu kenkyu ronshu: Shigaku*, 5 (1956); Shimomura Fujio, "Nichiro senso no Seikaku [Characteristics of the Russo-Japanese War]," *Kokusai seiji*, 3 (1957).

⁴⁷ Fujimura Michio, "Nichiro senso no seikaku ni yosete [On the Characteristics of the Russo-Japanese War]," *Rekishigaku kenkyu*, 195 (1955).

⁴⁸ Nakayama Jiichi, "Hokushin jihen go ni okeru Chosen mondai to Manshu mondai no setsugo [The Combination of Manchurian and Korean Issues after the Boxer Disturbances]," in *Nichiro senso shi no kenkyu* [A Study of the History of the Russo-Japanese War], ed. Shinobu Seizaburo and Nakayama Jiichi (Tokyo, 1959).

in the Leninist sense started by the Japanese bourgeoisie to monopolize the Manchurian market, nor a defensive war.

At first glance a 1967 book by the historian Tsunoda Jun seems to follow in Jiichi's footsteps.⁴⁹ In what he called a "positivistic" (this meant anti-Marxist) study, Tsunoda claimed that the contemporary clash over "Manchuria and Korea as separate" (*Man-Kan kokan ron*) and "Manchuria and Korea as inseparable" (*Man-Kan fukabun ron*) was an expression of a broader generational conflict. But the truth is his study sided with and extended Nakayama's thesis, namely that the Russo-Japanese War can best be explained through the application of the Marxist-Leninist theory of imperialism. And this remained the dominant perspective in the 1970s and even later, with little to no archive-based Japanese scholarly research to appear on the diplomacy and outbreak of the war thereafter.

*The Russo-Japanese War in Post-1945 Fiction and Film*⁵⁰

Cinema and historical fiction would have more of an impact on the general public than the academic studies described above, and they reflect the almost mind-boggling metamorphosis of Japanese society in the post-war era.

The first movie about the Russo-Japanese War that appeared after World War II was *The Emperor Meiji and the Great Russo-Japanese War* (*Meiji Tenno to Nichiro Dai Senso*), which was produced by the Shin-Toho Motion Picture Company in 1957. This was also the first Japanese movie to feature an emperor in the leading role—which by itself indicates the sea-change that had occurred in the country's political life.

As the name suggests, Shin-Toho (New Toho) was a spin-off and rival of the more established Toho studio, and it experienced financial difficulties from its very beginnings. Okura Mitsugu took over as president in 1955 and changed the company's fortunes with an

⁴⁹ Tsunoda Jun, *Manshu mondai to kokubo hoshin* [The Manchurian Issue and National Defense Policy], (Tokyo, 1967).

⁵⁰ For detailed analysis of views of the Russo-Japanese War in post-World War II cinema, see Chiba Isao, "Eiga no naka no Nichiro senso [The Russo-Japanese War in the Movies]," in *Nichiro senso kenkyu no shin shiten* [New Approaches to the Study of the Russo-Japanese War], ed. Inaba Chiharu et al. (Yokohama, 2005).

autocratic managerial style that substantially reduced costs.⁵¹ Intimately involved in every detail of film production, from editing of screenplays to co-directing, his most significant contribution to the survival and success of his company was the risky decision to produce *Emperor Meiji and the Great Russo-Japanese War*. The film, directed by the right-wing Watanabe Kunio, gave the company a new lease on life and established its subsequent emphasis on nationalistic war films that appealed to conservative audiences made up of less educated workers and farmers.⁵²

Okura came up with the idea for a film featuring an emperor as protagonist, reasoning that “in the past, if you made a movie about the emperor, you would be accused of high treason and lese majesty and subject to capital punishment, but we are now living in an era when the emperor appears in magazine stories.”⁵³ Earlier movies had featured scenes in which an emperor played a small role and spoke from behind a blind, but anything more than that was considered taboo, and all treatment of the royal family was strictly censored; even as late as the 1980s World War II films depicted Emperor Hirohito only from behind or from a distance. But that left open the possibility of highlighting the long-deceased Meiji emperor.⁵⁴ Still, when the actor Arashi Kanjuro was selected to play the emperor in this film, he hesitated because he thought extremist-nationalists would physically assault him. In the end, though, he was won over by Okura, who told him “don’t worry, I am a right winger too.”⁵⁵

Amidst plenty of big-screen combat shots, the thrust of the film was to portray the emperor suffering with his army by wearing an uncomfortable field uniform, eating military rations, and constantly worrying about the fates of individual Japanese soldiers and their families, going so far as to read casualty lists on a daily basis. While

⁵¹ Tanaka Junichiro, “Gidayu cho no yubenka: Okura Mitsugu [Orator Okura Mitsugu],” *Eiga geijutsu* (August 1959); Hata Ippei, “Katsuben kara shijugo nen: Shin Toho Okura shatyo no baai [Forty-five Years after a Narrator: The Case of Shin-Toho’s President Okura],” *Eiga hyoron* (January 1958).

⁵² “Shintoho Motion Picture Company,” *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* (<http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9067413>); Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (NY, 1960), 250ff.

⁵³ Okura Mitsugu, *Waga gei to kane to koi* [My Performance, Money, and Love] (Tokyo, 1959), 186–188.

⁵⁴ Barrett, *Archetypes in Japanese Film*, 163.

⁵⁵ Takenaka Tsutomu, *Kurama tengu no ojisan wa: Kikigaki Arakan ichidai* [Interview with Arashi Kanjuro] (Tokyo, 1976), 208–209.

the film also revived the Russo-Japanese War heroes glorified in the propaganda of the old textbooks, such as Hirose, Togo, and Nogi, it was the emperor who took center stage.⁵⁶ The studio's advertisements featured retired military officers speaking of the film in tears,⁵⁷ and once it premiered, *Emperor Meiji* exceeded even Okura's expectations, grossing more than any other film that year and enabling Shin-Toho to repay all of its accumulated debt at one time.

The response of academia and the intelligentsia was somewhat different than that of the mass audience. Old liberals who were born in the 1880s did not necessarily have a bad reaction to the movie. At a round-table talk with the intellectuals Abe Yoshishige, Watsuji Tetsuro, and Komiya Toyotaka present, Watsuji said that "I couldn't help but cry, although I didn't think it was that good of a movie." He said that he was moved by the film because it showed the Meiji Emperor, Togo, and Nogi enduring stoically while suffering great anguish in their hearts. And all three commentators agreed that the series of wars up to and including the Russo-Japanese War were necessary to allow Japan to block European imperialism.⁵⁸

From the younger generation of intellectuals, however, the movie received negative reviews. They critiqued the movie for its uninteresting screenplay, which was a mere juxtaposition of anecdotes, and for the old-fashioned quality of the content.⁵⁹ The novelist and critic Nakano Shigeharu was even more caustic, asserting that the film was a moneymaking proposition that could not be considered art.⁶⁰ The list of the best movies of the year as selected by movie and other cultural critics in *Kinema Junpo* (Biweekly Cinema News) ranked *Emperor Meiji* at a lowly number thirty.⁶¹

Intellectuals who harshly criticized the artistic quality of the film had a hard time understanding its popular appeal and box office

⁵⁶ Barrett, *Archetypes*, 163–164.

⁵⁷ Anderson and Richie, *Japanese Film*, 267.

⁵⁸ Abe Yoshishige et al., "Meiji eno kyoshu o koete [Beyond Nostalgia for the Meiji Era]," *Kokoro*, vol. 10, no. 8 (1957), 28–47.

⁵⁹ Tanaka Junichiro, "Meiji tenno to Nichiro dai senso [The Meiji Emperor and the Russo-Japanese War]," *Kinema Junpo*, 180 (1957), 106–107; Kitagawa Fuyuhiko, "Meiji tenno to Nichiro dai senso [The Meiji Emperor and the Russo-Japanese War]," *Kinema Junpo*, 176 (1957), 41–43.

⁶⁰ Nakano Shigeharu, *Eiga zakkan: Shioto no kokoromochi* [Miscellaneous Impressions of the Movies: An Amateur's Mind] (Tokyo, 1958), 84.

⁶¹ "Kinema Junpo 1957 nendo naigai eiga best ten [Ten Best Movies of 1957]," *Kinema Junpo*, 196 (1958), 28–41.

success. Kuwahara Takeo offered the explanation that after the Pacific War the general public's ethnic pride had been suppressed until this film effectively tapped into these natural sentiments with its simplistic but vivid reproduction of a kind of children's morality tale on the screen. It was just the thing people were looking for, and the film became a blockbuster.⁶²

In order to clarify the reasons for the film's phenomenal success, sociologists carried out a variety of exit polls that analyzed audience attitudes. According to one poll, 81% of the audience of *The Emperor Meiji and the Great Russo-Japanese War* was male while 19% was female, and older viewers outnumbered younger ones. By occupation the largest percentage was made up of laborers and merchants rather than students or professionals. Extreme differences of opinion prevailed, depending on the age of the viewer. Those from the older generation typically said the film "demonstrated the superiority of the Japanese race, and we should export [the film for this reason]," while a typical comment by a younger member of the audience was "I don't like wars under any circumstances." This indicates that senior citizens were feeling a longing for the good old days when Japan could display its national prestige. On the other hand, a majority, including elder respondents, reported that they did not care for the scenes showing "the pile of dead on the snow," which suggests that even their nostalgia was not necessarily militarist in nature.⁶³

Due to the economic boom of the next decade, the atmosphere in the country was substantially different when Shiba Ryotaro published his serial historical novel, *A Cloud at the Top of the Slope* (*Saka no ue no kumo*) between 1969 and 1972.⁶⁴ This novel about the Russo-Japanese War was a massive bestseller and the single most widely read work of historical fiction ever in Japan. Its popularity continues down to the present day, and the book became the main source

⁶² Kuwahara Takeo, "Setsuretsu eiga to geijutsu gaiteki dai kando: Meiji tenno to Nichiro dai senso [A Poor Movie and Emotion outside of Art: The Meiji Emperor and the Russo-Japanese War]," *Sekai*, 139 (1957), 190–193.

⁶³ "Meiji tenno to Nichiro dai senso ni okeru kankyaku hanna [Response from Spectators to the Movie 'The Meiji Emperor and the Russo-Japanese War']," *Kinema Junpo*, 177 (1957), 113–117.

⁶⁴ Shiba Ryotaro, *Saka no ue no kumo* [A Cloud at the Top of the Slope], 6 vols (Tokyo, 1969–1972). The novel first appeared as a series in the newspaper *Sankei shinbun* from 1968 to 1972.

of information on the Russo-Japanese War for the greater part of the contemporary Japanese public.⁶⁵

The story follows the adventures of the Akiyama brothers, both of whom were real historical figures: Akiyama Yoshifuru was the first commander of the cavalry in the new Meiji-era army and fought with distinction in the Battle of Mukden. Akiyama Saneyuki was a naval staff officer under Admiral Togo who was in charge of planning and operations in the Battle of Tsushima. The biography of Akiyama Saneyuki by the historian Shimada Kinji influenced Shiba's perspective when it appeared in 1969, and by using the then recently published "Secret History of the Russo-Japanese War" (Hara Shobo, 1965), compiled by Tani Hisao for his officer training courses, Shiba was able to reveal many previously unknown aspects of the war.

After his death in 1996, the nation paid homage to Shiba as a nationalist novelist, and some scholars critiqued *Cloud at the Top of the Slope* for that very characteristic. The historian Nakamura Masanori asserted that Shiba had falsely dichotomized a "bright Meiji" and a "dark Showa," and that he did not give adequate recognition to the link between the Russo-Japanese War and the Japanese intention of colonizing Korea.⁶⁶ In addition, the historian Narita Ryuichi pointed out that with its emphasis on the military leadership the novel neglected contemporary social problems resulting from the war.⁶⁷ But only a superficial reading can lead one to conclude that Shiba rehashes pre-World War II ultra-nationalist views of the war as defensive rather than aggressive in nature. Contrary to the heroic emphases of earlier military propaganda, Shiba portrays the strategic incompetence of General Nogi at the siege of Port Arthur, and he was scornful of the heavy loss of life that the old imperial military took

⁶⁵ For one of the few appreciations of Shiba Ryotaro in English (which, however, does not discuss the *Cloud at the Top of the Slope*), see Donald Keene, *Five Modern Japanese Novelists* (New York, 2003), 85–100. For an English-language treatment of that novel, see Tomoko Aoyama, "Japanese Literary Responses to the Russo-Japanese War," in *Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Wells and Wilson, 79–82.

⁶⁶ Nakamura Masanori, *Kingendai shi o do miruka: Shiba shikan o tou* [How Do You See Japanese Modern History? An Inquiry into Shiba's View of History] (Tokyo, 1997); for another criticism of Shiba's lack of interest in the war's impact on Korea, see Aoyama, 80.

⁶⁷ Narita Ryuichi, *Shiba Ryotaro no bakumatsu meiji: Ryoma ga yuku to saka no ue no kumo o yomu* [The Last Days of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the Meiji Era, Described by Shiba Ryotaro: 'Sakamoto Ryoma Goes' and 'A Cloud at the Top of the Slope'] (Tokyo, 2003).

in stride. The victory of Japan in this war, he writes, “in hindsight makes one feel quite nervous.”⁶⁸ Although the book depicts both the glory and sorrow of war, this debunking of official myth was particularly attractive for a largely pacifist readership. Why Shiba took the position he did and why the book had such strong appeal probably can be related to the significant changes that had taken place in Japan during the previous twenty years: this country had risen from ruin to become one of the economic superpowers of the world, and it was neither warfare nor imperialism that had brought about its remarkable success.

That impression is affirmed when we consider the popular film *Hill Number 203* (*203 Kochi*), about the Battle of Port Arthur, which premiered in 1980. After peaking in the 1950s, the Japanese movie industry gradually declined due to competition from television, and by the mid-1970s, film studios were reducing the number of productions to concentrate on big money-makers. In this environment, the president of the Toei Company, Okada Shigeru, drafted the screenwriter Kasahara Kazuo to make a film set in the Meiji period and involving the emperor. The result was *Hill Number 203*.⁶⁹

Kasahara's specialty was mobster movies such as the *Battles without Honor and Humanity* (*Jingi Naki Tataikai*) series that portrayed *Yakuza* rivalries. Reflecting on *Hill Number 203*, he said that he “wanted to write something in which insignificant people like tofu makers or sideshow entertainers were sent to the battlefield and a variety of things happened, rather than have scenes where the Meiji emperor's heart went out to Nogi on a remote battlefield.”⁷⁰ Although Kasahara, having had a difficult time as a soldier during World War II, was no sympathizer of the imperial army, he nonetheless attempted to be impartial, claiming that the orders given to Nogi were contradictory and pointedly not portraying him according to the simplistic theory that he was incompetent.⁷¹ Moreover, some of the old hagiographic (and maudlin) imagery survives in the movie when Nogi, who does not identify himself, shares a cigarette and some

⁶⁸ Cited in Aoyama, 79.

⁶⁹ Kasahara Kazuo, *Eiga wa yakuza nari* [Movies Are the Underworld] (Tokyo, 2003), 89–90; Kasahara Kazuo et al., *Showa no geki: Eiga kyakuhonka Kasahara Kazuo* [Dramas in the Showa Era: Screenwriter Kasahara Kazuo] (Tokyo, 2002), 422.

⁷⁰ Kasahara, *Eiga wa yakuza nari*, 91–94.

⁷¹ Kasahara, *Showa no geki*, 414–415, 431, 433–436.

wise understanding with a common soldier, or when Nogi breaks down in tears while reading the casualty list to the emperor, who is deeply moved and steps off his throne to console him with pats on the back.⁷² But in general, Kasahara conveyed a realistic sense of Japanese attitudes during the war. For instance, the film showed the family of a tofu maker who was drafted as a soldier, among them a drunkard father, an elder brother with tuberculosis, an elder sister who was working as a prostitute, and a feeble-minded younger brother. The father tells his son in the movie, “I hoped you’d die in the war so that I could get the pension.”⁷³

Three years in production and costing 1.5 billion yen, *Hill Number 203* became a box-office smash. But it stirred a sense of crisis among intellectuals. A new stage in the Cold War had begun the previous year with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and Japanese conservatives were sounding the alarm about the Soviet threat to Japan. The film seemed to bolster these fears: the main character, Koga, was once a lover of Russian literature, but after witnessing fierce warfare and the death of his men in the Russo-Japanese War, he began to cultivate an intense hatred of Russians. In the same year the film came out, the Liberal Democratic Party also won an overwhelming victory in the general election, and in tandem with the Afghan crisis and the premier of Kasahara’s film, Japanese progressives reacted against what they saw as the beginning of a neo-conservative upswing and the potential re-militarization of Japan. This explains the negative reviews given by some movie critics. Yamane Sadao, for example, recognized that the movie touched people’s hearts with its overwhelming scenes of soldiers dying in battle. But he harshly judged what he saw as the filmmakers’ chauvinistic political attitudes.⁷⁴ Yamada Kazuo criticized *Hill Number 203* from a similar perspective, making the accusation that it revived militarist notions of the Russo-Japanese War as a “defensive war” and justified the hideous and enormous sacrifice of individual life.⁷⁵

⁷² Barrett, *Archetypes in Japanese Film*, 161–62.

⁷³ Kasahara, *Showa no geki*, 439–40.

⁷⁴ Yamane Sadao, “Hei tachi no seikatsu suru nikutai to kokoro wa kokka o koeteiru [Soldiers’ Bodies and Souls Transcend the State],” *Kinema Junpo*, 791 (1980), 86–87.

⁷⁵ Yamada Kazuo, “203 Kochi, Kaigenrei no yoru nado ni okeru hurusa to atarashisa [Tradition and Novelty in the Films *Hill Number 203*, *A Night under Martial Law*, and so on],” *Bunka hyoron*, 233 (1980), 193–201.

Even though the film magazines gave it poor rankings—only seventeenth best for the year 1980 by *Kinema Junpo* and fifth worst of the year by *Eiga Geijutsu* [Film Art]⁷⁶—readers of *Kinema Junpo* voted *Hill Number 203* best movie of the year. And it seems the average viewer was more astute than the critics. In the words of one such individual, “although the movie was criticized as a symbol of a ‘conservative swing,’ it was an anti-war movie and did little to whip up war sentiment.”⁷⁷

Conclusion

Through all the transmutations in Japanese perceptions of the Russo-Japanese War—the propagandists’ hagiographies, the Marxists’ capitalist conspiracy theories, the militarists’ visions of conquest, the nationalists’ pride and protests, the pacifists’ revulsion, the moviegoers’ entertainment—we witness the unfolding of Japanese history and mentalities in the twentieth century, a period of immense complexity, violence, upheaval, and rapid change. The Russo-Japanese War first showed the Japanese populace that their nation had succeeded at emulating European modernization and becoming a great power. In subsequent decades, as a prominent symbol of Japanese historical memory, interpretations of the war helped to encourage some of the worse excesses of Japanese militarism, just as after World War II it provided a cautionary tale about the effects of Japan’s former addiction to militarism. The study of this evolution gives us invaluable clues to understanding the state of Japanese national consciousness in the century that followed the pivotal victory over the Russians in 1904–05.

⁷⁶ “Watashi no eranda best ten sakuhin to sono senshutsu riyu [My Ten Best Movies and Reasons to Pick Them up],” *Kinema Junpo*, 805 (1981), 48–70; “Eiga geijutsu dai 16 kai best ten worst ten [Ten Best and Worst Movies],” *Eiga geijutsu*, 336 (1981), 19–41.

⁷⁷ “Aidokusha no eranda Nihon eiga gaikoku eiga best ten to sono kanso [Ten Best Movies Selected by Readers and Their Remarks],” *Kinema Junpo*, 805 (1980).

WHITE HOPE OR YELLOW PERIL?: BUSHIDO, BRITAIN, AND THE RAJ

Hashimoto Yorimitsu

Bushido: The Soul of Japan was published in Philadelphia in 1900 by Nitobe Inazo.¹ Although the word “bushido”—the way of the warrior—was largely unfamiliar to the Japanese, thanks to this book the image of the samurai acting according to a noble bushido code of values became widespread in the English-speaking world.² During the Russo-Japanese War, Japanophiles and Japanophobes alike began to use the term. Some who praised bushido saw it as a modern form of chivalry which the Western world had lost but longed to revive, while others, fearful of the “Yellow Peril” and Pan-Asianism, denounced it as a fanatical Japanese jihadism that sought the destruction of the West. In both cases bushido was considered to be the force that for better or worse drove contemporary Japanese progress and modernization. How bushido was understood by Japanese writers and interpreted in Edwardian Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century is the subject of this article, which illuminates contemporary British perceptions of the state of their nation, their empire, and the world, and contributes to our understanding of both European Orientalism³ and the global phenomenon of “invented traditions.”⁴

¹ According to the copyright page, it was 1899. But I have not found any copy published earlier than 1900.

² Colin Holmes and A. H. Ion, “Bushido and the Samurai: Images in British Public Opinion, 1894–1914,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 14 (1980), 312; Rajyashree Pandey, “Traditions of War Literature in Medieval Japan” in *The Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective, 1904–05*, ed. David Wells and Sandra Wilson (London, 1999), 44. Both authors emphasize differences between Nitobe’s bushido and its prototype.

³ The classic statement is Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1978). For a critique of Said and a fuller and more balanced view of Orientalism, see John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts* (Manchester, 1995).

⁴ See Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983).

The Turn of the Tide: Pre-Bushido Historical Contexts

In the late nineteenth century the tide of European dominance seemed to be receding as the alleged superiority of the white male Christian came under challenge. In the heyday of the British empire this sense of crisis was captured by two well-known poems by the renowned Anglo-Indian writer Rudyard Kipling, "Recessional" (1897) and "The White Man's Burden" (1898). The former, which appeared in time for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, was a forceful reminder that every empire eventually declines, as demonstrated by the ruins of ancient monuments. The latter asserted the civilizing mission of the white man. Together, the poems mix pessimistic fatalism with a quest for regeneration, and they express the unsettled spirit of the age.

Popular novels also reflected and amplified this mood of angst. The most prophetic voice can be found in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), in which the turn of the tide on the River Thames symbolically depicted the inevitable drawback of the empire. *The War of the Worlds* (1898) by H. G. Wells implied that a superior civilization could attack England as the advanced English had once attacked others inferior to them. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) hinted at similar anxieties. Just as English explorers had prepared for their conquests, so Count Dracula collects books on Britain and studies English before his trip to Britain. Dracula calls an estate agent from London to his homeland, Transylvania, and says to him that he has learned English only "through books." He confesses that "true, I know the grammar and the words, but yet I know not how to speak them," and he continues, "I would that you tell me when I make error (sic), even of the smallest, in my speaking."⁵ Dracula is worried about passing himself off as English. This apprehensiveness, perhaps related to Bram Stoker's Irishness, was commonly found in immigrants and colonial subjects of the British Empire. But Dracula also represented the menace from outside England where British knowledge and power was seen as being appropriated for purposes of retribution.

At the same time, the modern Japanese imperial state came into being in the 1890s. Japan's stunning victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 and the subsequent struggle with Russia for supremacy

⁵ Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, (New York, 1997), 26.

in Korea attracted the attention of the British. Japan was the first Asian nation to succeed at westernizing, and the satirical magazine *Punch* caricatured Japan as either the “Young Little Jap” or “Jap the Giant-Killer.”⁶ At the moment this had no negative implications for the British public since both Britain and Japan shared an interest in thwarting the Russian advance in Asia, but fears of the Yellow Peril began to rise not long after the war.⁷ Regardless of their take on Japan, Britons were curious about what made it modernize so quickly and efficiently. In this unsettled atmosphere, full of admiration and a little paranoia about Asians as well, Nitobe’s *Bushido* appeared and grew popular in England.⁸

Nitobe’s life (1862–1933) was also at the mercy of the changing tide. Inspired by Henry George’s *Progress and Poverty* (1879)⁹ he went to America to study agricultural administration. In 1884 was attending Johns Hopkins University, where he joined a Quaker society and met his future wife, Mary Elkinton. After his marriage he returned to Japan, but injured his health and went back to America for a cure. During a stay in Monterey, California, for that purpose, he wrote *Bushido*. Afterward he became Japanese colonial officer in Taiwan, then professor of colonial policy at Tokyo Imperial University and Under-Secretary General of the League of Nations (1920–1926). He passed away in Victoria, Canada, while serving as a delegate to the fifth Pacific Conference. In all of these positions he devoted himself to bridging the gaps between East and West, though in the sense of wanting to show that the former was not inferior to the latter.

As a result of his American education, Nitobe had an excellent command of English. But he felt his writings on Japan were imperfect

⁶ *Punch*, Sept. 29, 1894.

⁷ Of course, the British image of Japan as a fairy-land had survived the wars with China and Russia however tarnished. Happy-go-lucky operettas such as *The Geisha*, however, became less popular after the Russo-Japanese War. See Hashimoto Yorimitsu, “Japanese Tea Party: Representations of Victorian Paradise and Playground in *The Geisha* (1896),” in *Histories of Tourisms: Representation, Conflict and Identity*, ed. John K. Walton (Clevedon, U.K., 2005), 104–124.

⁸ On the relationship between novels and the Yellow Peril, see, Hashimoto Yorimitsu, “Germs, Body-politics, and the Yellow Peril: Relocation of Britishness in *The Yellow Danger*,” *Australasian Victorian Studies Journal*, 9 (2003), 52–66.

⁹ Ironically, Henry George was harshly against Chinese immigration on the grounds that it posed an economic, hygienic, and religious threat to American white labor. See “The Chinese on the Pacific Coast,” *New York Tribune* (May 1, 1869).

in comparison to the works of the leading English popularizers of Japanese culture, Lafcadio Hearn and Basil Hall Chamberlain. "Had I their gift of language," he lamented, "I would present the cause of Japan in more eloquent terms!" In his view, however, the emotional power of his arguments overrode theirs: "the only advantage I have over them is that I can assume the attitude of a personal defendant, while these distinguished writers are at best solicitors and attorneys."¹⁰ His was a cultural declaration of "Japan for the Japanese," and for him the English language was a weapon to be wielded on behalf of that cause. Nitobe therefore sought to combat patronizing Western attitudes toward Asians, a set of attitudes that the cultural critic Edward Said defined as "Orientalism." For Said, Europeans felt that they were responsible for representing "Orientals" because the latter, like children, were not capable of representing themselves.¹¹ What Nitobe represents is a rebuttal of that outlook, which undergirded European imperialism and global domination.

Bushido as Japanese Ethical System

One component of the European imperialist worldview was a perceived link between Christianity and civilisation, and Nitobe sought to overturn that perception as well. As a Christian of the Quaker denomination, he asserted in the preface to the first edition that his affiliation with Christianity was not contradicted by his devotion to bushido. As he frequently emphasized, bushido was an "ethical system" that coexisted with but did not derive from Japanese religion. In his view this explained something that puzzled many European observers, namely how the Japanese were able to emphasize moral education without religious content.

Along with other Japanese Christians in the 1890s, Nitobe also struggled to make Christianity compatible with Japanese society. Many Japanese Christian intellectuals claimed their version of Christianity was more authentic than the Western variety, which they saw

¹⁰ Nitobe Inazo, *Bushido* (Tokyo, 1900) [henceforth Nitobe 1900], vi, and *Bushido, the Soul of Japan: An Exposition of Japanese Thought*, 10th rev. and enl. ed. (New York and London, 1905) [henceforth Nitobe 1905], xi.

¹¹ Said, *Orientalism*, 21. This patronizing altruism was well articulated by Kipling's "White Man's Burden." He urged America to take up the so-called "White Man's Burden" for "half child and half devil." See *The Times*, February 4, 1899.

as hypocritical for speaking of Christian philanthropy in one breath and justifying white colonialism in the other. Hirai Kinza, for instance, who argued for a Christian-Buddhist synthesis, harshly criticized the West's "false Christianity" in a paper he presented at the World's Parliament of Religions of 1893, which took place in Chicago in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition.¹² Nitobe agreed, but took a different tack. His object was to explain Japanese identity through comparisons with elements of Western culture. According to him, bushido was similar to both medieval chivalry and the ideal of Victorian public schools. In the case of the latter, he quoted from the well known *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) to define an adherent of bushido as the "fellow who never bullied a little boy or turned his back on a big one."¹³ In this fashion Nitobe attempted to show that European Christian values at their best were consistent with the Japanese code of ethics.

The Japanese practice of emperor worship, however, was a theological stumbling block for Japan's Christians. Bowing or saluting to the emperor's picture, particularly after the issuance of the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890, was a provocative litmus test for them because it was considered idolatry.¹⁴ In 1891, for instance, Uchimura, Nitobe's closest Christian friend, refused to bow low enough upon the reading of the rescript at the First High School of Tokyo and was then forced to resign from his teaching position. Lafcadio Hearn, then working as an English teacher in a Japanese Middle School, vividly recorded the conflict between emperor worship and Christianity in a dialogue with one of his students:

'I saw you [Hearn's student said to him] bow before our Emperor's picture at the ceremony on the birthday of His Majesty. You are not like a former English teacher we had.'

'How?'

'He said we were savages.'

'Why?'

¹² See, John Henry Barrows, ed., *The World's Parliament of Religions*, vol. I (Chicago, 1893), 444–450; Basil Hall Chamberlain sardonically quoted the speech of the Rev. Kozaki Hiromichi, who had attended the Conference in 1893 as a Japanese Christian. See his *Things Japanese: Reprint of the 1905 Fifth Edition Revised* (London, 1927), 88; For more details of Japan's strategy for the Parliament, see Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West* (Chapel Hill, 2003).

¹³ Nitobe 1905, 8; Nitobe 1900, 6; Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's School Days* (London, 1914), 278.

¹⁴ According to Basil Hall Chamberlain, in *Things Japanese*, 76, it should be considered as nothing more than custom.

‘He said there is nothing respectable except God—his God—and that only vulgar and ignorant people respect anything else.’

‘Where did he come from?’

‘He was a Christian clergyman, and said he was an English subject.’¹⁵

Addressing this issue, Nitobe maintained that bushido was never incompatible with Christianity, for according to the Bible, “[render] unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.”¹⁶ Moreover, he insisted that emperor worship was naturally derived from the land:

Japanese nature worship endeared the country to our inmost souls, while its ancestor worship . . . made the Imperial family the fountain-head of the whole nation. To us the country is . . . the sacred abode of the gods, the spirits of our forefathers: to us the Emperor is . . . the bodily representative of Heaven on earth, blending in his person its power and its mercy.¹⁷

Applying the example of the ancient Hebrews, who linked God, Heaven, and the nation, Nitobe stated that a similar set of connections may be noticed in the Japanese national faith. But he did not dwell on the relationship between faith and bushido, for the lack of “a systematic philosophy or a rational theology” made that tie difficult to establish.¹⁸

Japanese virtues such as loyalty and self-sacrifice, Nitobe explained, were related to the worship of the emperor as the founder and forefather of the Japanese empire. Although Nitobe admitted to a Hegelian view whereby the ultimate endpoint of history was the development of freedom and individualism, he defended community bonds based on ancestor worship. And he intended his book *Bushido*, which posited the superiority of Japanese “national instinct and race feelings” as a cultural declaration of independence from the superiority of Western

¹⁵ Lafcadio Hearn, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, vol. II, (Boston, 1923), 148. Hearn’s purpose here—similar to Nitobe’s—was to express admiration for Japanese youth’s devotion to their emperor and predicted that because of it “Japan should have little to fear for the future.”

¹⁶ Nitobe 1905, 91; Nitobe 1900, 59.

¹⁷ Nitobe 1905, 13–14; Nitobe 1900, 9–10. The American writer Jack London quoted the same passage in his “Yellow Peril” (1904) although he did not mention Nitobe. He had been hired by the Hearst newspaper syndicate to report on the Russo-Japanese War and warned about the Asian threat. See King Hendricks and Irving Shepard, eds., *Jack London Reports* [Garden City, NY, 1970], 349).

¹⁸ Nitobe 1905, 15; Nitobe 1900, 10.

civilisation. Arguing against the technological-determinist view concerning Japan's victory over China (and later Russia), whereby Japan's success was attributed to its successful adoption of the Western model of modernization, Nitobe insisted that "it is the spirit that quickeneth, without which the best of implements profiteth but little."¹⁹ In line with that statement he rejected the Western caricature of "the little Jap"²⁰ and affirmed the centrality of the role of spiritual aspects, above all ancestor worship:

What won the battles on the Yalu, in Corea and Manchuria, was the ghosts of our fathers, guiding our hands and beating in our hearts. They are not dead, those ghosts, the spirits of our warlike ancestors. To those who have eyes to see, they are clearly visible. Scratch a Japanese of the most advanced ideas, and he will show a samurai.²¹

This reflected Nitobe's racist assumptions: the Japanese were a nation of samurai for whom bushido was well-nigh instinctual. We might add as well that it implied a relativistic definition of morality: anything that was good for Japan was to be considered morally good.

Bushido and Japanophile Britain

Despite Nitobe's ethnic chauvinism, this Far Eastern admirer of Thomas Carlyle appealed to those Western readers, who, alienated from their own culture and its religious orthodoxies, sought to fill the breach with Asian "Truth." This perspective was illustrated in William Elliot Griffis's introduction to the 1905 edition of Nitobe's *Bushido*, in which Japan was esteemed as "the efficient middle term between the wisdom and communism of Asia and the energy and individualism of Europe and America."²²

In this regard the timing was convenient for the appearance of Nitobe's book. Anti-capitalist sentiment was rising in the 1890s, with industrialization and urbanization getting the blame for all manner

¹⁹ Nitobe 1905, 188. The 1900 edition did not have this passage. Not surprisingly in light of the Russo-Japanese War, the 1905 edition had more examples emphasizing the superiority of human spirit over its technology.

²⁰ Nitobe 1905, 176; Nitobe 1900, 117.

²¹ Nitobe 1905, 188–9; Nitobe 1900, 125.

²² Nitobe 1905, xxiv.

of economic suffering and moral decay.²³ *Bushido* was proclaimed by some as an antidote to the problems of capitalism and modern European civilization, for the same reasons that philosophical anti-positivism or backward-looking medievalism had grown in popularity since the mid-Victorian Era. Due to the fact that Nitobe originally wrote for an American public with comparisons between Japan and the United States, *Bushido* became a big seller in the latter country, where it was first published. Discussions of the book in newspapers and magazines caused such a sensation that President Theodore Roosevelt, who was obsessed with racial degeneration, bought thirty copies to distribute among family and friends.²⁴

For British intellectuals, the problem of social decay was also a central issue and had given rise to anti-individualist, eugenicist thought. Karl Pearson, Professor of Applied Mathematics at University College London, delivered a lecture in which he argued that the statesman's obligation was to ensure that "the fertility of the inferior stocks is checked, and that of the superior stocks encouraged."²⁵ Viewed from a broader perspective, such an interventionist proposal was the biological and social version of anti-laissez-faire economic protectionism. Pearson himself argued that "the nation is really an organised whole, not a loose agglomeration of hostile groups of men seeking primarily their own profit and pleasure at the national expense."²⁶ Lafcadio Hearn, one of the individuals responsible for the spread of a bushido myth about Japan (although without mention of Nitobe), agreed, and described ant life in a 1904 essay as more advanced and harmonious than human society.²⁷ Likewise, H. G. Wells, who

²³ Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market: Capitalism in Modern European Thought* (New York, 2002).

²⁴ This is from Kaneko Kentaro's report of his interview with Roosevelt. See, Gaimusho [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], comp., *Nihon Gaiko Monjo: Nichiro Senso V* [Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy: Russo-Japanese War V], (Tokyo, 1960), 708. Certainly Roosevelt said in a letter to Kaneko, Japan's special envoy to manipulate American opinion, that "I was most impressed by the little volume on Bushido," but there seems to be no English record of his distribution of the copies. See *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, MA, 1952), 777. On the other hand, Nitobe himself mentioned the episode in his preface to the 1905 edition (see Nitobe 1905, vi). Since then it has been frequently quoted in any book about Nitobe and *Bushido*.

²⁵ Karl Pearson, *National Life from the Standpoint of Science* (London, 1901), 59.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Based on *The Cambridge Natural History* and Herbert Spencer, Hearn stated that "in regard to social evolution, these insects [ants and bees] appear[ed] to have

was also fascinated with Japan and bushido, portrayed the highly advanced organizational capacity of ants in his short story "The Empire of the Ants" (1905).

This rethinking of individualism and the sources of national strength reached its peak in the aftermath of the long and difficult Boer War in South Africa. The conflict with the Afrikaners revealed to the world that the British could not easily hold and defend their scattered colonies. This seemed to be confirmed with the creation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902, which indicated to many observers that the British empire could not survive in the Far East without the help of Japan.²⁸ Moreover, a paper in *Nineteenth Century* (May 1903) reported that 8,000 out of the 11,000 volunteers during the Boer War were not sufficiently fit for battle, a statistic that was frequently cited as an example of the nation's degeneration.²⁹ Although the 1904 report on "physical deterioration" denied the alleged hypothesis, it revealed the miserable environments many people had to endure in daily life, and, therefore, it encouraged social workers, youth movements, and the eugenics movement.³⁰

Given these contexts, it is hardly surprising that the British would begin to think highly of Japan.³¹ All the more so since Japan was its ally in the Great Game, the intense imperial rivalry between Russia and Britain in Asia. In a 1905 essay, Joseph Conrad, the Polish Russophobe who was the author of the aforementioned novel *Heart of Darkness* (1899), considered the Russo-Japanese War to be a struggle against "autocracy": in defeating Russia, he argued, the historical "task of Japan is done: the mission accomplished."³² A cynical writer did pose the following question: "Since the beginning of the

advanced 'beyond man'" and "our most appalling ideals of conduct [would] fall short of the ethics of the ant" "by nothing less than millions of years!" Lafcadio Hearn, *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. 11, (Boston, 1923), 296, 298–299.

²⁸ See Ian Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894–1907* (London, 1966).

²⁹ G. R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899–1914* (Oxford, 1971), 60; idem, *A New England? Peace and War 1886–1918* (Oxford, 2004), 305.

³⁰ Searle, *A New England?*, 375–376.

³¹ Japan was not the only paragon of national efficiency and patriotic self-discipline. Germany was regarded in the same light. But Japan was an ally that could be admired without apprehension whereas Germanophobia was on the rise in Britain. See Searle, *Quest for National Efficiency*, 54–60.

³² Joseph Conrad, *Notes on Life and Letters*, ed. J. H. Stape (Cambridge, 2004), 76.

Russo-Japanese war what have you not heard about . . . [the Japanese]? His 'pluck,' his 'heroism,' his 'amazing adaptability,' his 'unparalleled zeal,' and 'energy,' his 'unquenchable patriotism' . . . have been held up for your unreserved admiration by every newspaper in the kingdom."³³ A like-minded opinion was expressed by Bishop William Awdry of Tokyo, who sent a letter to the London *Times* warning that the ill-balanced overestimate of Japan might one day bring disillusionment to both sides.³⁴ These voices, however, were lost among the noise of banzai, or three cheers, for Japan, led above all by the readers of Nitobe's *Bushido*.³⁵

Bushido seemed to explain this "plucky little Jap." One of those who fostered the popularity of Nitobe's definition was a war correspondent for the *Times*, Charles à Court Repington.³⁶ His unsigned *Times* article, "The Soul of a Nation," which appeared on October 4, 1904, expounded on bushido as one of the vital forces behind Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War. He praised bushido for its "Spartan simplicity" and the "admirable moral training" "and sentiment of collective self-sacrifice" it had given to Japan's citizenry and armed forces.³⁷ He then went on to argue that bushido, as a non-theologically based ethical system could easily "adopt and incorporate all the greatest teachings of Christianity" and go on to lay the groundwork for the elimination of the debilitating denominational strife among Christians.³⁸ The reaction to Repington is revealing, especially since on the other side of the Atlantic the *New York Times* regarded bushido as "the element of fanaticism that makes . . . [Japan] dangerous."³⁹ In the London *Times*, although a few letters to the editor were sceptical, most were favourable. Lord Meath wrote

³³ T. W. H. Crosland, *The Truth about Japan* (London, 1904), 1–2.

³⁴ "The Character of the Japanese People," *The Times*, October 2, 1905.

³⁵ That included one of the Rothschilds, who named his racehorse "Bushido" see *The Times* (April 23, 1908).

³⁶ Holmes and Ion, "Bushido and the Samurai," 317–319.

³⁷ Charles à Court Repington, *The War in the Far East, 1904–1905* (London, 1905), 381, 383, 606. Unlike many other admirers of bushido, Repington did not intend these chivalric values to override the need to invest in and train soldiers in the use of military technologies such as the machine gun (John Ellis, *Social History of the Machine Gun* [Baltimore, 1986], 68. It is a point of interest that Repington coined the term "First World War" (Michael Dockrill and John Fisher, eds., *The Paris Peace Conference, 1919* [Basingstoke, 2001], 14).

³⁸ Repington, *War in the Far East*, 384.

³⁹ "The Yellow Peril," *New York Times*, April 18, 1905.

to recommend that the newspaper republish Repington's "heart-stirring article" in pamphlet form.⁴⁰

The lessons of bushido that Repington was urging on his countrymen were seconded by the anonymously written *Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (1905). Represented as a "National Schools of Japan" textbook from the year 2005 and supposedly authored by a Japanese resident of "Tokio," this apocalyptic work depicted the fall of the British Empire. The demise, it states, came about because it was "impossible to send our Navy to the Far West," with the result that "India has fallen to Russia, South Africa to Germany, Egypt to the Sultan; while Canada has taken shelter beneath the wings of the American Eagle, and Australia has become a protectorate of the Mikado."⁴¹ As if echoing Kipling's poem "Recessional," the British were compared with other once great and long vanished imperial powers, above all Rome. The author ascribed the decline of the British empire to "[h]ooligans," "the undisciplined sons of English slums," the lack of "respect for parents, [and] no reverence for old age."⁴² But the author in his lament suggested a solution: in their schools these children of "sloth and ignorance" should be forced to live a soldier's life and made to understand their role as citizens of the empire.⁴³ The short book ended by reminding readers—supposedly Japanese "youths and maidens"—that such a task to build the empire "has fallen to Japan."⁴⁴

The author of *Decline and Fall of the British Empire* presupposed a cyclical view of history: Britain's dominance culminated with the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, at which Admiral Nelson proclaimed "England expects that every man will do his duty." Thereafter began the slow decline of this attitude and then the empire itself.⁴⁵ Beginning

⁴⁰ A pamphlet did appear a few weeks later (see *The Times*, December 9, 1904). This and other related articles were compiled in Repington's *War in the Far East*.

⁴¹ Vivian Grey [Elliot Evans Mills], *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (Oxford, 1905), 3. The revised 1906 text and an abridged Japanese translation (1906) is reprinted in Hashimoto Yorimitsu, "The Decline and Fall of the British Empire (1906) to sono shoyaku Eikoku Suibo-ron (1906) no hukkoku oyobi kaidai," *The Humanities* (Journal of the Faculty of Education and Human Sciences, Yokohama National University), no.7 (February 2005), 33–64.

⁴² Grey, *Decline and Fall*, 46.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 46–47.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 45.

with 1905, Japan, by contrast, was on the cyclical historical upswing. Indeed, Admiral Togo Heihachiro was a student of English naval history, believed that the Battle of Tsushima ranked with Trafalgar in historical importance, and applied the words uttered by Nelson to the Japanese Navy: "The destiny of our Empire depends upon this action. You are all expected to do your utmost."⁴⁶

The parallels between Togo and Nelson were not lost on other British commentators. On June 2, 1905, the *Times* noted that Togo's message was "identical with that of our own Nelson" and interpreted "the Tsushima victory" as "the outcome of Bushido." But here was the rub: it was widely believed in the Edwardian era that the English equivalent of the bushido spirit had died out and needed to be revived to achieve national efficiency and reverse the deterioration of both empire and Anglo-Saxon racial vitality.

Promoting Bushido in Britain

How this view of bushido came about had much to do with the Japanese government, which made great efforts to propagate the notion in Britain as a way of countering the potentially negative impact of the Russo-Japanese War on public opinion: Tokyo feared the British would interpret the conflict in racial terms as evidence of the impending Yellow Peril. Nitobe's book, which became a best-seller during the war, was a windfall that made the effort relatively easy. At the end of January 1904, Prime Minister Katsura Taro and Foreign Minister Komura Jutaro dispatched Cambridge-educated Suyematsu Kencho as an agent to manipulate British opinion along these lines and work to keep it on the side of Japan.⁴⁷ At the same time the Japanese Army distributed copies of Nitobe's *Bushido* to Western military observers in Manchuria; General Ian Hamilton, the Military Representative of the British Raj to the Japanese Army (and later commanding officer at the ill-fated Battle of Gallipoli in World

⁴⁶ *The Times*, June 2, 1905. Others also echoed Nelson's signal. See *The Times*, August 22, 1905; Repington, *War in the Far East*, 582.

⁴⁷ Robert B. Valliant, "The Selling of Japan: Japanese Manipulation of Western Opinion, 1900–1905," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 29 (1974), 422; Suyematsu Kencho, *The Risen Sun* (London, 1905), 186–193; and see Suyematsu's *A Fantasy of Far Japan* (London, 1905).

War I) was impressed by the book's morale-boosting content as the secret of Japanese success on the battlefields of the Russo-Japanese War and spread that view in his own writings.⁴⁸

Japanese intellectuals, unconnected to the government, did much the same on their own and found a willing audience among their British counterparts. Okakura Yoshisaburo had studied linguistics under the supervision of Basil Hall Chamberlain at Imperial University and was invited in 1905 by the Sociology Department of the University of London to deliver a number of lectures on "the Japanese Spirit." These lectures were published in the same year with an introduction by popular British novelist George Meredith, who praised the bushido spirit as the "splendid conception of duty" that made the Japanese "Spartans in the fight, Stoics in their grief," as seen at Port Arthur and other battlefields of Manchuria.⁴⁹

Okakura's lectures also reiterated the popular belief that the secret to Japan's recent progress lay in the ancestor worship that was central to bushido, and this was in its own right an important element in the British reception of Japanese cultural influence. Hozumi Nobushige also popularized Japanese ancestor worship in the UK. Once a barrister at the English Middle Temple, he became a professor at the Imperial University of Law in Tokyo and promoted a legal system based on the family. In 1901, the year after Nitobe's *Bushido* came out, Hozumi published an English-language book in Tokyo titled *Ancestor-Worship and Japanese Law* that was in such high demand it was reprinted and revised several times over the next decade. In 1904, Hozumi summarised his book in an article that appeared in the collection *Japan by the Japanese*, edited by Alfred Stead, a social critic and one of the major Edwardian missionaries of the cult of Japan. In this paper, Hozumi emphasized that "*worship of the Imperial Ancestors is the national form of worship.*"⁵⁰

Kikuchi Dairoku was another interpreter of ancestor worship to the British public. Kikuchi had read mathematics at Cambridge with the eugenicist and social Darwinist Karl Pearson and after graduation became the first professor of mathematics at Imperial University

⁴⁸ Ian Hamilton, *A Staff Officer's Scrapbook during the Russo-Japanese War*, vol. II (London, 1907), 17, 139–140.

⁴⁹ Okakura Yoshisaburo, *The Japanese Spirit* (London, 1905), xi.

⁵⁰ Italics in original. Alfred Stead, ed, *Japan by the Japanese: A Survey by Its Highest Authorities* (London, 1904), 286.

of Tokyo, as well as later serving as the Minister of Education (1901–1903) after being named president of Imperial University.⁵¹ In that capacity he was invited by the Sociology Department of the University of London to deliver a series of lectures on Japanese education “during the Easter and Summer terms, 1907.”⁵² These were summarized in the influential magazine *The Nineteenth Century*, and then revised and published in book form in 1909. The British reviewers were favourably impressed with Kikuchi’s explanations of the way the Japanese worshipped their ancestors, emperor, and state: because of this aspect of their culture the Japanese were “faithful subjects,” and the government did not need to make a big show of the flag. By contrast, British Empire Day was characterized by “tedious and perfunctory flag-waving.”⁵³

Ancestor worship as national religion and the secret of patriotism in Japan was also propagated by the Anglo-American journalist and Japanophile Lafcadio Hearn. In the last book published before his death, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (1904), Hearn maintained that Japan’s virtues and strengths as a nation arose from its worship of the dead. Nitobe made the same point in *Bushido* (which Hearn surely read, but did not acknowledge), but whereas Nitobe tried to reconcile Christianity and bushido, Hearn saw an unbridgeable divide between the two. Hearn firmly believed “never will the East turn Christian” because of the animosity Asians held for Europeans, who had used Christianity as an excuse for domination.⁵⁴ He predicted instead that “Western civilization will have to pay, sooner or later, the full penalty of its deeds of oppression.”⁵⁵ These ominous-sounding words were not just an analysis of Asian attitudes, but a warning against imperial hubris that was of a piece with Kipling’s “Recessional” and the anonymous *Decline and Fall of the British Empire*.

Alfred Stead endorsed this position and suggested that the British Empire emulate its Japanese counterpart. He did so in his voluminous *Great Japan: A Study in National Efficiency* (1906) and in a lecture

⁵¹ Koyama Noboru, *Japanese Students at Cambridge University in the Meiji Era, 1868–1912*, trans. Ian Ruxton (Morrisville, NC, 2004), 2, 55.

⁵² Kikuchi Dairoku, *Japanese Education* (London, 1909), v.

⁵³ “Experiments in Education,” *The Saturday Westminster Gazette* (July 10, 1909); “The School of Japan,” *The Daily News* (June 23, 1909).

⁵⁴ Lafcadio Hearn, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (New York, 1904), 524.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 522.

on “Japanese Patriotism” given at a meeting of the Japanese Society of London in 1907. Quoting from Kikuchi, Nitobe, and Okakura, Stead urged the emulation of an ethical code along the lines of bushido, which, along with its concomitant ancestor worship, accounted for why, to quote the Imperial Japanese General Staff, “patriotism is the religion of Japan.”⁵⁶ If only Britain could achieve this for itself!

The “Western Bushido” of Edwardian Britain

In his 1926 bestseller, *England*, William Ralph Inge, Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral, wrote that the Russo-Japanese War had sealed the fate of the British empire: “The tide began to turn soon after, when the Japanese victories over Russia sent a quiver of hope through the hearts of every nation which the white races had bullied and subdued. It was one of the turning points of history.”⁵⁷ Inge had the benefit of hindsight, but for many Edwardian Britons, the war offered a different lesson, which was that something like the heathen Japanese worship of the nation-state could serve as a means of reversing imperial decay. A typical expression of this attitude can be found in *The Other Side of the Lantern*, an Asian travelogue of 1905 whose first printing sold out in a week and was reprinted five times in the next four months. The author, Sir Frederick Treves, now best known as the surgeon of Joseph Merrick—the so-called Elephant Man—had served in the Boer War and advocated the modernization of British field hospitals. He travelled to Asia in 1904, where he was impressed by the Japanese Red Cross Society and Army Medical System, especially its effective controls for hygiene during the Russo-Japanese War. Referring to the 13,250 soldiers who died of disease in the Boer War, he regretted that “the methods of the Japanese Medical Service had not been adopted by the British Army.”⁵⁸ He came away

⁵⁶ Alfred Stead, *Great Japan: A Study of National Efficiency* (London, 1906), 21.

⁵⁷ William Ralph Inge, *England* (London, 1926), 157–158.

⁵⁸ Frederick Treves, *The Other Side of the Lantern* (London, 1905), 404. As Takaki Kanehiro, Surgeon-General of Imperial Japanese Navy, proudly emphasised, the Russo-Japanese War was allegedly the first modern war in which more soldiers were killed by “bullets” than by “disease.” Homer Lea, however, took Takaki’s report as proof of Japan’s potential military threat in his infamous American war-scare book *Valor of Ignorance* (New York, 1909), 341–342.

full of praise for them and called for a revival of “Western Bushido” inspired by the Japanese virtues of self-sacrifice, valor, patriotism, and benevolence.⁵⁹ Closer to Hozumi than Nitobe, whose words he sometimes confused,⁶⁰ Treves emphasized ancestor worship over the ethical aspects of bushido, although like both of those thinkers he saw the two as intertwined: both morality and community bonds, he believed, would emerge more naturally from devotion to the memory of forefathers than from fear of an absolute and abstract deity. He concluded that bushido was “the religion of old friends, the religion of lovers, since high among the objects of its homage is fidelity in human affection, unforgetfulness of human ties.”⁶¹

Like Treves, social commentators on both the left and the right appropriated bushido in a revealing sign of their anti-individualist ideological overlap. Fabian socialists and reactionary conservatives alike idealized it for its stress on “the importance of . . . society over self.”⁶² H. G. Wells, for instance, in *A Modern Utopia* (1905) named the governing class of the future world “Samurai,” their subservience to the state guided by a bushido-like ideal. Two admirers of that book, Maurice Browne and Harold Monro, founded the “Samurai Press” and published *Proposals for a Voluntary Nobility* (1907), which advocated the formation of a new elite based on talent, patriotism, and social commitment rather than blood.⁶³ This perspective had an affinity with the eugenics movement, whose adherents believed that society should be managed by those individuals who possessed precisely these superior qualities. William Ralph Inge argued in the *Eugenics Review* for just such a “new conception of nobility” and stated that “the ‘Bushido’ of Japan is the nearest approach to what I mean.”⁶⁴

More overtly nationalistic movements were also turning their eyes to the Sparta-like Far Eastern country whose fervent patriotism based

⁵⁹ Treves, *Other Side of the Lantern*, 336–337.

⁶⁰ See, for instance, *ibid.*, 334.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 327.

⁶² Holmes and Ion, “Bushido and Samurai,” 322–324.

⁶³ William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel, 1880–1940* (Cambridge, 1994), 195.

⁶⁴ W. R. Inge, “Some Moral Aspects of Eugenics,” *Eugenics Review*, 1 (1909), 31–32. Certainly Nitobe incorporated ideas from W. H. Mallock’s *Aristocracy and Evolution* (1898), in which rule by the cream of the crop was supposed to promote social evolution, but Nitobe emphasized that the noblesse oblige of the knighthood permeated the nation at large: see his *Bushido*, 1905, 162–164, and *Bushido*, 1900, 107–109.

on ancestor worship they sought to encourage at home. One of these was the Empire Day organization formed by Lord Meath to lobby British schools to celebrate Queen Victoria's birthday every May 24th by having pupils assemble to sing the national anthem and salute the flag.⁶⁵ In an open letter to the public issued in 1905, Meath associated the ideals of good citizenship with the form of bushido taught in Japanese schools, and in a speech given on Empire Day that same year, he suggested that the "gallant little people of the Rising Sun" were "daily furnishing us with object lessons" such as self-sacrifice and loyalty.⁶⁶ Although some protested against Meath's ideas as jingoistic, and his organization's proposals were not enacted into law until 1916, 6,000 schools adopted them in 1905.⁶⁷

A similar thrust was evident in the Boy Scouts movement, founded by Robert Baden-Powell, the hero of the Boer War. Baden-Powell's most influential book, *Scouting for Boys*, was published in 1908; the first 50,000 copies sold out quickly, and the text was reprinted several times within the same year. In it he encouraged scouts to celebrate Empire Day,⁶⁸ and in 1910 he appointed Meath to the Boy Scout Association's Council.⁶⁹ Baden-Powell conceived of scouting as the fulfilment of the Japanese-inspired prescription for Edwardian youth outlined in *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*. As he stated in one of his speeches, "if you care to show your patriotism to the extent of expending Sixpence, I hope each one of you will go tomorrow morning and buy a copy of the pamphlet called 'The Decline and Fall of the British Empire.'"⁷⁰

Ancestor worship was also central to his reformist vision—as it was to Lord Meath, who glorified "the grit of our forefathers." But Baden-Powell had a more reproachful attitude to modern youth:

⁶⁵ John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880–1960* (Manchester, 1986), 231.

⁶⁶ Pamela Horn, "English Elementary Education and the Growth of the Imperial Ideal: 1880–1914," in *'Benefits Bestowed?': Education and British Imperialism*, ed. J. A. Mangan (Manchester, 1988), 49.

⁶⁷ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 232.

⁶⁸ Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*, ed. Elleke Boehmer (Oxford, 2004), 288, 292.

⁶⁹ John Springhall, "Lord Meath: Youth and Empire," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (1970), 100.

⁷⁰ Samuel Hynes, *The Edwardian Turn of Mind* (Oxford, 1968), 26, quoting with minor changes from Vivian Grey, *The Further Surprising Adventures of Lemuel Gulliver* (Oxford, 1906), backmatter.

Your forefathers worked hard, fought hard and died hard, to make this Empire for you. Don't let them look down from heaven, and see you loafing about with your hands in your pockets, doing nothing to keep it up.⁷¹

Harshly critical of the indulgence and selfishness of the "hooligans" who undermined the Roman Empire and could do the same for Britain's, he told his scouts that "'Country first, self second' should be your motto."⁷²

Baden-Powell's vision was an anglicized version of bushido. One of his central aims, he explained, was to revive "the rules of the knights"—"just as Bushido of the ancient Samurai Knights has done, and is still doing, for Japan." He constantly mentioned bushido and recommended regular training in jujitsu to maintain the scout's physical fitness.⁷³ As an example of "Courage," he referred to "the Japs" who died using suicide bombs against enemy positions in the Russo-Japanese War.⁷⁴ Underneath the surface, though, Baden-Powell's words reflect not just admiration for the Japanese, but also a degree of anxiety about them. He condemned those British politicians who sought to reduce the size of the military: if they were to succeed, he wrote, "we may as well learn German or Japanese" in the future, "for we shall be conquered by these."⁷⁵

Yellow Peril Returned

A more likely scenario was not the conquest of Britain, but that the Japanese would inspire if not directly aid the liberation of the British colonies in Asia. The appeal of the bushido concept was especially strong among Indian nationalists, and as it grew in strength anti-Japanese conspiracy theories began to take hold in Britain.

⁷¹ Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, 278.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 28.

⁷³ The Edwardian discovery of Jujitsu deserves a paper of its own. For present purposes, though, it is enough to note that the number of articles and advertisements about Jujitsu increased markedly after Japan's victory over Russia: see Michael Anton Budd, *The Sculpture Machine* (New York, 1997), 88–89. Interestingly, it was Repington's "The Soul of the Nation" in *The Times* that a Jujitsu wrestler referred to as his inspiration: see Apollo, *Jujitsu: What It Really Is* (London, n.d.), 19–20.

⁷⁴ Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys*, 226.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 289.

The Indian nationalist intelligentsia interpreted the Russo-Japanese War as a racial conflict between Asians and Europeans.⁷⁶ They were assisted in this by familiarity with the writings of the Japanese militant and radical Pan-Asianist Okakura Kakuzo (the brother of the above-mentioned Okakura Yoshisaburo), the Hindu convert and extremist anarchist Sister Nivedita (formerly Margaret Noble of Ireland), and other critics of British imperialism such as Alfred Stead.⁷⁷ Indian nationalists who had studied in Britain also brought the bushido cult to India. One of them was the Cambridge graduate and Hindu mystic Sri Aurobindo, who noted that:

The Japanese when they teach Bushido to their boys, do not rest content with lectures or a moral catechism; they make them practice Bushido and govern every thought and action of their life by the Bushido ideal. This is the only way of inculcating a quality into a nation. . . . This is what we have to do with the modern ideal of patriotism in India.⁷⁸

Aurobindo saw a relationship between the traditions of self-denial and self-discipline in both Indian and Japanese cultures,⁷⁹ and placed India with its Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic heritage at the center of the anti-colonial Pan-Asian movement. But he believed Japan would serve as India's savior: in a 1908 article he wrote that "a Chino-Japanese alliance" will "eject the English from India, and hold her in the interests of Asiatic freedom and Asiatic unity" and further drive "the extrusion of the European from Asia, Africa, Australia, the smiting down of European pride, the humiliation of Western statecraft, power and civilisation and its subordination to the lead of the dominant Asiatic."⁸⁰ Many Indians, both moderate and extremist, shared this same vision.⁸¹

⁷⁶ For the impact of the war in general on India and other parts of the British empire, see Steven G. Marks, "Bravo, Brave Tiger of the East! The War and the Rise of Nationalism in British Egypt and India"; and Paul Rodell, "Inspiration for Nationalist Aspirations? Southeast Asia and Japan's Victory," both in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, ed. John W. Steinberg et al., (Leiden, 2005), 609–628 and 629–654.

⁷⁷ Peter Heehs, "Foreign Influences on Bengali Revolutionary Terrorism, 1902–1908," *Modern Asian Studies*, 28 (1994), 537–544, R. P. Dua, *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese (1905) War on Indian Politics* (Delhi, 1966), 32.

⁷⁸ Sri Aurobindo, *Bande Mataram: Early Political Writings* (Pondicherry, 1972), 379.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 815.

⁸¹ See Marks, "Bravo, Brave Tiger of the East!"

These attitudes alarmed many Britons, who became obsessed with the Yellow Peril and saw the Russo-Japanese War as a struggle between the white and yellow races. Already in 1905, the explorer Colonel Francis Younghusband, sent by the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, to Tibet in 1904, expressed his concern about Indian youths “drawing false inferences from the rise of Japan.”⁸² Even Curzon himself, the ultimate imperialist,⁸³ was unable to ignore the Russo-Japanese War’s psychological effect on the “Oriental” and the related revival of their national self-consciousness—as he stated in an address given in 1911 at Glasgow University.⁸⁴

In 1912 a critical verdict was rendered by Basil Hall Chamberlain, the British authority on Japan. In a paper titled “The Invention of a New Religion,” Chamberlain argued (incorrectly) that the word bushido had never been used before Nitobe’s book and that “pre-existing ideas” had been “altered, freshly compounded, turned to new uses”—in other words, he explained bushido as a newly “invented tradition,” to borrow Eric Hobsbawm’s terminology.⁸⁵ Regardless of its recent origins, imperial ancestor worship, Chamberlain warned, had become the expression of a cultic Japanese fanaticism.⁸⁶

While the Empire Day and Boy Scout movements equated “Western Bushido” with revitalized patriotism, Japanese bushido was more and more perceived in Chamberlain’s terms. Although Nitobe himself only barely hinted at this dimension of bushido in his book, in the British imagination it was amplified into a theology of Oriental racial extremism. Guided by this national instinct, the “plucky little Jap” was seen as forming the leadership of an aggressive Yellow Horde.

Among the authors responsible for popularizing this view was H.G. Wells. In 1905 Wells had been sufficiently impressed with Japan’s victory over the Russians and with Nitobe’s *Bushido* to envision a kind of samurai elite for the global community, but his prognostications soon turned racist and foreboding. His 1908 novel *War in the Air* depicted a German and Japanese war of conquest—coinci-

⁸² Charles Sydney Goldman, *The Empire and the Century* (New York, 1905), 603; for British attitudes also see Marks, “Bravo, Brave Tiger of the East!”

⁸³ For example, see Said, *Orientalism*, 213–216.

⁸⁴ “East and West,” *The North-China Herald*, February 17, 1911.

⁸⁵ Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *Invention of Tradition*, ed. Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1–14.

⁸⁶ Basil Hall Chamberlain, “The Invention of a New Religion,” in his *Japanese Things* [sic] (Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo, 1971), 532.

dentally similar to what Baden-Powell in the same year was urging his boy scouts to prepare for and what Aurobindo was hoping for (minus Germany). Wells captured contemporary anxieties in this book.⁸⁷ It featured warplanes made by the Japanese and Germans, told how “India, at the sight of Asiatic airships, had broken into a Hindoo (sic) insurrection in Bengal,”⁸⁸ and featured a rebellion of the “Subject Races”⁸⁹ that spread like wildfire from Australia to Africa.⁹⁰ Furthermore, in a tour de force of futurology, Wells predicted that the samurai spirit would live on among the pilots of the new aircraft because “true to the best tradition of Japan,” “the aeronaut should be a swordsman.”⁹¹

If Wells’ novels reflected racist fears of Japan grounded in the bushido myth, the Catholic novelist and cultural critic G. K. Chesterton threw cold water on the myth while hyping the racism. He argued that the bushido element in Wells’ collectivism and Meath’s Empire Day movement was unsuitable for the “English humour and English shyness.”⁹² In *A Miscellany of Men* (1912), he excoriated the people who praised bushido, “the Japanese chivalry,” “as if no Western knights had ever vowed noble vows.”⁹³ On similar grounds he belittled the jujitsu craze that was generated by Japan’s victory over Russia. According to him, this “is not a glory for the Japanese methods, or even for the Japanese civilisation,” but rather “was won entirely by imitation of Europe”: after all “[General] Kuroki did not ju-jitsu [General] Kuropatkin in the face of both armies.”⁹⁴ Although his understanding of jujitsu was flawed—he saw it as “ordinary

⁸⁷ H. G. Wells, *The War in the Air* (London, 2005). For Wells’ genius at articulating new popular anxieties, see Hashimoto Yorimitsu, “Victorian Biological Terror: A Study of ‘The Stolen Bacillus,’” *The Undying Fire: The Journal of the H. G. Wells Society, the Americas*, no. 2 (2003), 3–27.

⁸⁸ Wells, *War in the Air*, 175.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 73. Wells might have been alluding to Cromer’s “The Government of the Subject Races” in *Edinburgh Review* (January 1908), which popularized the word. This article was criticized as a typical Orientalist discourse by Said: see his *Orientalism*, 36.

⁹⁰ In the novel, Aurobindo-like retribution was called for by a fictional Chinese named Tan Ting-siang. He said “we overtake and pass the West. We recover the peace of the world that these barbarians have destroyed.” See *ibid.*, 174.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁹² G. K. Chesterton, *The Collected Works of G. K. Chesterton*, vol. 27 (San Francisco, 1986), 489.

⁹³ G. K. Chesterton, *A Miscellany of Men* (New York, 1912), 190.

⁹⁴ Chesterton, *Collected Works*, 27:269.

wrestling with the addition of foul play"⁹⁵—his view of bushido as akin to Western chivalry was in exact agreement with Nitobe.⁹⁶

Chesterton's rationalistic attitude, in this regard unfettered by the distinction between East and West, was still closely knitted with his sense of racial supremacy. In his popular book *What's Wrong with the World* (1910), he writes that the Japanese are like bees, their society animated by a godless, collectivistic "Soul of the Hive" because "it has been said that 'Patriotism is its only religion.'"⁹⁷ As Christian Europe declined and became "morbid or sceptical," he regretted that "now for the first time we worship as well as fear" mysterious Asia; the implication was that the Asian "hive has become larger than the [European] house, the bees are destroying their captors," and Europe's own toleration was only helping them carry out their racially based annihilation.

Conclusion: East is East and West is West?

Nitobe's *Bushido* reflected the disorderly boundary that existed between religion and race at the turn of the last century. Although a convert to Christianity himself, in a "borrowed tongue" he defended his own culture as a non-Christian counterpart to Western morality. Its central feature was imperial ancestor worship, which, once *Bushido* was published and translated into Nitobe's native tongue, the Japanese began to magnify into the religious soul of the people and the secret of its victory over Russia.⁹⁸ Simultaneously, on the other side of the world racialized patriotism as the bond of empire was also what

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Following the same logic, Chesterton satirized Indian nationalism for essentially mimicking British civilization. Mahatma Gandhi, who unlike other Indian nationalists rejected the Japanese model of development, happened to see the article, and it contributed to his shift in emphasis toward Indian traditional culture. See M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*, ed. Anthony J. Parel (Cambridge, 1997), 27–28, 37–38.

⁹⁷ G. K. Chesterton, *What's Wrong with the World* (London, 1913), 263.

⁹⁸ On the conceptions of bushido prevalent in Japan at this time, see Pandey, "Traditions of War Literature," in *Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Wells and Wilson, 43–44; Sandra Wilson, "The Russo-Japanese War and Japan: Politics, Nationalism, and Historical Memory," in *ibid.*, 183; and Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, "Human Bullets, General Nogi, and the Myth of Port Arthur," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, ed. Steinberg et al., 200, 201.

Edwardian Britons longed for after the difficult Boer War. In this age that was being bombarded with the social Darwinist message of survival of the fittest, it seemed mandatory to mobilize the populace by raising national and racial consciousness. Nitobe's book, along with other Japanese interpreters of bushido and imperial ancestor worship such as Hozumi, Kikuchi, and Okakura Yoshisaburo, and the writings of the Japanophiles Hearn and Stead, offered a seemingly tried and true model for arresting the potential decline of the British empire. Western bushido was the answer for the Boy Scout and Empire Day movements, at least until it became apparent that anti-colonial nationalist movements were borrowing from the same source. With the rise of Indian bushido, Japanese chivalry all of a sudden lost its appeal to the British, who started to reinterpret it as a threatening manifestation of a supposed Oriental fanaticism.

A more accurate analysis was made at the time by George Etujiro Uyebara, whose Ph.D. thesis in economics at the University of London warned that "the expounders of Bushido" attributed "the virtues of the Japanese solely to their religious and ethical culture" and overlooked "the social and economic conditions of old Japan."⁹⁹ From our perspective it is indeed the latter that was responsible for Japanese success at modernizing, whether measured in terms of economic development or military strength. But for contemporaries of Nitobe, it was judged on other grounds, and his text opened the door to multiple interpretations of bushido and the role it played.

A famous line from Kipling exemplified what most Britons came to see as the main implication of bushido: "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." This was only the beginning of what Kipling intended to convey, however, and a passage that followed this was what Nitobe stressed: "But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,/When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!"¹⁰⁰ Certainly as this study of the concept of bushido in Japan, Britain, and India has shown, there was no distinction by border, breed, or

⁹⁹ Respective quotes from George Etujiro Uyebara, *The Political Development of Japan, 1867-1909* (London, 1910), 7-14, and *idem*, letter to the editor, *The Times* (December 24, 1909).

¹⁰⁰ Nitobe, *Lectures on Japan* (London, 1937), 48. This is a posthumous work compiled by his wife, Mary P. E. Nitobe and his disciples, based on his manuscripts for a 1932 lecture tour in California, where he had written *Bushido* at the turn of the century.

birth for the invention of new traditions, or for making Orientalist assumptions, positive and negative, romanticized and racist. And, in the decades that followed the publication of Nitobe's landmark book there would be many conflicts between the two strong men—Asian and European—inspired by Japanese bushido.

NATSUME SOSEKI'S NUANCED VIEWS OF THE CONFLICT

Tsukamoto Toshiaki¹

Natsumé Sôseki (the pen-name of Natsumé Kinnosuké) is one of the most distinguished men of letters in the history of modern Japan. A haiku-poet and scholar-critic who gained fame for his composition of classical-style Chinese poems, he is best known for his novels, including the still-revered comic masterpiece *I Am a Cat*. He was born in 1867, shortly before the Meiji Restoration and the beginning of Japan's drive to become a modern, centralized nation-state.

The unprecedented socio-political upheaval brought about by Japan's rapid modernization and the attendant influence of Western culture distressed and also energized Japanese intellectuals. Sôseki was among them, and he is renowned as a critic and novelist who scrutinized the era's problems using a literary style that marked the birth of Japanese modernism. This article will not engage in a whole-sale examination of the works of this versatile writer, but will restrict itself to what Sôseki wrote or said regarding the Russo-Japanese War, which in and of itself offers a revealing commentary on the humanist nationalism of the man and the complex era in which he lived.

We will first look at Sôseki's pre-war stay in London, then discuss his views on the Russo-Japanese War as expressed in his fiction and essays, and ultimately see what he came to conclude about war, militarism, and nationalism in general.

Sôseki in London

In response to tsarist Russia's increasingly active involvement in the Far East with the construction of the Trans-Siberian and Chinese

¹ The author and editors would like to thank Kailash Editions and Dany Savelli for permission to reprint this article in translation from *Les Carnets de l'exotisme: Faits et imaginaires de la guerre russo-japonaise*, ed. Dany Savelli (Paris: Kailash Editions, 2005).

Eastern railroads, its occupation of southern Manchuria following the Boxer Rebellion, and machinations in Korea, Japan began to perceive a threat to its own national security. At the same time, Great Britain feared that the Russian advance into Manchuria would upset the balance of power in the north Pacific, a long-maintained foreign-policy objective of the British government.

Tokyo was sharply divided in ways to cope with this crisis. The senior statesmen who had led the Meiji Restoration insisted that Japan should adopt a pro-Russian policy to avoid confrontation with one of the most dreaded military powers in the world. Younger leaders, unable to trust the behavior of the expansionist country, proposed to seek an alliance with Great Britain, which would be very helpful if Japan should take military action against Russia. In 1901 Tokyo decided to adopt the latter course and succeeded in concluding a treaty of alliance in 1902, Great Britain also having found friendship with Japan advantageous in obstructing further Russian advances in the region.

It was in the midst of this emerging relationship that on October 28, 1900, Sôseki, a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University, arrived in London as a student sponsored by the Japanese government. On the following day, having left his lodgings in Gower Street, he became lost on the way back. In his diary entry of this day he writes that he was "embarrassed by the crushing congestion, the streets being filled with overflowing people who gathered to welcome the volunteer soldiers just returned from South Africa."² In September of that year Britain had declared the annexation of the Transvaal, and the festive crowd gathering there naively believed they had gained the final victory in the Boer War. What Sôseki saw immediately after his arrival in London was enthusiastic popular support for the war, which to him epitomized an aspect of the ruthless struggle for control of a non-Western territory that was abundant in gold and diamonds, whatever the pretext given for the conflict might have been. Sôseki's awareness of the stark realities of this international development must have led to some vague anxiety regarding the prospects of Japan. For his homeland was a small, backward country in the Far East repeatedly humiliated by the Western powers.

² Natsumé Sôseki, *Sôseki Zenshû* [Complete Works of Sôseki], vol. 19 (Tokyo, 1995), 26.

On the voyage to Europe, Sôseki had felt disgraced as a Japanese on several occasions. When the *Preussen*, the German ship he had boarded at Yokohama, called at Shanghai, he found "the buildings thereabout were incomparably more magnificent than those in Yokohama," the most Westernized city in Japan at that time. Further south in Hong Kong, he had supper at a Japanese inn, which he found "too dirty to stay in for long." In sharp contrast, he saw back on board the ship the beautiful night scene of the island itself, full of edifices with brightly lit windows like glittering diamonds and rubies. Then in Singapore, after visiting an excellent botanical garden, he took lunch at a restaurant in Japan town, where he was disturbed at the sight of Japanese prostitutes walking the streets in broad daylight.³ These experiences undoubtedly taught him the true position of Japan, the poverty of its national resources, and the marginal status it occupied in the world, even after victory in the Sino-Japanese War.

Life in London compelled him to recognize the wide gap that existed between Japan and Britain in every aspect of life. In his diary he wrote: "Here people give their seats to the weak; unlike us they are not self-centered. They assert their rights; unlike us they are not flabby. They are proud of Britain, just as we are proud of Japan. Consider calmly which is truly worth being proud of."⁴ He added the following: "All night I keenly thought of the prospects of Japan; we must be honest and serious; we must keep our eyes wide open."⁵ And: "They say Japan woke up thirty years ago; but she only jumped out of bed at the fire-bell, utterly upset; she is hastily swallowing everything Western but cannot digest it; the situation is the same whether in literature, or in politics, or in commerce; Japan must fully come to her senses."⁶

But Sôseki himself had not fully come to his senses yet. Prior to his departure for Britain under the official order to study *English*, he went to the trouble of getting permission to study *English literature* as well. Nevertheless, he was distressed with the realization that English literature did not necessarily sit well with him, an heir to traditional

³ Ibid., 15–19.

⁴ Ibid., 44.

⁵ Ibid., 35.

⁶ Ibid., 66.

Japanese culture and Chinese classics. Some Western novels he considered excellent were disparaged by English critics, or vice versa. And some poems that people had unanimously extolled in the eighteenth century now in the early twentieth century stood very low in general estimation. How can we explain these phenomena? Even if literature has something universal that appeals to the depth of human nature, isn't it essentially rooted in the cultural climate or tradition that gives birth to it? Does "taste," in accordance with which we supposedly appreciate literary works, change easily when we grow weary of it? Or is there some basic criterion or general theory by which we can evaluate literary works? More fundamentally, what is literature? What sociological or psychological necessities gave rise to literature? These were the problems that so deeply perplexed Sôseki in London. Seeking solutions to them while frequently tormented with fits of mental depression, he gradually came to the conviction that he had only his own judgment to rely upon. It was to be cultivated through extensive reading ranging from literature to science to sociology, as well as through a variety of artistic experiences.

While grappling with these problems in London, Sôseki never forgot the difficult East Asian events with which Japan was contending. He comments in his "*London Shôsoku*" (Letters from London), written in 1901, that the first thing he looks for in the newspaper every morning is whatever information he can find on the Boxer Rebellion. At that time the allied forces, after occupying the capital of China, were toughly negotiating with the Qing government for an absurdly large indemnity. He apparently felt profound sympathy with China, and chafed at the deep humiliation that the Chinese Emperor must have suffered when he was obliged to flee Peking.⁷

Another passage from the same work includes a casual but noteworthy remark regarding a commentary in a newspaper over the possible war between Japan and Russia. Sôseki writes that a correspondent of the *Standard* (a British newspaper) in St. Petersburg reported on a discussion that appeared in a prominent Russian journal. The journal concluded that in the event of armed conflict between

⁷ See *ibid.*, vol. 12 (1994), 31. According to the annotation here, Sôseki refers to the large indemnity demanded of China. But since his wording (天子蒙塵) means "the humiliation of the Emperor's flight from the capital," there is no reason not to take his use of this expression literally. Sôseki must have been referring to the removal of the Chinese court from Peking to Xian in 1900.

the two countries, Russia had best fight a decisive battle for hegemony in the Korean peninsula because the invasion of Japan would be strategically unadvisable.⁸ Sôseki, after summing up the article, only says that the discussion would shock Koreans, but he could not have overlooked the brutal realities of contemporary international relations in a more general sense. His concern in this regard is indicated by another comment in "Letters from London," where he expresses the belief that the British government will cynically "cover the deficit in war expenditures with the diamonds of the Transvaal."⁹

In January 1902, Japan concluded the previously mentioned defensive treaty of alliance with Great Britain. The alliance was so unbalanced in favor of Japan that it immediately attracted the attention of all European nations. In Japan, the overjoyed general public believed the mightiest sea power in the world now promised to back Japan in case of war. Sôseki, hearing of this rapture of delight in his homeland, harshly commented that it was a case in which a poor family might feel elated when allied with a very rich family through marriage, and added that we must not forget everything in international relationships ultimately depended on national interests rather than on morality, which did not necessarily bode well for the relationship with Britain.¹⁰ Sôseki thus evinced remarkable lucidity in his assessment of world affairs, even though this fell outside the realm of literature, his specialization.

Sôseki's Earlier Works and the Russo-Japanese War

Sôseki returned to Japan in 1903 and began to teach English at the prestigious First Higher School, and also to lecture on English literature at Tokyo Imperial University; he continued to periodically experience bouts of severe depression as in London. In February 1904, Japan declared war against Russia, and its victories in several early sea battles elated the general public. Even Uchimura Kanzô,

⁸ Ibid., 8–9. According to Oka Saburô, what Sôseki refers to is "The Manchuria Question," by a correspondent in Odessa, an article that appeared in the April 9, 1901, issue of the *Standard*. See Oka, *Natsumé Sôseki Kenkyû* [A Study of Natsumé Sôseki], vol. 1 (Tokyo, 1981), 232–233.

⁹ *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 12, p. 31.

¹⁰ See *ibid.*, vol. 22 (1996), 252–253.

a well-known Christian pacifist, rejoiced at the news of the successful surprise attack on the Russian fleet in Port Arthur and gave three loud cheers in spite of himself.¹¹ In May, Sôseki contributed to the *Teikoku Bungaku* (Imperial University Journal of Literature) a piece of “*shintai-shi*” (new-styled poetry) titled “*Jûgun-kô*” (A Poem for our Servicemen), a manifestation of his patriotism. But he soon realized the nonsense of an idle man distant from the bloody battlefield composing poetry in an excited moment of bellicosity. Afterwards he admitted it was nothing better than other worthless works of transient rapture published during the war. He returned to the routine life of a teacher as of old, occasionally publishing essays and translations, without directly mentioning the war.

In December 1904 he began to write the very popular, serially published *Wagahai wa Neko de aru* (usually translated “I Am a Cat”)¹² in the magazine *Hototogisu* (Cuckoo). This is a sprawling comic novel-essay in which an undernourished and nameless tomcat, kept by a bumbling and bombastic English teacher Mr. Kushami (Sneeze) faithfully depicts in quaint and pretentious diction every aspect of modern life, and gives pseudo-philosophical comments on the incongruities of human existence perceived by the cat. The cat makes off-hand remarks on the Russo-Japanese War as well, always in a peculiarly oblique, if not burlesque, style.

In chapter 5 of *I Am a Cat*, a thief one night breaks into the house of Mr. Kushami when all the family members are fast asleep, and steals most of their clothes and even a big box of yams kept hidden in the bedroom. The box of yams was a present for the cat’s master from one of his former students. The next day the student happens to visit him again and deplores the uselessness of the stupid cat for failing to warn the master of the thief’s presence, then asks the master to give him the good-for-nothing little brute, which

¹¹ See Hirakawa Sukehiro, *Sôseki no Shi, Murdoch Sensei* [Professor Murdoch, Who Taught Sôseki] (Kodansha, 1984), 45–47.

¹² Regarding the title’s translation, Sôseki himself wrote to an American correspondent that in this work “a cat speaks in the first person plural, we.” He goes on to say that “whether regal or editorial, it is beyond the ken of the author to see.” In the same letter he also uses the expression of “this feline King” to refer to the nameless cat, which leads us to assume that Sôseki was thinking in terms of what grammarians call the “royal we.” In this case, *We Are a Cat*, though it sounds a bit funny in English, would be a more precise translation. See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 26 (1996), 284.

he knows would taste rather delicious if properly cooked. The cat, realizing the fatal mistake of merely enjoying a meditative life with the underpaid teacher, decides to astonish the family by a highly meritorious feat of catching the rats that nightly haunt the kitchen, though he has never braved such a danger as rat-hunting before. Accordingly he maps out a careful plan of operation to intercept the rats, which he expects to charge out of the many holes in the kitchen walls. But the cat feels apprehensive because he is unable to foresee which holes they will use to make their sorties. This feeling, says the cat, is similar to Admiral Togo's apprehension when he was about to fight a decisive battle against the Russian Baltic Fleet sailing to Vladivostok but did not know which of the possible straits it would pass through: Tsushima, Tsugaru, or Soya. Despite the detailed planning, the cat's engagement with the rats ends in an instant when the blundering feline falls from the shelf with a big thud, a black monster of a rodent having sunk its teeth into the cat's tail. "Thief!" sounds the hoarse voice of his master, Mr. Kushami, who rushes out of his bedroom with a stick in hand, very much astonished indeed. But there was no human to be seen, nor any sign of rats, whose raid the cat failed to foil.¹³

It would be incorrect to interpret Sôseki's chapter, written two months after the Battle of Tsushima, as ridiculing Admiral Togo. Though Sôseki never idolized anyone, he always paid due respect to anyone worthy of it. In "*Hihyôka no Tachiba*" (The Viewpoint of a Critic), published in the May 1905 issue of the journal *Shinchô* (New Tides of Literature), he praised Japanese soldiers.¹⁴ In "*Sengo Bunkai no Sûsei*" (General Tendencies in our Literature after the War), which appeared in the periodical *Shinshôsetsu* (New Novels) in August of the same year, Sôseki states that in his estimation Togo is almost as great as Nelson.¹⁵ Rather, what Sôseki does through the cat's impertinent self-identification with Togo, is to criticize the light-headed Japanese public, which in its exuberance over Togo's dramatic victory, tended to class itself in the same category as the great naval commander. Sôseki detested this kind of empty bravado, as

¹³ See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 1 (1993), 183–225. See also Sôseki, *I Am a Cat*, trans. Shibata Katsue and Kai Motonari (Tokyo, 1961), 150–181.

¹⁴ See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 25 (1996), 105.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 113.

was also evident when he chided himself for the poor poem he had composed in a passing rapture of patriotic fervor.

Sôseki's thinking is more obviously portrayed in Chapter 6, where Mr. Kushami's eccentric friends gather in his house and indulge in their usual idle talk. In the course of time, a self-styled poet begins to read aloud a ludicrous poem dedicated to his adoring love, the haughty daughter of a stout, bald-headed, upstart millionaire. The poetaster exudes plenty of egotistical confidence about the quality of his verse. As the group discusses its merits (or demerits) and understandability (or non-understandability), Mr. Kushami feels tempted to show the prose poem he has himself composed. It runs roughly as follows:

"Long live Yamato-damashii (the Japanese Spirit!)" shouted a Japanese, coughing as if a consumptive. . . / "The Japanese Spirit!" cried the newspapers. "The Japanese Spirit!" screamed a pickpocket. In one leap the Japanese Spirit crossed the ocean; it was lectured upon in Britain, while a play about it was put on the stage in Germany. . . / Admiral Togo has the Japanese Spirit, so have fishmongers, swindlers, cheats, and murderers. . . / But when asked what is the Japanese Spirit, they answer "It is the Japanese Spirit," followed by a cough to clear the throat. . . / Is the Japanese Spirit triangular, or quadrangular? No! It is a spirit, as the words indicate, and therefore it is always formless, unstable. . . / Everyone speaks of the Japanese Spirit, but no one has seen it. Everyone hears of it, but no one has met it. Is the Japanese Spirit something mysterious like Tengu, the long-nosed, occult-powered legendary goblin?¹⁶

Sôseki regarded the blind extolment of the Japanese Spirit as the flip-side of a Japanese inferiority complex. Long overpowered by Western civilization in every sphere of life since the Meiji Restoration, suggests Sôseki, the Japanese were compensating by excessive worship of their "Spirit." This was a reaction caused by a general loss of confidence in Japanese cultural traditions and simultaneous dread at the prospect of being permanently overwhelmed by Western culture. The restoration of some confidence with victory over Russia, he felt, might lead to a new creativity on the part of Japanese art, literature, and culture, on the same level as other advanced nations.¹⁷ In the course of time, however, not a few of the Japanese came to

¹⁶ See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 1, pp. 226–265.

¹⁷ See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 25, pp. 108–116.

make a fetish of the Spirit that was mysterious “like Tengu, the long-nosed, occult-powered legendary goblin,” until it was regarded as a kind of panacea for any hardships, whether personal or national.

In January 1906, Sôseki published the short story “*Shumi no Iden*” (Inheritance of Love),¹⁸ in which the narrator tells how, upon seeing a young lady offering flowers at the tomb of his friend killed in the siege of Port Arthur, he came to formulate a quasi-scientific hypothesis that their love resulted from the unfulfilled love of their ancestors. What arrests our attention is the grotesque imagery of the opening pages. Sôseki writes:

Perhaps on account of weather, God himself went insane. A voice from above the thick clouds covering the sky over the Sea of Japan and Manchuria thundered ‘Butcher men and feed the hungry dogs with them!’, whereupon the Japanese and Russians answered all together, ‘Yes, certainly!’ and started slaughtering each other in a battlefield whose front lines stretched more than four hundred kilometers long. Out of the horizon of the endless wild plain rushed thousands of dreadful wolf-like quadrupeds ripping through the winds that reeked of human blood, like artillery shells and bullets. Scarcely did the insane God, treading on air, have time to shout ‘Suck blood!’ when the boisterous gulping of the monstrous wolves was heard, their red flames of tongues flashing over the dark ground.

Then the savage predators, obeying the orders of the mad God hidden behind the black, dense clouds, devoured human flesh, gnawed the bones and sucked the bodies to the very marrow. The narrator’s young friend, of course, is one of the innumerable victims devoured in this way.¹⁹

The horrid image of “the insane God” might be derived from Blake’s *Gwin, King of Norway*, in which we can find the following passage: “The God of War is drunk with blood;/ The earth doth faint and fall;/ The stench of blood makes sick the heav’ns;/ Ghosts glut the throat of hell!”²⁰ And the wolf-like quadruped appears to be a

¹⁸ Sometimes this work is translated as “Heredity of Taste,” but it is too literal a translation. In a letter to Morita Sôhei dated February 14, 1906, Sôseki makes a comment on the word “*shumi*” (generally translated as “taste”), and says that by this word in this particular case he means “love between man and woman.” See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 22 (1996), 466.

¹⁹ *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 2 (1994), 185–186. The passage here relies, with some changes, on the English translation by Itô Aiko and Graeme Wilson, in *Ten Nights of Dream; Hearing Things; The Heredity of Taste* (Tokyo, 2004), 203.

²⁰ See Ishii Kazuo, “*Yôkyo-shû no Haikai* (The Backgrounds of *Yôkyo-shû*),” in

fictional animal that Sôseki created out of the gray wolves who roamed Manchuria, overlapped with the image of Cerberus, the dog-like three-headed monster that guards the entrance to Hades.²¹ But whatever the literary sources of the fearful quadrupeds may be, Sôseki clearly ascribes the Russo-Japanese War to the insanity of God hidden above the black clouds.

Apparently Sôseki's viewpoint changed substantially in the course of four years. Originally, in 1902, he had remarked that everything in a nation's foreign policy depended on national interests, determined by rational calculations based on military and economic losses and gains. But now in 1906, he appears to urge us to reconsider the fierce war that had just ended, a war that was carried out with unrestrained violence and resulted in an appalling number of victims and incalculable damage to lives and property. If this war was to be regarded as the essence of the foreign policies of Japan and Russia, it had to be justifiable in terms of national interests. But how could it be when he could see no trace of anything rationally assessable in it? He could no longer maintain his former opinion that everything depended on calculations of profit and loss when in his view nothing but the insanity of God could have caused the catastrophe. What Sôseki means by the "insane" God is unclear, since he makes an intentionally ambiguous statement that God went mad on account of the weather. But, judging from his remark uttered elsewhere that any character attributed to what we call God is merely a projection of our own natures,²² we cannot but assume that the insane God is a personification of human destructiveness. This naturally reminds us of Sigmund Freud, who, seeing the nightmare of devastation that World War I caused in regions that were technologically by far the most advanced and therefore regarded as the most cultured and civilized, was led to admit to the latent existence of a "death instinct" in humankind, an instinct essentially alien to culture or technology.

Hikakubungaku Kenkyû: Natsumé Sôseki [Comparative Studies of Natsumé Sôseki], ed. Tsukamoto Toshiaki (Tokyo, 1978).

²¹ See Kenmochi Takehiko, *Kindai no Shôsetsu* [Modern Novels in Japan], (Tokyo, 1975), 70–72.

²² See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 14 (1995), 124.

Sôseki's Thoughts after the Russo-Japanese War

In 1908, three years after the Russo-Japanese War ended, Sôseki began writing the series titled *Sanshirô* in the *Asahi* newspaper, which became his third novel. It tells the story of a rustic young man named Sanshirô, just graduated from the Higher School at Kumamoto. He enters into two worlds previously unknown to him; one is a world of misty knowledge at the university, distant from the hustle and bustle of daily life, and the other is the cheerful society of beautiful, urbane girls. In foreshadowing of the plot, Sôseki immediately introduces two peculiar characters, through each of whom Sanshirô experiences events he could not easily forget. One of them is a young woman whom he happens to meet while traveling by rail to Tokyo. When departing at a stopover station, she upsets him by saying with a grin, "You really are chicken-hearted, aren't you?" More germane for our purposes, though, is his next encounter on the train, where he meets a quiet man reminiscent of a Shinto priest with a thick moustache who is blowing long streams of smoke from his nostrils. At the Hamamatsu Station they both see a few Westerners strolling on the platform through the window. They notice an extremely beautiful woman, when the man with a moustache remarks: "We Japanese are really miserable-looking things next to them. We think we have become a first-class power after beating the Russians but the victory doesn't make any difference. We've still got the same faces, the same feeble little bodies." He goes on to say that most Japanese boast of Mt. Fuji, but that is just a natural object and not something the Japanese have created. Sanshirô argues that Japan is just starting to develop and will continue to do so in the future, but the strange man coolly replies, "Japan is going to perish." He continues with the affirmation that "You shouldn't be enmeshed in blind patriotism. It will only ruin Japan." These were words Sanshirô never expected any Japanese to utter after the victory of the Russo-Japanese War. With this striking remark, writes Sôseki, Sanshirô felt he had really left the small town of Kumamoto and that he had glimpsed for the first time the vast new world he was about to enter.²³

²³ See *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 5 (1994), 273–292. Also see *Sanshiro*, trans. Jay Rubin (Tokyo, 1999), 7–30.

The Shinto-priest-like man with a moustache, we can assume, is the voice of Sôseki himself. What does Sôseki suggest when he has the man say, "Japan is going to perish"? Sôseki knew, partly through his experience of London and partly from his extensive reading of the foreign press, what strengths and resources the Western powers could mobilize. He also knew that Japan was obsessed with superficial imitation of Europe and America. He may even have been aware that Japan had not yet achieved legal equality with the Western nations. Although the country had reached an agreement in 1894 with Great Britain regarding the abolition of the extraterritoriality rights the British had enjoyed since Japan opened its ports to foreign trade in 1858, it was only in 1911, six years after Japan's narrow victory in the Russo-Japanese War, that it finally succeeded in acquiring tariff autonomy and revising unequal treaties with the United States, followed by other powers.

In 1914, nine years after the Russo-Japanese War ended, World War I broke out. While no one could foretell the outcome after only a year and a half, Sôseki was led to contemplate the significance of the war for humanity. While astonished by the tremendous scale of the bloodshed in Europe, Sôseki thought that this unprecedented all-out conflict was essentially empty and meaningless, just like the wars mankind had previously experienced, and that it would not permanently change the innermost lives of human beings since this war, he now understood, was caused by factors unrelated to any profound human religious or secular ideas.

Then Sôseki "lowers" his eyes from these heights of philosophical contemplation to the stark realities in Europe, and ponders the future of militarism, which seemed to have triumphed over liberalism. Expressing sympathy for the awful sufferings wrought by the Germans on Britain and France, Sôseki contemplates Heinrich von Treitschke, the German historian who in Sôseki's mind provided his fatherland with the ideological justification for its militaristic aggression. Treitschke's position may have made sense prior to the unification of Germany, at a time when his nation felt constantly threatened from outside, but after the goal of unification was achieved, Sôseki believes this ideology should have been discarded. Germany, however, seems to have remained under its inspiration as it seemed determined to unify Europe under its control and even conquer the earth. What ultimate contribution, he asks, can Germany make to the civilization of

the world if it pursues its interests through a doctrine such as Treitschke's?²⁴ We know full well his answer.

These thoughts were, of course, a response provoked by the contemporary situation in Europe, but at the same time they reflected principles Sôseki had long cherished. In "*Watashi no Kojinshugi*" 'My Individualism,' a lecture also delivered in 1914, he plainly explained those principles, which were regarded in those days as harmful to Japan. Some people, Sôseki argues, contrast individualism with nationalism and insist that the former inevitably undermines the latter, but in his view this logic is flawed. Individualism is certainly based on the freedom of every individual, but the freedom that any individual enjoys necessarily depends on the situation in his or her homeland. In other words, when national security is at stake, then it would be reasonable for individual freedoms to be restricted in one way or another. Japan is indeed a small and poor country, but obviously it is not facing an impending emergency. Why then shouldn't each Japanese citizen pursue his or her own individual happiness when it is clear that every individualist, provided he is a person of honor and character, will fulfill his duty in a time of national crisis? Thus Sôseki declares we can all be nationalists and cosmopolitans, nationalists and individualists at one and the same time.²⁵

This provides a clue to understanding what Sôseki meant when he said, "Japan is going to perish." To him the spiritual independence of every honorable individual, and not glory-seeking victories in war, form the very basis of national prosperity. He died in 1916 at the age of forty-nine, not seeing the result of World War I, or the militarism and nationalism that grew more rampant after his death and represented the negation of his life's work.

²⁴ See "*Gunkokushugi* [Militarism]," pts. 2-3, and "Treitschke," pts. 1-3, in *Sôseki Zenshû*, vol. 16 (1995), 630-648.

²⁵ See "*Watashi no Kojinshugi* [My Individualism]," in *ibid.*, 610-614.

SERIAL WAR: EGAWA TATSUYA'S
*TALE OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR*¹

Kitamura Yukiko²

Introduction

Egawa Tatsuya's *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War: The Weather Is Fine but the Waves Are High* (*Nichiro sensô monogatari: Tenki seirô naredomo nami takashi*) is the first manga on the Russo-Japanese War to be serialized and printed in Japan. The protagonist is Akiyama Saneyuki (1868–1918), who was at the center of operational planning in naval battles of the Russo-Japanese War as the Combined Fleet's Senior Staff Officer under Admiral Tôgô Heihachirô. The black and white cartoons of the manga describe Akiyama's friendships, the movement toward war, and the upheavals occurring in Japanese society after the Meiji Restoration. Akiyama Saneyuki's status as protagonist reminds us of his similar role in Shiba Ryôtarô's best-selling novel *Cloud at the Top of the Slope* (*Saka no ue no kumo*) (1968–1972).³ But Egawa demythicizes the Russo-Japanese War, while Shiba contributes to mythicization.

In today's Japan, this manga is the best-selling publication of any type on the Russo-Japanese War⁴—although as of August 2006 the lengthy story being told in the manga has only gone as far as the

¹ The author and editors would like to thank Kailash Éditions and Dany Savelli for permission to reprint this article in translation from *Les Carnets de l'exotisme: Faits et imaginaires de la guerre russo-japonaise*, ed. Dany Savelli (Paris: Kailash Éditions, 2005).

² I am grateful to Mr. Egawa Tatsuya, who pleasantly agreed to have an interview with me, and to Mr. Murayama Hiroshi, Mr Ôe Kazuhiro, and Mr. Suginaka Minoru, who work for Shôgakukan and gave me precious information. I would also like to thank Mr. Egawa Tatsuya and *Big Comic Spirits* of Shôgakukan for the permission to reproduce *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Dr. Dany Savelli for her initial guidance to write this article and her numerous insightful suggestions.

³ For more on this, see Chiba Isao, "Shifting Contours of Memory and History," in this volume.

⁴ Available at Amazon.co.jp: <http://www.amazon.co.jp/exec/obidos/search-handle-form/249-9611208-1809923>.

first Sino-Japanese War (1894). Since April 23, 2001, it has been serialized in a weekly manga magazine, *Big Comic Spirits* (*Biggu Komikku Supirittsu*), which is published by Shôgakukan, one of the three biggest manga publishing companies in Japan, and sells 600,000 copies each week. The entire *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* series has been republished by Shôgakukan in twenty volumes so far, and in total 1,236,000 copies have been sold. It has also been translated and published in Taiwan and Korea.⁵ In the present article I will focus attention on this long tale, referring to my interview with Egawa himself,⁶ and convey how he deals with the war in his manga, one of the most influential forms of mass media in modern Japan.

Manga Artist Egawa Tatsuya

Egawa was born in Nagoya in 1961.⁷ He became a mathematics teacher at a junior high school, but quit after five months. He then worked as an assistant to the manga artist Motomiya Hiroshi for four months, and debuted with his own manga, *Be Free!* (1984–1988). His fame was established by works such as *Taruru the Magician* (*Magikaru Tarurûto-kun*) (1988–1992)⁸ and *Tale of Tokyo University* (*Tokyo Daigaku monogatari*) (1992–2000).⁹ Egawa is an independent artist, has his own studio in Tokyo, and employs six assistants. Among various subjects in his works, Egawa deals with magic for children, school life for teenagers, and for adults history and versions of classical novels. Along with *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*, since 2001 Egawa has “manganized” *Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*), written by Murasaki Shikibu in the eleventh century, and since 2002 *Domestic Yapoo* (*Kachikujin*

⁵ So far, eleven volumes have been published by Tongli in Taiwan, and thirteen by Seoul Moonwhasa in Korea.

⁶ Egawa Tatsuya, personal interview, March 17, 2003. All Egawa’s comments, which are quoted in this paper without reference number, are from this interview.

⁷ For criticism of Egawa’s works, see *Mangajinmagazine*, vol. 2, 2001. For his autobiography, see Egawa Tatsuya, “*Zen shin manga*” ka [“*Perfectly Manga*” Artist] (Tokyo, 2002).

⁸ *Taruru the Magician* was published in twenty-one volumes and sold twelve million copies. This manga was translated into French, Chinese, Korean, Thai, and was also made into an animated cartoon on TV and a TV game in Japan.

⁹ *Tale of Tokyo University* was published in thirty-four volumes, sold fifteen million copies, and was dramatized on TV in Japan.

Yapoo), written by Numa Shôzô in 1970. Whereas Egawa's manga are famous for their abundant eroticism, he decided to exclude this from *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*.¹⁰

Historical Background

As Shimizu Isao has shown,¹¹ many one-frame manga and short narrative manga¹² on the Russo-Japanese War were drawn while the war was taking place. After the war, narrative manga became more highly developed in length and plot, but the Russo-Japanese War was rarely featured. Before *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*, there were only two manga with that as its major subject. One was the internet comic *Monsieur Akashi* (*Musshû Akashi*) (1999–), written by Morita Kiyoshi and drawn by Ikehara Shigeto.¹³ Its protagonist is Akashi Motojirô, the true-to-life Japanese spy whose mission during the war was to promote anti-Russian sentiment in Europe, especially among peoples under Russian rule.¹⁴ At first about twenty pages of this manga were updated every week, but the serial came to an end and there is no prospect of publication as a book.¹⁵ Another was an anthology of short manga, *True Record of the Naval Battle Tsushima: The Miraculous Great Turn in Front of the Enemy in the Russo-Japanese War*

¹⁰ See Egawa's interview, "Egawa Tatsuya *Nichiro sensô monogatari*" [Egawa Tatsuya's *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*], *Comic Dacapo* (November 21, 2001), 119. For other interviews, see Egawa Tatsuya and Fukuda Kazuya, "Manga de 'sensô' wo dô kakubekika" [How 'the War' Should Be Described in Manga], *Meme* (May 2002), 16–21; "Egawa Tatsuya Interview" [Interview of Egawa Tatsuya], *Bessatsu Takarajima* (January 14, 2003), 4–10.

¹¹ See Shimizu Isao, "La Guerre russo-japonaise à travers la caricature russe," in *Faits et imaginaires de la guerre russo-japonaise (1904–1905)*, ed. Dany Savelli (Paris, 2005), 477–491.

¹² Narrative manga, the so-called story manga in Japanese, means comics that develop a story by pictorial and other images in a deliberate sequence of frames. See Scott McCloud, *Mangagaku: Manga ni yoru manga no tameno manga riron* [Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art] (Tokyo, 1993), 17; Jaqueline Berndt, "Tenji sareru manga: Bijutsukan ni okeru manga no 'bigaku'" [Manga Exhibited: 'Aesthetics' of Manga in Museums], in *Man bi ken: Manga no bi/gaku teki na jigen eno sekkin* [Aesthetic Studies of Manga: Towards an Aesthetics of Comics] (Kyoto, 2002), 162–163.

¹³ *Monsieur Akashi* is available for free at the website of Mitsuiwa, a computer network company: <http://www.mitsuiwacc.com/data/backno.html>.

¹⁴ On Akashi's activities, see Antti Kujala, "Japanese Subversion in the Russian Empire" ed. Steinberg et al. (Leiden, 2005), 261–280.

¹⁵ Mori Hiroshi (press officer of Mitsuiwa), telephone interview, May 10, 2003.

(*Jitsuroku nihonkai kaisen: Nichiro sensô kiseki no tekizen dai kaitô*) (2000), written by Takanuki Nobuhito, drawn by Ueda Shin et al., and published by Tachikaze Shobô. These two works do not follow the typical pattern of popular manga in Japan since the 1930s, which was serialization in a magazine followed by re-publication later in book form. Thus, before Egawa, no artist had created manga on the Russo-Japanese War in the “traditional” Japanese way.

Why was the Russo-Japanese War not chosen as a subject of manga until recently? In Japan, the word “manga” first appeared in the 1770s, but it was not until the 1920s that manga began to appear in newspapers and magazines, and only thereafter did the word become popular.¹⁶ For adults, proletarian manga by Marxist artists such as Yanase Shomu were published in *Proletariat News* (*Musansha Shinbun*), *War Banner* (*Senki*), etc., but despite their large readership these periodicals were forced to close by the government, armed with the Peace Preservation Law, in the early 1930s.¹⁷ None of the proletarian manga touch on the Russo-Japanese War. For children, manga about soldiers (*heитай manga*) such as Tagawa Suihō’s *Canine Private Norakuro* (*Norakuro nitôhei*) became popular from 1931.¹⁸ In this genre the characters were animals, including dogs, monkeys, pigs, whose comical life in the army formed the story-line. There were some scenes of maneuvers, but no images of killing or other violence. From 1937, with the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, to 1941, many nationalistic war manga (*sensô manga*), such as Niizeki Seika’s *Patriot Manga: The Desperate Troop* (*Aikoku manga kesshi tai*) (1938), were also published for children.¹⁹ Its characters were fictional human beings and its subject a contemporary war, so once again the Russo-Japanese War did not figure.

By contrast with the dearth of coverage by manga artists, in the 1930s and 1940s numerous memoirs and novels on the Russo-Japanese War were published, which helped to raise the Japanese fighting

¹⁶ Shimizu Isao, *Manga no rekishi* [*History of Manga*] (Tokyo, 1991).

¹⁷ Frederik L. Schodt, *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* (Tokyo, 1983), 51; Tanaka Masuzô, “Pro bi graffiti: Yanase to hitobito, manshû to sensôga” [Proletarian Art Graffiti: Yanase and People, Manchuria and War Paintings], *Shuka*, vol. 11 (1998), 22.

¹⁸ Akiyama Masami, *Maboroshi no sensô manga no sekai* [*The World of Phantasmal War Manga*] (Tokyo, 1998), 102.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 152.

spirit. In 1935, for instance, for the thirtieth anniversary of the war, Asahi Shinbun issued *The Secret History of the Great Russo-Japanese War: Retrospectives of Famous Admirals* (*Nichiro taissen hishi: Meishô kaiko*), and Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun and Osaka Mainichi Shinbun jointly published *Reflections upon the Russo-Japanese Great War after Thirty Years* (*Kaiko sanjû nen nichiro taissen wo kataru*). In 1943, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the worsening situation for Japan in the Pacific War, several books such as Ogasawara Naganari and Ogasawara Kiyotaka's *The Imperial Headquarters: Secret Episodes of the Russo-Japanese War* (*Daihonei: Nichiro sensô hiwa*), Uno Chiyo's *What I Heard about the Russo-Japanese War* (*Nichiro no ikusa kiki gaki*), and Frank Thiess's *Tsushima* (translated from the German original of 1936) were published to remind the public of the victory that was achieved in the last war against a white power.

Significantly, before and during the Second World War Japanese manga were more severely regulated by the government than other genres. Manga was regarded as low-brow and frivolous, so that from the mid-1930s children's magazines were obliged to contain progressively fewer manga and more proselytizing military adventure stories.²⁰ Books of manga were basically prohibited from being publishing by the end of 1941,²¹ and manga strips were banned from newspapers entirely from the middle of 1944.²² The sole comic-strip magazine was *Manga*, published by the New Japan Manga Association (*Shin Nippon Manga Kyôkai*), which was under the control of the government and remained in circulation until 1944, though only manga with militaristic propaganda for the war were printed.²³ It is reasonable to assume that given those restrictions manga artists could not afford to reflect on the past and deal with the Russo-Japanese War.

After the Second World War, especially in the early 1960s, war-themed manga (*senki manga*) for boys became prevalent, with fighter-pilots and soldiers as the characters.²⁴ The subject matter was always

²⁰ Sharon Kinsella, *Adult Manga: Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society* (Richmond, UK, 2000), 23.

²¹ Akiyama, *Maboroshi no sensô manga no sekai*, 157–158.

²² Tsurumi Shunsuke, *A Cultural History of Post-War Japan 1945–1980* (London, 1987), 32.

²³ Ishiko Junzô, *Sengo mangashi nôte* [*Notes on the Post-War History of Manga*] (Tokyo, 1994), 18–31.

²⁴ Natsume Fusanosuke, *Manga to "sensô"* [*Manga and War*] (Tokyo, 1997), 30–44.

the Pacific War—despite Japan’s defeat—and especially frequent were tales of airborne kamikaze attacks. For example, the following serials were launched in monthly or weekly magazines: in 1961 Kaizuka Hiroshi’s *Red of the Zero Fighter* (*Zero sen reddo*), in 1962 Chiba Tetsuya’s *Taka in Lightning Fighter* (*Shidenkai no Taka*), and in 1963 Tsuji Naoki’s *Zero Fighter Hayato* (*Zero sen Hayato*). Manga for men (*seinen manga*) also started to become more numerous from the late 1960s, and these, too, dealt with the Pacific War as their primary subject, for instance Motomiya Hiroshi’s *Zero Fighter White Eagle* (*Zero no shirotaka*) (1976–1977), and Amanuma Shun’s *Soul in the Sky of the War* (*Senkū no tamashii*) (1997–2000). These manga do not deal with the causes of war, but rather with the thrill of air combat, the sadness of leaving a female lover for death, and the hollowness of militarism. But the question remains, why the Second World War instead of the Russo-Japanese War? In Egawa’s view, manga on World War II are popular because of the visual possibilities derived from drawings of airplanes and air battles as well as the still living memory of Japan’s participation in the war.

As in the case of the United States,²⁵ however, even historically accurate war manga do not currently enjoy much market share in Japan and are criticized as militaristic and war-affirming.²⁶ Japan’s sole war manga magazine, *Combat Comic* (*Konbatto Komikku*), was launched in 1985, but ceased publication in 2001. Not only war manga, but also historical manga are relatively unpopular in Japan. By contrast, manga on sports, school-life, love, martial arts, and science fiction sell far better. As Kurita Atsushi points out,²⁷ in order to be interested in historical manga, it is necessary for readers to have some knowledge of history and some sense of romance connected to the past. In other words, readers of manga bear some responsibility for the lack of attention given to the Russo-Japanese

²⁵ Ouzo Mandias, “The Quarter Bin: Profiles 43: War Comics” (February 25, 2001), <http://www.fortunecity.com/tatooine/niven/142/profiles/pro43.html>.

²⁶ Aizawa Takatoshi, eds., “Sensō manga no naiyō bunseki” [Analysis of the Contents of War Comics], *Dokusho Kagaku*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1959), 18–21; Frederik L. Schodt, *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga* (Berkeley, 1996), 115.

²⁷ Kurita Atsushi, “*Mister Zipangu* ni miru rekishi manga no kanōsei” [The Possibility of Historical Manga-in *Mister Zipang*], *Manga Jihyō* (March 13, 2000), <http://www.mirai.ne.jp/~ash/comic/cm000313.html>.

War. After all, there were plenty of artistic works on the war in the form of movies and literature.²⁸

And yet, a new wave of adult manga, known as information manga (*jôhō manga*), which have educational content and deal with serious subjects like politics and economics, have exerted a powerful influence in Japan since 1986.²⁹ Kawaguchi Kaiji's *Silent Service* (*Chinmoku no kantai*), in thirty-two volumes published from 1988 to 1996, a war-simulation manga whose subject is the re-armament of Japan, became a best-seller with a total of 25 million copies in press. In addition, Inoue Takehiko's *Vagabond* (*Bagabond*) (1999–), which is the manga version of Yoshikawa Eiji's novel *Miyamoto Musashi* (1935–1939), was a huge success and proved that historical manga for adults could be popular. Both Japanese comics and their readership seem to have matured, and it is no longer unusual to see war and history treated by manga. In this context, the Russo-Japanese War, which had been largely neglected by manga artists and seemed unlikely to garner attention or popularity, was seized upon for interpretation in the work of Egawa Tatsuya.

Egawa's Tale of the Russo-Japanese War

We will now consider the features of *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*. We would feel bewildered, if we expect to read a war comic in which battle scenes at Port Arthur, Tsushima Straits, etc. are shown one after another. That is because despite its title the manga does not in the beginning describe the war, but rather the protagonist's childhood in the countryside of Matsuyama and then his adolescence in Tokyo. In the opening segment, we find the following narration: "This tale is a manga that represents the life of Cmdr. Akiyama Saneyuki, Senior Staff Officer of the Japanese Imperial Navy, who used his brain so fully that his nerves were on edge during the Battle of Tsushima, in which Japan, a small, weak country in the East, gained a miraculous victory over the Russian empire, a huge military nation and one of the Western powers, in 1905, just before the

²⁸ On which, see Chiba, "Shifting Contours of Memory and History" in this volume.

²⁹ Kinsella, *Adult Manga*, 70–78.

West could dominate the East and complete its conquest of the globe” (vol. 1, pp. 6–7; see fig. 10).

If the narrator declares in this fashion that the manga is a biography of Akiyama Saneyuki, we would expect the title to be *Tale of Akiyama Saneyuki*. But as Egawa himself remarks, the major subject of the whole manga is not Akiyama but the Russo-Japanese War. For Egawa, Akiyama is merely a pretext to explain the war, and he does not have any intention of engaging in hero-worship. Thus, in the preceding citation, Egawa introduces Akiyama not as “a hero who participated actively in the Russo-Japanese War,” but as a person “who used his brain so fully that his nerves were on edge.”³⁰ *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* is thus a hybrid of biographical manga, historical manga, and war manga, and utilizes biography to delve into the history of the war. Egawa thinks “it is meaningless if I depict only the battlefield when I express something about war. I should describe what exists under ‘the iceberg’ of war: supplying battle-lines, economics, technological development, people, and culture.” Actually, this method of revealing a much broader subject through the words and actions of the characters is a common feature of narrative manga in Japan. As Kure Tomofusa points out,³¹ while Western narrative comics tend to be subject-driven, Japanese narrative manga privilege character development, and the reader is able to experience the subject—say, the history of a war—through a process of psychological identification with the protagonists.

How did Egawa get interested in the Russo-Japanese War? He says he had wanted to create manga about wars and modern history since becoming a manga artist some twenty years ago. He felt that the reasons for Japan’s defeat in the Second World War could only be explained by looking back to the Russo-Japanese War. As he understands it, the Japanese Army weakened itself by mythicizing Japan’s victory in the latter war and ignoring any deficiencies of Japanese power.³² In his mind, the Russo-Japanese War was a

³⁰ The implication of this passage is that after the Russo-Japanese War Akiyama was absorbed in religion (including Shintoism, Buddhism, and a new religion, Ōmoto-kyō), and was regarded as being “mad.”

³¹ Kure Tomofusa, “A History of Manga: Narrative Sophistication” (1998), http://www.dnp.co.jp/museum/nmp/nmp_i/articles/manga/manga2.html.

³² In this regard Egawa is influenced by Ishihara Kanji. See Ishihara Kanji, *Sensōshi taikan* [*General View of Military History*] (Tokyo, 2002).

turning point as well for the following two reasons: it was the beginning of modern war, in which the profit is small compared to the investment, and it was the first war in which a member of the yellow race subverted a white power's colonial ambitions. But above all, "Japanese people are mind-controlled by the United States and have completely forgotten history prior to the Second World War." For all these reasons he decided to portray in his manga what he saw as the truth about the Russo-Japanese War. At the same time, Egawa is a clever business strategist, who predicted that this manga would succeed commercially as the centennial of the war approached in 2004–2005.

According to Egawa, the word "tale" in the title means that this manga represents "the war from the viewpoint of the author." For a long time, a cornerstone of his manga has been the assumption that reality and fantasy overlap; as he suggests, "everything one can tell as a story is just a fantasy. Even if one believes something is real, it is only a fantasy." In *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*, the narrator does not appear, but descriptions of characters, time, and place, as well as the implications of historical events, are narrated from the omniscient authorial viewpoint in the boxes, while the characters' speech, of course, is written inside bubbles. The subtitle, *The Weather Is Fine but the Waves Are High*, is a sentence added by Akiyama Saneyuki to the following telegram: "Having received a warning that the enemy's battle ships were seen, our Combined Fleets are going to sail and exterminate them," which was sent to the Japanese Imperial Headquarters just before the Battle of Tsushima on May 27, 1905. Originally, the sentence "the weather is fine but the waves are high" was a weather forecast, but Akiyama used it to imply that the situation was advantageous for the Japanese navy, which had been trained on the sea in conditions of high waves.³³ By using it as the subtitle of the manga, Egawa indicates that Akiyama Saneyuki is the protagonist.

Akiyama Saneyuki was made the protagonist because the editor of *Big Comic Spirits*, Murayama Hiroshi, recommended it. When the subject of the Russo-Japanese War was chosen, Egawa himself wanted to make the protagonist Yamamoto Gonnohyōe, the minister of the

³³ Oide Hisashi, *Chishō Akiyama Saneyuki [Intelligent Officer Akiyama Saneyuki]* (Tokyo, 1985), 191–192.

navy whose role in the Satsuma-British conflict (1863) and the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) would allow for the presentation of an even deeper background to the Russo-Japanese conflict. Yamamoto, however, did not appear on the battlefield in 1904–1905, and Admiral Tōgō, who did, was too old to serve as a protagonist. Akiyama, on the other hand, had been an ordinary student before becoming a soldier, and his life's story presented from childhood on was expected to engage young readers (fig. 11). Moreover, since Akiyama was associated with the writers Masaoka Shiki and Natsume Sōseki, making Akiyama the protagonist would enable the manga to deal with literature of the period: in Japan after the Meiji Restoration, not only soldiers but also literati like these were modernizing the Japanese language and means of cultural expression as an alternative way of “fighting” against the West. *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* is different from other war manga insofar as no simple “villain” appears, and the point of view of each character is presented empathetically.

For the faces, Egawa draws from photographs, but is sensitive to other historical information he, Murayama, and Murayama's two assistants gather on the characters that would provide a clue to their personalities and behaviors.³⁴ In this essential feature of his manga, he is less influenced by Western notions of physiognomy than he is by the Chinese Yi Jing, which asserts that all individual actions are foretold by facial features. Egawa states that his basic principle is to “clarify a complicated history and at the same time express characters full of emotions.” In the enthusiastic judgment of Fukuda Kazuya, he succeeded: Fukuda has especially high praise for Egawa's depiction

³⁴ The published sources they used include the following, as referenced at the end of each of the manga's volumes: Fukui Shizuo, *Shashin nihon kaigun zenkanteishi* [*A History of All Battle-ships of Japanese Navy through Photographs*] (1994); Ozawa Takeshi, *Shashin de miru bakumatsu Meiji* [*The Last Days of the Tokugawa Government and the Meiji Era through Photographs*] (2000); The Academy of Korean Studies, *Yi-Dynasty through Pictures*, vol. 1 (2002); Akiyama Saneyuki Association, ed., *Teitoku Akiyama Saneyuki* [Admiral Akiyama Saneyuki] (1934); Kum Byondon, *Kim Ok-kyun to nihon* [Kim Ok-kyun and Japan] (1991); O Sonfa, *Kankoku heigō eno michi* [*The Way to the Annexation of Korea*] (2000); Yoshimura Akira, *Nikolai sōnan* [*Disaster for Nikolai*] (1996). As for primary materials, Egawa relied on access to the following repositories: the Matsuyama City Memorial Museum of Masaoka Shiki, the Department of War History at the National Institute for Defense Studies in Tokyo, the First School of the Maritime Self-Defense Force in Hiroshima, and others.

of Masaoka Shiki's countenance with a lively and at times comical realism.³⁵

The contrast between *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* and Shiba Ryōtarō's above-mentioned historical novel *Cloud at the Top of the Slope* helps to reveal the manga's purpose and meaning. Egawa does not cite it as a reference, but both works have the same protagonist in Akiyama Saneyuki, and some critics have suggested that Shiba had an influence on Egawa.³⁶ According to Egawa, though, he read Shiba's work for the first time just before starting to create his manga and did not especially admire it. In Egawa's view Shiba searched for heroism and did not adequately explore the longer-term causes and effects of the war; to some extent, his intention was to correct what he saw as the mistakes of the *Cloud at the Top of the Slope*. Shiba's novel, for instance, neglects the Korean dimension of the war, which Egawa, in agreement with many scholars, considers crucial and explores in great depth in his manga. The basic argument can be seen in the line from volume 3 where Masaoka Shiki says, "If nothing effective is done, Korea will be colonized by Russia! Then Russia will attack Japan." What this means is that the entire two decades of maneuvering by Japan prior to 1904, including its initiation of the first Sino-Japanese War, can be explained as vital prelude to the Russo-Japanese conflict, which according to Egawa Japan had to fight in order to avoid colonization by Russia or any other European power at the height of the imperialist era. As he has Mutsu Munemitsu, the minister of foreign affairs, say in volume 7, soon "the Siberian Railroad will be completed and the Russian empire will be on the march south in the Far East. Little time is left for us anymore." Indeed, as the historian S. C. M. Paine has argued, Egawa understands that Japan's shadow war with China disguised the real opponent, Russia, whose influence Japan needed to expel from the Korean peninsula to protect its vital strategic interests.³⁷ For that reason

³⁵ Fukuda, "Manga de 'sensō' wo dô kakubekika," 16.

³⁶ Kurita Atsushi, "*Nichiro sensō monogatari* wa, meiji-jin eno sunaona akogare dearu" [*The Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* Reflects the Author's Longing for People in Meiji], *Manga Jūhyō* (November 4, 2001), <http://www.mirai.ne.jp/~ash/comic/cm011107.html>; Anonymous, "Manga no hanashi: *Nichiro sensō monogatari*" [Talk about Manga: *The Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*], <http://www.wind.sanet.ne.jp/musekinin/reading/nitiro.htm>.

³⁷ S. C. M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895: Perceptions, Power, and Primacy* (Cambridge, 2003), 321.

Egawa's manga pays close attention to subjects unfamiliar to most Japanese of today, like the 1884 Korean coup d'état, the Tonghak Rebellion, and the assassination of Queen Min, which incidents are explored from the standpoint of both Korea and Japan. Along with the causes of the Russo-Japanese War, Egawa decides that he would not ignore the aftermath and effects of the war, such as the Treaty of Portsmouth and the Hibiya Riots—in contrast to Shiba, who ended his novel with the Battle of Tsushima.

Egawa considers historical accuracy to be of the utmost importance. This is symbolized by the covers of *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*, designed by Takahashi Junzi. For example, the cover of volume 6 bears both a photograph of Nicholas II and a map from the third volume of *History of the Naval War in Meiji 37th and 38th Year* [*Meiji sanjū shichi hachi nen kaisenshi*] (1910) as the backdrop to Egawa's illustration of Akiyama Saneyuki (fig. 15). Every character in the manga with a name existed in real life. Historical events are not fabricated by Egawa; on the contrary, they are described very minutely and accurately. For example, Egawa describes in detail the Ôtsu Incident, in which the future Tsar Nicholas II, on a visit to Japan in 1891, was attacked by a Japanese policeman, Tsuda Sanzô (vol. 6). The attack scene itself is portrayed from various angles in many frames without speech or sound, analogous to a slow-motion scene in a movie. The pages depicting this incident provide detailed descriptions of how Nicholas was injured, the Japanese were terrified by the idea of "the war against Russia," and the judicature's independence was maintained. For his drawings of warfare, Egawa makes use of contemporary military paintings, but given their inaccuracy he prefers to rely on photographic sources. He says that he is very careful to draw battleships and artillery in great detail because "the relationship between modern weaponry and outcome [victory or defeat] is awfully important." The battleships described by Egawa are as realistic as photographs. When two-page depictions of battleships feature the bow on the left, they give the impression of high speed, not only because of the size of the wake and the flow of steam coming from smokestacks, but also because in manga time flows to the left (fig. 12). Or, when a combined fleet is drawn (again in large format over two pages), the ships are headed for the bottom of the page so that they "make a powerful impression" by seeming to approach the reader.

As is apparent from the word "tale" in the title, however, not

everything in the manga is historically true. Egawa sometimes invents episodes to establish relationships between characters, although based on facts about the time period and region in which each person was living. For instance, the episode in which Akiyama Saneyuki met the radical Korean reformer So Jaep'il after a sumô tournament is fictitious (vol. 3). Akiyama and So were the same age and both lived in the same town, Ichigayakôji-machi, whose population was not large. Egawa's story-line is justified on the grounds that "it is impossible to say that those two people never met." Egawa also follows a similar logic to make up conversations. For example, it is historically true that the Korean progressive Kim Ok-kyun and Fukuzawa Yukichi, the philosopher, met in Tokyo in 1894; however, since the details of their conversations are unknown, Egawa steps in to provide them out of his imagination, limited only by an understanding of what was historically plausible. Egawa thinks that even if such fictions make his readers doubt the contents of his manga, it will be beneficial by stimulating their desire to explore the history of the time period further and "check for themselves."

The realism of the manga is enhanced by having Japanese characters speak in their actual dialects: Akiyama Saneyuki and Masaoka Shiki in Iyo dialect, Yamamoto Gonnohyôe in Satsuma dialect, Sakamoto Ryôma in Tosa dialect, etc. The speech in this regard is supervised by Shimizu Fumito, linguistics professor at Ehime University, and translations into standard contemporary Japanese are given when necessary on the side. The effect on the reader is impressive. As Egawa states, "Japanese dialects are classics," by which he means that classical Japanese used dialects to a great extent, but these dialects have become obsolete since the mid-nineteenth century. Egawa suggests that "the core of culture is language, and language defines thought," therefore he uses dialects in order to preserve "Japaneseness." Likewise, when anyone speaks a foreign language in *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*, Egawa has them do so in the original, whether Russian, English, or Korean, and provides Japanese translations depending on the space constraints (fig. 13).³⁸ In previous manga, even dialogues in foreign languages were generally written

³⁸ In his manga *Tale of Genji*, too, Egawa features both the original classical Japanese language and its translation into modern Japanese, and he has received high critical marks for it.

only in Japanese. By using foreign languages and Japanese dialects, Egawa gives ample expression to each personality and the complexity of history and international relations. In doing so he is attempting to get across a deeper message, which is to “understand the culture of your own country and respect that of other countries.” It can perhaps be said that *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* is a manga that uses language to explain the cultural divisions that are the root cause of so much warfare.

It is possible to enjoy reading *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* without any knowledge of history and to absorb its thematic message because the pictures and the syntactical conjunction of monologue, dialogue, narration, and frame arrangement provide the reader with a visual experience that enhances the effect of the words.³⁹ Egawa’s description of the assassination of Kim Ok-kyun in 1894 provides a splendid example (fig. 14): while images of the blood-soaked and dying Kim are shown, each focusing closer in than the one previous, Kim’s (fictionalized) internal monologue is given in words which suggest that he was killed by a conspiracy of Korea, China, and Japan despite his efforts to modernize Korea. Yasuhiko Yoshikazu also describes the assassination of Kim in the sixth volume of his manga *Dog of Justice* (*Ôdô no inu*); however, he gives us little information on the historical background and the reasons for his murder.⁴⁰ As the critic Okada Toshio has remarked,⁴¹ Egawa is adept at distilling the essence of complicated phenomena in order to better explain them. Egawa himself says, “I did not become a manga artist to entertain people. For me, manga is a way to educate people.” *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* delivers a definite anti-war message. In one of its significant pacifist scenes, the narrator cites a passage from Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*: “The best art of war is to win without a fight,” and comments that “the most excellent soldier avoids wars and always tries to keep peace” (vol. 6).

And this manga in particular is aimed at the widest possible audi-

³⁹ Advertisements for *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*, designed by Murayama Hiroshi, also convey a definite thematic message. See *Nikkan Sports* (June 10, 2002), 31; *Big Comic Spirits* (April 28, 2003), 377.

⁴⁰ Yasuhiko Yoshikazu, *Ôdô no inu* [*Dog of Justice*], vol. 6 (Tokyo, 2000), 29–37. *Ôdô no Inu* is a manga about the first Sino-Japanese War.

⁴¹ Okada Toshio, “Egawa Tatsuya no unbalance na miryoku” [The Ambiguous Attraction of Egawa Tatsuya], in Egawa Tatsuya, *Be Free!*, vol. 4 (Tokyo, 1998), 404.

ence. The target audience of *Big Comic Spirits* is men in their twenties, but Egawa's expectation was that readers of *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* would be both male and female from the age of ten to one hundred. He feels that "if people around one hundred years old read this manga, they will feel nostalgia for the past."⁴² According to the editor, Murayama, people over fifty who had never read manga responded favorably when the serial started, and from the point where Akiyama enters the prestigious Tokyo University (vol. 3), teenagers also became engaged with the story. It can be surmised that older people also read this manga because they enjoyed Shiba's *Cloud at the Top of the Slope*, which raised their awareness of the Russo-Japanese War. At the website of Amazon.co.jp, the following comments on *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* are found: "the images are not gloomy even though it is a war manga"; "interesting and easy to read"; and "[I was] stimulated by the ambitions of the characters."⁴³ Even with the reception it has been given Egawa thinks that "nowadays Japanese people are not interested in the Russo-Japanese War at all," but he predicts that sales of *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War* will continue to grow as its reputation spreads.

Egawa Tatsuya's epic manga on the Russo-Japanese War is not a work of simplistic Japanese-nationalist or anti-Russian propaganda, but rather a subtle attempt to untangle the complex history of the war from the perspective of Japan and its Far Eastern neighbors. If a considerable number of people in contemporary Japan have deepened their understanding of this pivotal era in their history and perhaps even come to feel that at some level they have experienced the era as "the present," it is no small measure through the efforts of Egawa and his manga *Tale of the Russo-Japanese War*.

⁴² Egawa Tatsuya, "Long Interview," Tokyo: BS Fuji (May 30, 2003).

⁴³ Amazon.co.jp (June 1, 2003).

PART IV

REGIONAL RELATIONS DURING AND AFTER THE WAR

A DAMOCLES SWORD?: KOREAN HOPES BETRAYED

Ku Daeyool

We can not possibly interfere for the Koreans against Japan.
They couldn't strike one blow in their own defence.

Theodore Roosevelt, in Tyler Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, p. 110

Why should they (Americans) protect you (Koreans) if you do not protect yourself? . . .

We have the promise of America. She will be our friend whatever happens."

F. A. McKenzie, *Korea's Fight for Freedom*, pp. 77–78

The above are the typical reactions of the Western powers to the Korean government and people at the turn of the twentieth century when the country was facing a war between Japan and Russia. Westerners considered Korea on an uninterrupted, unreformed, and unaltered course of decay, totally ignorant of international developments in East Asia which ultimately would threaten, like a Damocles sword, their country's independence. In a sense, the Koreans had been enjoying bliss in the previous decade after it "gained" independence after China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War. Meanwhile, during this period, Russia and Japan maintained a sort of balance of power on the Korean peninsula through a series of conventions that included the Yamagata-Lobanov (1896) and Nishi-Rosen (1898) Agreements. Chongsik Lee stated, "Conscientious and efficient use of this decade [1896–1905] would have changed the future of the country and even might have changed considerably the history of the Far East and the world."¹ Nelson, in his celebrated book, wrote that: "being only recently released [after the Sino-Japanese War of 1895], however, from the status of a nation traditionally under the hand of a stronger power, she made little showing of an ability to

¹ Lee, Chong-sik, *The Politics of Korean Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), p. 55.

control her own affairs properly.”² Ten years after the annexation of Korea by Japan, a British report pointed out that the Koreans were unable to manage their own affairs when it discussed the demise of the peninsula kingdom.³

This verdict is tenable. The pro-Russian faction, backed by the emperor, successfully eliminated progressive elements within the Kingdom including members of the Independence Club, and consequently, modernization programs resulted in, at best, partial and superficial introductions of Western technologies. Social confusion, however, and the hindrance of progress were not confined to Korea; many countries including China and Turkey suffered similar fates when they tried to shake off feudal elements in their societies. Unfortunately, Korea lost its sovereignty as a result of such trial and error, while other countries escaped Korea's fate by surviving and overcoming domestic and external challenges. Subsequently, the “lost decade” thesis was an invention of the Japanese who wanted to justify its annexation of Korea. Although the Koreans were given enough time to revitalize their country, they failed. As a result Japan was forced to absorb the peninsula in order to safeguard peace in East Asia, an excuse that Japan claimed in its proclamation of Korean annexation.⁴ The above-mentioned comments all reflect this view.

² Frederick M. Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1945), p. 240. See also Esthus' comment: “Korea had had a ten year chance to improve, and neither Emperor nor officials had shown the slightest inclination to take advantage of it.” [Raymond A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), p. 109.]

³ Memorandum on Korea's Relations with China, Russia and Japan, (PID, 435). (Documents of the British Foreign Office are listed in the following order: sender to receiver (or the title of the document), date, FO (Foreign Office)/class number/file number/document number. One collection of American diplomatic relations with Korea describes this period as the “period of equilibrium and de facto Korean independence” and comments that for nearly five years since 1898 when the Koreans had no overlord they were very far from ready for self-government. [Allen to SS (Secretary of State), May 31, 1902, in Scott S. Burnett, (ed.) *Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States*, vol. 3, *The Period of Diminishing Influence, 1896–1905* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), p. 172 and Contents.] American documents are listed in the following order: sender to receiver (or the title of the document), date, class number, file number, document number or page.

⁴ For the text of the annexation treaty, see *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Documents, hereafter cited as *NGB*), 43–1, pp. 679–682.

This paper examines how the Koreans perceived, and reacted to, the international environment at the time of the Russo-Japanese War along with the consequences of Japan's victory on the peninsula. Did the Koreans fail to realize that their country's independence was at the mercy of a delicate relationship between the two neighboring powers and that the peninsula would become the prey of the victor when this balance turned into hostilities? Or did the Koreans really do their best to protect the country's independence by all possible means?

"A lost decade (1895–1904).": The powers' perception of Korea

The so-called "lost decade" for the Koreans was dotted with a chain of events that effected them as well as the East Asian international scene. In Korea, beginning with the Kabo reform many attempts to safeguard independence had been in full swing under Japanese auspices which started in 1895. Most Koreans understood what was at stake when a group of Japanese ronin murdered Queen Min in October 1895. Her murder resulted in the rise of the "Righteous Army" against Japan, (January–April 1896), the escape of King Kojong to the Russian legation, (where he stayed for a year) which signaled the collapse of the Kabo reform and the consolidation of Japanese control over Korea. The activities of the Independence Club, (The club was dissolved in November 1898) and the appearance of the *Tongnip Sinmun* (*The Independent*), led by So Chaep'il (Philip Jaisohn), April 1896, the proclamation of the Korean Empire (Taehan Cheguk) in February 1897 and some reform measures by the "Emperor" Kojong and his government, (called the Kwangmu Kaehyok or Reforms of the Kwangmu era) were all schemes and undertakings by Koreans aimed at preserving their autonomy. All these events heightened tensions and ultimately contributed to the developing crisis between Russia and Japan over Manchuria and Korea at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The keyword of the period was "independence," as manifested in the construction of the Arc of Independence in the place of Yongunmun (the Gate of Receiving Grace). However, the emperor of the newly proclaimed Korean Empire was more inclined to strengthen his own power than to create a democratic state, thus ending in the partial and fragmentary introduction of Western political

ideas and customs to Korean society.⁵ In addition, superficial regal pageantries such as receiving honor and medals from the heads of States and Empires impressed him more than political reform. To make an impression within the international community he dispatched Korean missions to the coronations of foreign sovereigns, including Czar Nicholas II and King Edward VII. He invited foreign missions to Seoul for his fiftieth birthday celebration, and he requested that the Great Powers raise the status of their representatives in Korea from minister-resident to minister-extraordinary and plenipotentiary.⁶ In March 1901, he succeeded in sending a Korean mission to Great Britain and Italy on a permanent basis for the first time after Korea had entered into treaty relations with European countries in the 1880s.⁷ Certainly, these events could not satisfy the desires of the people for a “new Korea.”

Social confusion in Seoul as well as in the countryside, which was in fact the continuation of the Tonghak movement (1894–95), culminated with rumors of an impending war between Russia and Japan.⁸ According to a private letter of John N. Jordan, the British minister in Seoul, to Francis Campbell, the superintending under-secretary of the Foreign Office, the situation in Seoul was developing “kaleidoscopically” from day to day, and rumors were so legion that most of his time and energies was consumed in sifting the grain of truth from the bushels of lies that were current. There was a good deal of excitement among the Koreans when Russian soldiers arrived in Seoul. The deployment of Russian troops to Korea spread a sense of foreboding among foreigners, judging from the number of British subjects who deposited their valuables in their legation. In early January, the Korean crown princess through a messenger asked Jordan if she could count on being given refuge in the event of trou-

⁵ On the so-called Kwangmu Reform after the establishment of Taehan Cheguk, see Kang, Man'gil, *Pundan sidaei yoksa insik* (Understanding of Korean History in the Age of Division), (Seoul: Ch'angjakgwǎ Pip'ongsa, 1979), pp. 118ff.

⁶ Allen to SS, January 24, 1901; July 19, 1901, in Burnett, pp. 168, 169, 171.

⁷ Pak Chirsun to Gubbins, March 16, 1901, Asia Munje Yon'guso, Korea University, (comp.) *Kuhanguk oegyō munso* (Diplomatic Documents of the Korean Empire), (Seoul: 1965–1969), vol. 12, p. 298. (Hereafter referred to as *Korean Documents*.)

⁸ For a contemporary description of social confusion before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese, see memorandum by Gale, enclosure in Jordan to Lansdowne, January 20, 1904, FO/17/1659 (17).

ble to her and her household. Jordan guessed that the emperor and the crown prince had made arrangements with the American legation. The British minister concluded that although the future still seemed uncertain, peace or war, the latter with all its horrors would almost be better than this continual ferment which dislocated business and produced general economic paralysis.⁹

In the final analysis, such a situation was due to the division among political elites over the issue of “reform,” which had been of capital importance ever since the country opened its doors to the outside world. The progressives and the conservatives, or the pro-Japanese and the pro-Russian groups agreed with each other until King Kojong returned to the palace from his shelter in the Russian legation and proclaimed the birth of the Korean Empire in early 1897. Both groups, however, differed in the ways and methods of political development and institution. Complications were added to by the interference of the Great Powers who supported their assorted patrons in the Korean government. Eventually, the conservatives succeeded in expelling the progressives from the government, who in turn repudiated the king’s principle of governance. The Korean monarch thus lost the authority and legitimacy to resolve conflicts between progressive and conservative political elites. The King’s subjects were then reportedly ready to rise and overthrow the dynasty if war broke out.¹⁰

The Great Powers indeed supported the “independence” of Korea in public but mocked it as a “fake” in private. Yamagata Aritomo, the founder of the modern Japanese army, discussed the division of the peninsula with Lobanov-Rostovsky, Russian foreign minister, when he attended the coronation of Czar in 1896, even though the two agreed in public to respect Korean independence and sovereignty. When the Korean government prepared for a banquet to celebrate its new status of “independence” after China repudiated its claim of sovereignty over Korea, Alexei de Speyer, the Russian minister in Seoul, retorted wilyly that Korea already had been an “independent state.”¹¹ However, he said to Komura Jutarō, his Japanese colleague, that the theory of Korean independence was a “farce.” It was useless, he added, for the Japanese to pretend that

⁹ Jordan to Campbell, January 11, 1904, FO/17/1659 (private letter).

¹⁰ Enclosure in Jordan to Lansdowne, January 28, 1904, FO/17/1659 (24).

¹¹ Speyer to Kim Yunsik, June 5, 1895, *Korean Documents*, vol. 17, p. 319.

Korean independence did exist, and the Japanese must frankly admit that Korea was under their "tutelage and protection."¹²

Perhaps it was Horace N. Allen, the American minister who was most harsh in his criticism of the Korean situation. A former American medical missionary, whom King Kojong and Queen Min believed to be most friendly to their Kingdom, concluded that Korea was beyond salvation. "Morning Calm was out of date," he said, "Choson should be entitled the Land of the Cold Gray Calm of the Morning After." The people cannot govern themselves . . . They must have an overlord as they had had for all time."¹³ British diplomats in Seoul shared his view. In his talk with Kato Takaaki, the Japanese minister in London, Jordan agreed to the latter's view that Korea could not manage her future salvation as an independent country.¹⁴

At the center of this situation lay Kojong, the Korean monarch. Allen wrote, "The Emperor is alone responsible for all this."¹⁵ To them, Kojong was totally unsuitable for running a modern state. He was "morbidly superstitious,"¹⁶ and the sorcerers, who had been expelled by the Japanese in 1894, gradually resumed their old occupation to exercise a great influence in the direction of state affairs.¹⁷ The American minister commented that the emperor spent his time "playing with dancing girls, like Nero fiddling while Rome burned"¹⁸ and predicted that "disorder was sure to ensue from the present course, unless some strong power or powers should take it upon itself or themselves to compel the Emperor to accept and follow sensible advice."¹⁹ To Jordan, the Korean monarch was the "most timid of man by nature";²⁰ the only way to govern the country was to play one against the other, thus protecting his safety between two rival-

¹² Hiller to Beauclerk, February 8, 1896, Park Il-keun (comp.), *Anglo-American and Chinese Diplomatic Materials Relating to Korea, 1887-1897* (Pusan: Pusan University, 1983), pp. 736-737. (Hereafter cited as Park.)

¹³ Fred H. Harrington, *God, Mammon and the Japanese—Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korean-American Relations, 1884-1905* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1944), p. 326; See also Esthus, pp. 96-98.

¹⁴ Jordan to Salisbury, October 11, 1899, FO/405/88 (No. 96).

¹⁵ Allen to SS, May 31, 1902, in Burnett, p. 172.

¹⁶ Allen to SS, January 2, 1904, in Burnett, p. 107.

¹⁷ Jordan to Lansdowne, January 13, 1904, FO/17/1659 (11).

¹⁸ Harrington, p. 326.

¹⁹ Allen to SS, June 20, 1902, in Burnett, p. 66.

²⁰ Jordan to MacDonald, October 20, 1897, FO/17/1321 (87).

ing groups.²¹ The emperor who had been regarded as “flawless,” “peerless,” and “immaculate” was no longer an object of worship by his own people but had hosts of bitter enemies, who would be glad to see him “put out of the way.”²²

Now, each group believed that the only way to overcome the political stalemate was to eliminate each other. Political assassination became the vogue of the time. James S. Gale, a Canadian missionary scholar, referring to such incidents as the coup of 1884, the assassination of Queen Min in October 1895 and other killings in February and October 1896, and in October 1898, commented that “Korea knows of only one way of reform and that is to kill off all the members of the Cabinet.”²³

An added encumbrance was introduced into the operation of government function. Western representatives considered that even if the emperor had the ability and inclination, it would be impossible for him to attend to all the details of the business of the country.²⁴ However, the Council of State, which was composed of the principal ministers and empowered in theory to consider the framing of laws and ordinances, the preparation of the budget, the conclusion of treaties, and a multitude of other matters, was a purely ornamental institution, while all power was concentrated in the hands of the emperor himself. Like a way of postponing a question by the Greek Kalends, the council was used as a convenient foil for the emperor’s invariable plan of dealing with all matters on which he wished to avoid giving a decision.²⁵ Government was virtually paralyzed for the several months before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in the throes of ministerial crisis’s that averaged about one a week. Changes of foreign minister followed each other in such quick succession that the foreign legations no longer acknowledged the announcements of these appointments. Even a newly appointed foreign minister, though a mere figurehead, soon obtained “sick leave” when the country was in crisis in the wake of the protectorate treaty, but still continued to attend functions at the palace.²⁶

²¹ Jordan to Salisbury, November 28, 1898, FO/17/1350 (114).

²² Gale’s memo, enclosure in Jordan to Lansdowne, January 20, 1904, FO/17/1659 (17).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Allen to SS, May 31, 1902, in Burnett, p. 171.

²⁵ Jordan to Lansdowne, January 13, 1904, FO/17/1659 (11).

²⁶ Jordan to Lansdowne, October 2, 1905, FO/17/1693 (136).

One illustration may bring out the point with sharpness. On January 21 just two weeks before the outbreak of the war, the Korean government sent a telegram to the Great Powers which declared that it would maintain a strict policy of neutrality in the event of an outbreak of hostilities. It was drawn up in the palace with the help of the Belgian adviser, M. Delcoigne (who had been employed as an adviser on domestic and palace affairs) but without consulting the foreign minister. The latter was only asked to affix his seal to the document when it was ready to be dispatched. A special messenger then forwarded it to Zhifu, Shandong Province, (because the Korean telegraphic service was under Japanese control) from where it was sent to Europe, Japan and the United States by the French consul at that port, who was entrusted with safeguarding Korea's interests.²⁷

Japan took advantage of the prevailing atmosphere helping to foster the image within the international community that the Korean government was a thoroughly discredited political institution. As early as September 1895, Premier Ito Hirobumi told Ernest Satow, the British minister in Tokyo, that the idea of Korean independence was quite impracticable, adding that it must be either annexed or be placed under the protection of "the strongest" power.²⁸ And, immediately after Japan took over the Korean government in August 1904, the emperor was forced to leave state affairs to the cabinet, which was supervised by Japanese advisers.

Responses of the Korean government

The Great Powers, of course, viewed the Korean situation from their own frame of mind and interests. They knew that nationalists were apt to accept a union between any power, ideology, and religion, as long as they were viewed as a means to enhance national interests. Nationalism is easily aroused and dragooned to feel strongly through the oversimplified presentation of issues in terms of black and white or right and wrong, thus quickly encouraging xenophobic attitudes at the time of foreign encroachments. Nationalism, however, does not always result in a just and normative direction, i.e., enhancing

²⁷ Jordan to Lansdowne, February 1, 1904, FO/17/1659 (26).

²⁸ Satow to Salisbury, September 27, 1895, Park, p. 602.

political rights and welfare of the masses, opposing feudalism and monarchism, and foreign domination. The reactionary tendency of Kojong was amply manifested in a series of events during this period, which ultimately caused the demise of the country. He emerged, however, as a symbol of Korean independence when he resisted Japan's attempts to dominate Korea, but his motivation remained personal not national. Some nationalistic figures also tried to seek salvation with help from Japan when they were convinced that the interests of both countries were not divergent or contradictory. To the Westerners, however, any doctrine of "Korea for the Koreans" was futile, their sincerity being perhaps their only title to a hearing. In the same light, the tilt in Korean policy toward Russia before the war was viewed as "contributing to hastening the crisis."²⁹

Reports on developments over Korea and Manchuria had been conveyed in detail to Koreans via their own newspapers such as the *Hwangsong Sinmun* and *Chejuk Sinmun*. In the foreign news column of these conservative papers, reports of Russia's military occupation of Manchuria and negotiations over the withdrawal of its troops were carried almost everyday. The Rosen-Nishii agreement of 1898 was reported to the public as an action in which the Russian legation lodged a protest to the Korean government.³⁰ The *Hwangsong Sinmun* reported that Russia and Japan sought to expand their influence over the peninsula with an ultimate aim of making Korea a protectorate.³¹ In the opinion of this newspaper the rivalry between Russian and Japan over Korea could well lead to a war between the two countries.³² Details of the decision made by the Japanese cabinet in August 1903 over the so-called "exchange of Manchuria and Korea" also appeared in this newspaper.³³

The responses of the Korean government to these events were immediate but not durable. The president of the *Hwangsong Sinmun*, Namgung Ok, was arrested and later released for the report about the possible division of Korea between Japan and Russia. The Korean government declared that the Lobanov-Yamagata agreement could

²⁹ Jordan to Lansdowne, July 13, 1904, FO/17/1660 (151).

³⁰ *Korean Documents*, vol. 17, pp. 570–571.

³¹ National History Compilation Committee (comp.), *Kojong sidaesa* (Chronology of the Kojong Era), 6 vols. (Seoul: 1969–1972) Hereafter, cited as *Kojong* vol. 5, p. 155.

³² *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 404, 478–479, 603.

³³ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 849–851.

not restrain the free and independent status of Korea because it did not participate in the drafting of this arrangement.³⁴ On the other hand, Kojong sought to obtain a “guarantee” from the Great Powers for Korean independence while maintaining a “balance” among them on the peninsula. Moreover, Korea’s foreign relations with the Western powers had begun when they persuaded China in 1882 that Korea should enter into treaty relations with the United States and European countries to counterbalance the growing influence of Japan in, and the possible encroachment of Russia to, the peninsula. Kojong also witnessed the emergence of Japanese influence over the peninsula after their victory in the Sino-Japanese War. But this influence quickly collapsed and the balance was restored by his own astute move to escape in February 1896 to the Russian legation from his the palace which had been guarded by Japanese troops. Thus, Kojong’s policy was initially successful at least until he faced a war between two neighboring powers that would determine the fate of his country in 1904.

The Western powers, however, viewed the emperor’s policy as “immoral.” Allen criticized the emperor by noting that his policy was just to protect the Koreans from all outside interference while allowing them to “stew in their own juice.”³⁵ The emperor was alarmed by conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 and the extension of the Franco-Russian alliance to East Asia. This induced him to consider needed reforms. However, his concerns soon subsided and nothing changed for the Koreans. The emperor’s self perception was enhanced as a result of these alliances with Korea. Moreover, he thought that he then had the long desired guarantee of neutrality and that he could move forward with an utter disregard for consequences of his actions on his subjects.³⁶

The British, as well believed that the neutrality of Korea was a “long-cherished scheme of the emperor.”³⁷ The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, first considered an aid for Japan’s aggressive tendencies was later viewed as a restraint on their Korean policy, and consequently the emperor became more friendly to Britain.³⁸ Jordan, however,

³⁴ Ibid. vol. 5, p. 163; vol. 4, pp. 334–335.

³⁵ Allen to SS, October 2, 1900, in Burnett, p. 69.

³⁶ Allen to SS, May 31, 1902, in Burnett, p. 171.

³⁷ Gubbins to Salisbury, September 14, 1900, FO/17/1455 (88); November 3, 1900, FO/17/1455 (108 and 109); November 5, 1900, FO/17/1455 (110); March 13, 1901, FO/17/1513 (12).

³⁸ Jordan to Lansdowne, July 25, 1903, FO/17/1625 (92). Japanese documents

criticized the emperor's policy as it swung like a pendulum from one side to the other. In the view of Great Britain, however, the Korean emperor did not have a strong strategic position in the Great Power game. The main asset was the geographic location of their peninsula. Otherwise, Korea was vulnerable, but was nonetheless playing a weak hand skillfully.³⁹

The unfortunate part of the emperor's policy was that power balances and guarantee were only possible when the Great Powers engaged in diplomatic competition short of war that did not destroy the status quo. The Russo-Japanese War was a conflict between two revisionist powers, and in this sense Korea was bound to be the prey for the victor to consume. Japan, disregarding Korean neutrality, occupied Seoul in early February 1904 and expelled the Russians from the peninsula. Despite Japan's continued victories on the battlefield later that year, the emperor was still assured by his soothsayers that Russia was sure to win in the war and thus the balance to the region would be restored.⁴⁰ Reflecting the emperor's wish, the *Korea Daily News*, also carried uninterruptedly articles on military operations in Manchuria, which were described to be favorable for the Russians even after the fall of Liaoyang in September, 1904.⁴¹ The effort of the emperor to support Russia was not stopped until his secret mission to The Hague was frustrated in July, 1907, an adventure which resulted in his dethronement by the Japanese in August, 1907.

Kojong subsequently sought the support of the United States to secure a balance of power in the region and to guarantee his political agenda. Ever since Korea entered into treaty relations with the Western powers, the emperor considered the United States to be the only power that had no political design on the peninsula. In late 1904, when the Korean monarch began to realize the seriousness of the war to the future of his country, he sought "some assistance" from the United States. Secretary of State John Hay, however, replied

also left a considerable record of this. See NGB, vol. 34, p. 521ff, vol. 35, p. 393ff; vol. 36-1, p. 448ff and p. 718ff.

³⁹ Nish, Ian H., "Korea between Japan and Russia, 1900-1904," paper presented at the 6th Annual Conference of AKSE, held in Seoul, (Aug. 2-5, 1982), p. 186.

⁴⁰ Allen to SS, November 18, 1904, in Burnett, p. 137; Jordan to Lansdowne, March 7, 1904, FO/17/1659 (72).

⁴¹ *K-DN*, September 14, 19, 22, 1904. One article went on: "The Japanese victory at Liaoyang has come to be looked upon as almost a defeat, while Kuropatkin's retreat is hailed as a Russian triumph."

in carefully guarded phrases, expressing U.S. friendship and good wishes for Korea, but added that American interests were commercial rather than political.⁴² Jordan elaborated on Hay's remark: "It is apparent that nothing can be done by a friendly nation until negotiations commenced making for peace in the unfortunate struggle now going on around your county. That the war in the Orient may soon be brought to a termination, honorable to all concerned in it, is I am sure, the hope of mankind." This was an indirect, vague, evasive but certainly negative reply. According to Jordan, this letter was from Dr. Chas W. Needham, who was then a foreign secretary to the Korean legation in Washington, and sent to Cho Minhui, the Korean minister, who forwarded it to the emperor. In the process of translation it assumed the form of a definite assurance of support from which the emperor derived much comfort for a time. Other attempts were made at this time to contact the U.S. government by Horner Hulbert, a pro-Korean American missionary, and by Syngman Rhee.

Korea's immaturity in handling diplomatic affairs was amply demonstrated in the handling of matters concerning its neutrality. As mentioned earlier, the Korean government proclaimed its neutrality on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War and the British government "acknowledged" the Korean message in due course, adding that "you were so good as to intimate to him (the British foreign secretary) the decision of the Korean government to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality in the event of an outbreak of hostilities." Elated by this British remark, the Korean emperor sent a palace messenger to the British legation to convey his gratitude about how highly he appreciated the sympathetic interest which Britain had evinced in Korea.⁴³ Furthermore, he sounded out whether he might look to the British legation for refuge in case of trouble, but Jordan strongly discouraged any idea of the kind.⁴⁴ The Koreans then began to believe that they had secured an agreement between the Great Powers concerning the inviolability of their territory. Any former suspicion of Korea's cultivating a Russophile policy ended as result of the

⁴² Harrington, p. 324.

⁴³ Jordan to Lansdowne, January 28, 1904, FO/17/1659 (25). For the reply of the Korean government, see *Korean Documents*, vol. 14, p. 618.

⁴⁴ Jordan to Lansdowne, February 8, 1904, FO/17/1659 (34).

favorable manner in which its declaration had been received by the majority of foreign powers. Now, the Koreans were sanguine that war would suit them better than peace. Korea now had nothing to fear, as the great majority of the powers had recognized its neutrality, while a peaceful solution might still place Korea under the political tutelage of Japan.⁴⁵ When Britain recognized Japan's paramount interests in Korea in its second alliance with Japan in August 1905, the Korean government stated that its terms were at variance with the British treaty with Korea in 1882 (which contained British support for Korean independence). The Koreans, therefore, requested Great Britain to renege on their previous alliance. Jordan thought that even a formal acknowledgement of this "strange request" might in the present temper of the Koreans, be construed as a tacit acquiescence in the justice of their remonstrance, and would raise hopes which could not possibly be fulfilled.⁴⁶

From the Korean point of view, the "balance and guarantee" policy was certainly the most favorable solution to the Korean question. The minimum requirement for the success of this policy was that the majority of the Great Powers had to support the status quo in Korea and thus guarantee Korean neutrality. However, the Great Powers now were determined to change the existing regional order and were not ready to give such guarantee without reward. If some great powers pursued revisionist policies, which would eventually lead to an armed clash, a small nation like Korea was unavoidably sacrificed. Moreover, the geo-strategic location of the Korean peninsula was more like the Low countries than Switzerland in European international relations, a crossroad doomed to become a battlefield if conflict occurred. The outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War and the takeover of the peninsula by Japan attest to this fact.

The commitment to neutrality, however, only existed between the revisionist powers of Russia and Japan, two powers clearly at odds with each other and who eventually went to war. In order to maintain and consolidate Korean neutrality, the powers, who had no political design on the peninsula, i.e., the status quo powers, had to be included in the agreement if it was to have any teeth, thus creating

⁴⁵ Jordan to Lansdowne, February 1, 1904, FO/17/1659 (26).

⁴⁶ Jordan to Lansdowne, 1905. 10. 17, FO/17/1693 (142).

a sort of the balance of power vis-à-vis the revisionist powers. The United States and Great Britain, two powers that could maintain the status quo in the region, were not disposed to be deeply involved in Korean affairs. As shown above, the United States declared its interests in the Korean peninsula as being economic. Britain, after the Port Hamilton incident, by which its navy had occupied the Korean islands, Komundo, at the entrance of the Korean Strait in 1885, also realized it was better not to exaggerate Anglo-Russian rivalry in East Asia. Since then, "the spirit of Port Hamilton never returned."⁴⁷ This was a structural limitation to Korean neutrality.

Korea had an asset to induce these status quo powers to Korean affairs: economic interests. Of course, the powers had established control over mines, timber, fishery, railroad, telegraphy and telephone on the peninsula since Korea entered into treaty relations with the powers. Moreover, the Korean monarch was willing to offer these interests to the Imperial powers in the hope that they would protect Korea's interests against aggressive Asian nations. The power that the Korean emperor had in mind to defend his interests was the United States. In 1877 Kojong asked Allen, then the secretary of U.S. legation in Seoul, how Korea could "interest the U.S. Government and people in Korea, and secure our help in keeping off China." Allen quickly replied, "Give the gold mining to an American company," and proposed that the Korean monarch grant a monopoly in P'yong'an Province reputed to have the best ore." Kojong was "perfectly willing" to grant this monopoly.⁴⁸ The right to construct the Seoul-Inch'on railroad had been strongly requested in 1895 by Japan, but Kojong gave the right to an American company next year, because the road would be in the hands of people belonging to a power, which under no conceivable circumstances would be suspected of having political motives.⁴⁹ In spite of these efforts on the part of the Korean government, the United States made it clear, as shown in Hay's remark, that it would not intervene in affairs in the peninsula remote from the American conti-

⁴⁷ Ian H. Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance—the Diplomacy of Two Island Empires 1894–1907* (London: Athlone, 1966), p. 17.

⁴⁸ Harrington, p. 130.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 178. Hillier to O'Connor, March 22, 1895, Park, p. 530; May 9, 1895, p. 545.

ment. To a lesser extent, the Korean government also endeavored to include Britain in this scheme, but the British strongly discouraged Korean overtures of this kind.⁵⁰ In sum, economic privileges that Korea could offer were not big enough to attract Great Powers participation in political games on the peninsula. This was another reason for the failure of Korean neutrality.

In spite of the necessity of prudence and persistency in diplomatic relations for this purpose, Korean efforts for neutrality ended more often than not in limited agreements. According to Allen, the question of an international guarantee for the independence of Korea was one that would have come before all the powers interests, but it was kept from any of the foreign representatives in Seoul.⁵¹ Moreover, the Korean plan was generally carried out in cooperation with one specific power, which was in a less favorable position in Great Power games on the peninsula. Korea wanted to freeze the existing status quo by a neutrality treaty lest its adversary could avail itself for furthering its influence on the peninsula. Naturally, all the Great Powers refused this sort of agreement because it would deny them opportunities to expand their influence. When Russia concentrated its energy on Manchuria, it ardently supported the status quo on the Korean peninsula. However, when it actively pursued expansionist policies through the leasing of Masanpo and dispatching of troops to the Korean border, it stressed that any proposed political changes must first be submitted to the Russian government.⁵² When Japan consolidated its position vis-à-vis Russia by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902 onward, it refused Russian overtures for Korean neutrality. This was another weakness in the operation of Korea's neutrality policy, and, moreover, Kojong did not have the ability to navigate through the troubled East Asian regional currents.

When the neutrality of the peninsula was first proposed by Japan after the Military Mutiny in 1882, the Korean government did not realize its future capability to protect its interests. The Koreans turned down the Japanese suggestion to neutralize Korea after the manner

⁵⁰ The Korean envoy, Yi Han'ung, sounded out the possibility to raise money in London for the construction of the Seoul-Uiju railroad. [Minutes on Yi Han'ung to Foreign Office, January 13, 1904, FO/17/1662.]

⁵¹ Allen to SS, August 10, 1900, in Burnett, p. 69.

⁵² Allen to SS, October 20, 1900, in Burnett, p. 72.

of Belgium by stating an optimistic view of the future international environment surrounding the Korean peninsula would be bright.⁵³ With the dawn of the new century, the Koreans did their utmost to support a plan mainly in concert with the Russian government.⁵⁴ U.S. documents left a considerable record of activities by the Korean government in this matter under the title of “attempts to secure an international guarantee of independence.”⁵⁵ Korean efforts, however, were rebuffed by the Japanese who argued that the domestic situation did not guarantee a permanent basis for neutrality. The Korean government could not meet some of self-proposed requirements which included an ambitious plan to raise fifty thousand troops.⁵⁶

A last-ditch effort was made by the Korean government in the later part of 1903 when the negotiation over the withdrawal of Russian troops from Manchuria broke down and consequently war clouds hung over the country. In August, the emperor instructed his ministers at St. Petersburg and Tokyo to approach each government and request a declaration from them that, in the event of the rupture of relations, both would regard Korea as neutral territory and grant it the immunities that such status guaranteed. According to Jordan, Kojong asked John McLeavy Brown, the chief commissioner of the Korean customs, to prepare a draft note in Chinese, and two envoys left for the two countries soon after. Such Korean efforts did not receive a favorable response from either Japan or from Russia, who denied that there was any likelihood of a war against Japan.⁵⁷ Under such circumstances, the Korean declaration of neutrality on January 21, 1904, was no more than a request for the guarantee of the emperor's personal safety by making the Seoul-Inch'on area a

⁵³ Nelson, pp. 161–162; Kang, p. 103ff.

⁵⁴ For Russian suggestions of Korean neutrality during 1901 and 1903, see *NGB*, vol. 34, pp. 521, 526; vol. 35, pp. 393–395; Papers Communicated to the Marquis of Lansdowne by the Japanese Minister, January 29, 1901, FO/405/114 (5); Spring-Rice to Lansdowne, September 30, 1903, FO/405/139 (305); Jordan to Lansdowne, February 20, 1903, FO/405/137 (5); Nish, “Korea between Japan and Russia,” pp. 187–190; Synn, Seung Kwon, *The Russo-Japanese Rivalry over Korea, 1876–1904* (Seoul: Yukphubsa, 1981), pp. 332–333.

⁵⁵ Burnett, pp. 68–73. See also *NGB*, vol. 34, p. 521ff; vol. 35, p. 393ff, vols. 36–1, p. 448ff, p. 718ff.

⁵⁶ Gubbins to Salisbury, September 14, 1900, FO/17/1455 (88).

⁵⁷ Jordan to Lansdowne, August 26, 1903, FO/405/139 (6). See also *NGB*, vols. 36–1, pp. 721–722.

neutral zone.⁵⁸ Such declarations, however, were insignificant because the Korean government would come under the control of the power, that first occupied Seoul.⁵⁹ Moreover, any attempt to safeguard its neutrality would have involved objections to the landing of Japanese troops, which would lead to undesirable consequences.⁶⁰ With the outbreak of war on 8 February, Japan speedily occupied strategic places including Seoul on the peninsula and then imposed on Korea two protocols by which it virtually took over the Korean government.

Lastly, Yi Han'ung, the Korean charge d'affaires in London worked diligently to safeguard Korean independence at the time of the Russo-Japanese War.⁶¹ He arrived in London in 1901 as assistant to minister, Min Yongdon, and left a unique record on the annals of Korean diplomatic history on account of his own efforts which received little help from the moribund government in Seoul. He correctly assessed the gathering storms over his country and developed his idea of a neutralized Korea that would be guaranteed by what may be called a double system first, by the powers directly involved in Korean affairs and, then, by other powers who had only secondary interests in the peninsula but had alliances with the former group of countries.

In concert with the declaration of neutrality by the Seoul government on January 21, Yi Han'ung sent to the British Foreign Office an official note which included a lengthy memorandum. In this note, the Korean envoy requested that the British government come to an understanding with other Great Powers that would create a "fresh guarantee" to preserve the independence and sovereignty of the Korean Empire as it had been before the war regardless of which side was victorious. In the enclosed memorandum, he made the case that the independence of Korea was indispensable for the maintenance of peace in the region and the world in general. He tried here through several diagrams to link East Asian international politics with the balance of power system in Europe, thus interpreting the international rivalries of the East Asian region in terms of

⁵⁸ *Kojong*, vol. 6, p. 14; NGB, vol. 37, p. 319.

⁵⁹ Jordan to Lansdowne, February 25, 1904, FO/17/1659 (56).

⁶⁰ Jordan to Lansdowne, February 10, 1904, FO/17/1659 (36).

⁶¹ See my article "A Korean Diplomat in London."

the world balance of power system. In Europe, Britain and France maintained this balance as these two powers were half way toward agreeing on this issue in the years leading up to the war. In East Asia, Russia and Japan were moving toward a direct collision because their interests in Manchuria and Korea ran against each other. If the balance had collapsed in the East, the Korean envoy argued, Britain and France, who had maintained two separate alliances with the two powers in East Asia, were bound to clash. In order to avoid this disaster and maintain the balance of power in the East Asian region, the Korean charge d'affaires recommended in specific terms that the two Western powers should enter a quadruple treaty with Japan and Russia and thus become mediators who could settle Russo-Japanese disputes and guarantee their mutual interests in the region. In this way, Britain and France could mediate Russo-Japanese relations to preserve peace in the region.

The efforts of the Korean envoy, however, ended in a failure because Britain was inclined to leave important decisions up to Japan as it acknowledged by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. Japan was also convinced especially from the latter part of 1903 that any delay under the pretext of good offices of mediation between itself and Russia would only serve the latter's interests. After his initial failure, Yi continued tirelessly his effort to enlist British support for the cause of his country. The more he tried to explain the position of Korea, however, the more indifferent became the attitude of the British government. Finally, on May 12, 1905, he took poison in despair.

Responses of Korean society

Responses of Korean society to the Russo-Japanese War are generally discussed in terms of the development of Korean nationalism in modern times.⁶² They can be distinguished roughly between the conservative Confucian line that included various streams such as "Upholding orthodoxy and expelling heterodoxy;" "Eastern learning as a body

⁶² 61 See Pak Ch'ungsok, *Han'guk chongch'i sasangsa* (History of Korean Political Thoughts) (Seoul: Samyangsa, 1982); Kang Chaeon, *Hangukui kae-hwa sasang* (Enlightenment Thoughts of Korea) (Seoul: Pibong, 1981).

and Western learning as technique;" "Changing legal system and self-strengthening," and the reformist line which ultimately aimed to modernize the country. It is also noted that Korean nationalism during this period was in the process of what Karl Deutsch defines as social communication by which all members of society would share by and large a common value system. The construction of "Korean values" occurred because newspapers and new ideologies such as democracy and republicanism which were propagated by the activities of the Independence Club. Lower class people came to regard the encroachment of foreign powers on the peninsula as a threat to their own livelihood as well as to the Korean nation as a whole and to the active participation in nationwide anti-foreign movements. This reached a zenith at the time of the Japanese protectorate in 1905 and onward.⁶³

The Confucians viewed the social confusion of this time as the retrogradation of their political ideals and reform policies advocated by the progressives as Japan's aggression, which had occurred sporadically in Korean history and would ultimately lead to the slavery of the Korean people.⁶⁴ Ch'oe Ikhyon, the patriarch of Confucian scholars, who had led a memorial campaign to oust the Taewon'gun, the regent, from power in early 1870s, presented to the throne in early 1905 a memorial which in fact summarized Confucian views on the domestic situation before and during the war between Japan and Russia. According to Ch'oe, the emperor was surrounded by crowds of tricksters who played with the government and Korea was surrounded by a mob of fierce robbers who were stretching out their hand to grasp it. And he recommended carrying out "real reforms" in the following way:

It is in the first place to hang half a dozen of the most unscrupulous of the robbers by whom you are surrounded. That is the only way to restore the old harmony. . . . In the second place, only men of unsullied reputation should be appointed to the cabinet. They should have authority to decide upon all questions with uncompromising power.

⁶³ Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (New York: MIT Press, 1966), p. 101.

⁶⁴ Pak, Songsu, *Tongnip undongsa yongu* (A Study on the History of Korean Independence Movement) (Seoul: Ch'angjakgwa Pip'ongsa, 1980), pp. 116-119; Han'guksa Yon'guhoe (comp.), *Han'guk kundae saehoewa ch'egukjuui* (Modern Korean Society and Imperialism) (Seoul: Samjiwon, 1985), pp. 165-166.

By unceasing attention to duty a few months should suffice to effect an appreciable improvement. Then the loyalty of your subjects will be restored and the goodwill of Heaven renewed. Should our robber neighbors still cherish thoughts of annexation, we can call an international conference and come to some agreement among the powers. Without the international interference our robber neighbors will be able to think us already safely in their power. We shall receive no sympathy from other powers unless we carry on our own affairs in a proper manner.⁶⁵

What Ch'oe referred to as "tricksters" were more reform-minded progressive elements in the government than corrupt officials in the traditional sense. Though Jordan condemned him as "the mouth-piece of a number of intriguers who have been at work in the past," Ch'oe is known to Koreans as a leading scholar as well as one of the patriots of the times. Henry Cockburn, Jordan's successor in the British legation in Seoul, later commented that Ch'oe "showed an unflinching courage which touched a chord of chivalrous sympathy" after he died of hunger in 1906 on the island of Tsushima as a captive of the Japanese.⁶⁶ However, his understanding of, and prescription for, the problem of Korea at the time as simply naive. Many of the declarations by Confucians around this time accused Japan in the same vein of breaking its faithfulness to protect Korean independence.

For the conservative Confucians, the Choson dynasty had enjoyed good old days before the country had opened its doors to the outside world and the Westerners brought to Korea all the evils of a degenerate age. Xenophobic outbursts, accompanied with the emphasis on the greatness and self-esteem of the Korean nation, were common phenomena. The *Cheguk Sinmun*, published by Yi Yong'ik, a leader in the conservative camp, wrote in an article:

During these days the various foreign ministers in the capital, on a pretence of protecting their so-called legations have had brought into the city in a brazen-faced way soldiers by the tens and hundreds. . . .

⁶⁵ Ch'oe's memorial was enclosed in Jordan's report to London. [Jordan to Lansdowne, March 18, 1905, FO/17/1692 (41) and enclosure.] For Ch'oe's memorial in November 1873, which eventually led to the fall of the Taewon'gun from power, see Minjok Munhwa Ch'ujinhoe (ed.), *Myon'amjip* (Collection of Ch'oe Ikhy'on's Writings), vol. 1, pp. 112-124. (no publication date)

⁶⁶ Jordan to Lansdowne, March 16, 1905, FO/17/1692 (38); General Report on Corea for the Year 1906, Cockburn to Grey, March 7, 1907, FO/371/237 (12035/12035).

Today, the so-called enlightened world is worse even than the generations of antiquity where the strong devoured the weak. Today between the nations it is the same, there is no faith, no law, no shame, worse even than one has ever read of in history. . . . Among individuals or with nations the difference between strong and weak, rich and poor has always been the same, as the saying goes "the poor have not even a name," so with regard to small and weak countries there is no law to be recognized.

Today the attitude of the various nations with regard to Taehan (Korea) is one to rouse one's keenest sense of distress and anger. Their lack of decency has reached the extreme limit. In the eyes of foreigners from these countries truly the two characters Han'guk (Korea) do not exist, and yet our country Han (Korea) is a dignified independent state with an independent government and power to offer a proper resistance.⁶⁷

In the same context, the paper endorsed the Boxer movement, a Chinese explosion of xenophobia, which had taken place in 1900:

But here each foreign country, in the confidence of its own strength, beyond bounds despises its neighbor and lawlessly enters its neighbor's property and takes possession and robs him of his goods and in all sorts of ways shows his character exceedingly vile. For this reason a year or two ago in Beijing, China, there took place what was called the Boxer Rising. If we examine into the cause of it, it was this: The white races, trusting only to their own strength, oppressed the rulers of China and the people beyond all measure, and treated them so badly that the clear sighted Prince Tuan and others, in great fury, on a certain day roused up the Boxer soldiers and against the legations and consulates hurled fierce attacks, with death and slaughter to the last extreme of fury, holding back the foreign soldiers on the outside and within the city punishing the foreign ministers by all the means in their power.⁶⁸

This stood in contrast to an earlier report, in which the Boxer rebels were described as "bandits (pido)."⁶⁹ The corollary of this argument

⁶⁷ *Cheguk Sinmun*, January 22, 1904, enclosure in Jordan to Lansdowne, January 22, 1904, FO/17/1659 (20). The *Hwangsong Sinmun*, another organ published by the conservative Confucians, carried a series of articles on the history of Manchuria, in which the paper constantly reminded the Korean people that the area had belonged to Korean people in the past. ["Ahan kangyok sobuk yonhyok go" (On the History of Our Korea's Territory in Northwest), May 5-8, 1903.]

⁶⁸ *Cheguk Sinmun*, January 23, 1904, enclosure in Jordan to Lansdowne, January 23, 1904, FO/17/1659 (22).

⁶⁹ *Cheguk Sinmun*, July 3, 1900.

was to urge a popular uprising following the pattern of the traditional Righteous Army movement: "Why is it you (the people) do not drive out these impudent foreign soldiers and rid the country of a source of great danger? Why is it you do not put down the robbers and thieves that are everywhere and restore calm to the people? When the state is safe, my life and property also are in safety."⁷⁰

The progressives acknowledged the corruption and inability of the government to prevent social disorder and urged radical reforms for all parts of Korean society. Yun Ch'ihō, the former president of the Independence Club and leader of the progressive group, considered Confucianism to be the antithesis of liberty and the enrichment of nation because it was an empty, selfish, oppressive and hierarchical code of ethics. Mimicking fundamental U.S. principles he complained that Kojong's policy was "of the robber, by the robber and for the robber," because it exploited his people while his country was being abused by foreign powers, and therefore such a cruel government was destined to be perished.⁷¹

Perceiving the demise of their own country, these progressives together with some Confucians, who began to work in new fields of social activity, i.e., journalism and education were inclined to accept that social Darwinist ideas about the "survival of the fittest" were "irrefutable." The earth was already over-crowded, and therefore, most nations were seeking new fresh fields and pasture for their posterity, some by pacific emigration and colonization and some by military aggression; A large army was the surest guaranty of peace. So long as there were armies there would be war, and in spite of Geneva conventions and boasts of humane warfare, war was every bit as savage and barbarous today as it had been in the times when our ancestors smashed each others' heads with stone axes to death.⁷²

The perception of the progressive group on the international environment of Korea was no less pro-Japanese at least up to the early stage of the war. A leading anti-Japanese organ, the *Korea Daily News*, published by Earnest Bethell, a Briton, who was later brought to the British consular court for his anti-Japanese activities, conceded "at

⁷⁰ *Cheguk Sinmun*, January 22, 1904. See also *Cheguk Sinmun* of January 12, 1904.

⁷¹ Yu Yongyol, *Kashwagui Yun Ch'ihō yongu* (A study on Yun Ch'ihō during the Enlightenment Era) (Seoul: Han'gilsa, 1985), pp. 148-152, 158-159, 173.

⁷² *KDN*, September 29, 1904.

the outbreak of war the Koreans manifested a lively sympathy with Japan, the cause for which it was fighting.⁷³ Yun Ch'ihō expressed pro-Japanese sentiment by adding that the interests of Korea and Japan were congruent rather than divergent in 1904. According to Jordan, Yun and other enlightened officials "mildly" favored the success of the Japanese whose emergence opened up the prospect of an improved administration and of some relief from the burdens of their oppressive government. The main choice for all Koreans was to decide who was the lesser of two evils and the Japanese were considered to be the lesser of the two.⁷⁴ Japan, as soon as its troops occupied Seoul in February, brought Yun, who had been demoted to a provincial governorship by the conservatives, to the Capital to serve in a cabinet to coordinate a series of reforms for the Korean government. This was the beginning of collaboration between the progressive elements and Japan, but their honeymoon was short-lived as Japan's policy soon proved to be excessive in their mind.⁷⁵

When Yun Ch'ihō returned to Seoul as vice foreign minister, he suggested a set of seven points in a letter to Hayashi Gosuke, the Japanese minister, on February 22. Two days earlier the first Japan-Korean agreement had been concluded which provided Japan with legal justification for whatever political or military actions it might take in the peninsula. Here, Yun again defined his position: "I am a Korean first and last and a pro-Japanese as long as the interests of Korea coincide with those of Japan, as at present." However, the letter was in fact Yun's declaration to take more radical measures for reform. Besides expelling "notoriously bad men" like Yi Yong'ik and Kil Yongsu, political leaders in Seoul sought to separate the government from court politics because the emperor was mostly responsible for the present state of government.⁷⁶ On the 27th of the month, Yun also sent a letter to Jordan, expressing his displeasure with the slow and lukewarm progress of the reforms, a thing

⁷³ "The Gentle Art of Making Enemies," *KDN*, September 27, 1904. See also the leading article of September 9, 1904.

⁷⁴ Jordan to Lansdowne, March 7, 1904, FO/17/1659 (72).

⁷⁵ The United States also welcomed Japan's policy to appoint Yun as "the most enlightened and progressive as well as the most honest of the Korean official element." Yun was also regarded as pro-American. (Allen to SS, April 14, 1904, in Burnett, p. 126.)

⁷⁶ Yun Ch'ihō to Hayashi, February 22, 1904, enclosure in FO/17/1659 (92).

that made him wonder about the ultimate objective of Japanese policies. If the emperor were allowed to maintain absolute power, corruption and despotism would remain while reforms were being thwarted. Then, he raised one question, which had troubled him ever since: By helping the emperor to prolong his reign of oppression and by disabling patriotic Koreans from introducing reforms, would Japan try to convince the world that Koreans were not good enough to govern themselves?⁷⁷

Min Yonghwan, the most highly esteemed patriot of the time, had a similar attitude. He stigmatized the return of Yi Yong'ik from Japan as a retrograde step taken in order to pander to the reactionary cliques who were again assuming power and whose influence would soon frustrate the reforms under Japan's auspices. He asked Jordan if John McLeavy Brown, who had been the British head of the Korean customs service for over a decade, should be entrusted with being in charge of the Ministry of Finance. Min did not believe that Brown was capable of restraining Yi Yong'ik's influence on financial affairs and further stated that he would consult Hayashi on this matter. Like Yun Ch'ihō, Min also had reservations about Japan's intentions which he expressed by saying that Japan's answer to McLeavy Brown's case would be a test of Japanese intention regarding the privileged position they enjoyed in Korea, not merely for their own ends but for the benefit of the Koreans as well.⁷⁸ All these indicate that the progressive elements were not so enthusiastic in the matter of cooperation with the Japanese for Korean national causes, because their collaboration would entail the endorsement of Japan's position on the peninsula.

The pro-Japanese stance of Yun and other progressives continued by and large until August 1904 when Japan imposed a second treaty which forced Korea to employ foreign advisers including a Japanese financial adviser. Most alarming was the imposition of a Japanese financial advisor who would be empowered to direct all matters related to Korea's fiscal affairs. With the exception of Japan's plan for the cultivation of Korean wasteland, later called the Nagamori scheme, Yun's suggestion of reform and Japan's reform measures of

⁷⁷ Yun Ch'ihō to Jordan, February 27, 1904, enclosure in FO/17/1659 (92).

⁷⁸ Jordan to Lansdowne, March 31, 1904, FO/17/1659 (95).

the Korean administration were almost identical. Here Yun again pushed Japan for taking more radical measures for overhauling the whole administration. For example, in common with every other office, the Foreign Ministry suffered from the superabundance of officials. There were thirty-two officials in the office besides ten students, thus making a total of forty-two people. And, over fifty servants constantly kept the office noisy and dirty. To introduce order, secrecy and discipline, in short, to put the office on a workable, professional basis, the number of officials and servants needed to be reduced by half. This reduction was not possible until the government reorganized all other departments, as no minister would dare risk the unpopular measure of reducing the number of men in his department alone. Lastly, he added one point: By insisting on the Nagamori scheme, Japan placed pro-Japanese Koreans, implicitly including Yun himself, in a difficult position, and therefore, he hoped that in the interest of Korea and Japan the scheme would not be pressed any further.⁷⁹

Here, Yun Chi'ho found himself to trapped between Korean interest in furthering reforms and Japan's ever-increasing interest in the peninsula. With such a dilemma in mind, he wrote an anonymous article to the *Korea Daily News* that criticized Japanese actions in Korea since their takeover of the Seoul government. Yun still called Japan Korea's "best friend." Of course, nobody was fool enough to believe that Japan or anybody else fought for the good of Korea alone, but Koreans, having been oppressed and squeezed to death by their own government, welcomed even the war, hoping it might bring some changes to their hopeless condition by introducing a decent Japanese influenced administration of the country. Yun blamed Japan for doing nothing of the sort. On the other hand, Japan, apart from the Nagamori plan, worked for the comprehensive and elastic "military purpose" clause to its fullest extent in spirit and in letter by occupying and fortifying strategic points all over the country, by building railroads, by extending the already extensive fishery rights and by opening new telegraph lines, while persecuting any Koreans who dared to criticize shortsighted Japanese policies in Korea. In short, Japan was taking unfair advantage of its opportunity and was

⁷⁹ Yun Ch'ihō to Hayashi, August 15, 1904, enclosure in FO/17/1660 (168).

entirely alienating, hence compromising the support of the Korean people.⁸⁰

According to the observation of Jordan, the pro-Japanese British minister in Seoul, in the beginning the Japanese troops who occupied Seoul acted correctly by conducting themselves “in a very orderly manner” and not arousing Korean concerns which stood in direct contrast to Russian Cossacks, who had formed the Russian guards and had been “notoriously guilty” especially in the matter of abusing Korean women, something all occupied nations dread most. The Japanese soldiers paid for everything including their accommodations and, therefore, there had been little excesses so commonly associated with military occupation. Korean soldiers had been hustled out of their quarters to make room for the newcomers, but they did not seem to resent the intrusion. Some Korean officials, who could not be regarded as pro-Japanese, allowed without much rancor, the Japanese soldiers to stay in their houses and later were said to be satisfied with their good behavior. Prices had risen enormously but the poorer class Koreans for the moment at least secured ample compensation in the shape of increased earnings by providing labor for Japanese troops.⁸¹ Frederick McKenzie, a British war correspondent, later known for his anti-Japanese articles, also admitted that the Japanese troops first exhibited exemplary behavior but this soon transformed into the abuse of power.⁸²

The favorable, though limited, support for the Japanese prevailing in Korean society had a significant bearing in the development of Korean nationalism. As reiterated by Yun Ch'ihō, those who were regarded as pro-Japanese as long as interests of Japan and Korea were congruent began to change their attitude when they found the interests of both countries to enter onto a collision course. The first occasion was the Japan-Korean agreement of February 23. Although some element of the progressives still believed in the sincerity of the Japanese, an antagonistic atmosphere to Japan began to spread quickly

⁸⁰ It was published in the name of Taehan saram (a Korean) in *KDN*, July 22, 1904. See also enclosures in Jordan to Lansdowne, July 13, 1904, FO/17/1660 (151).

⁸¹ Jordan to Lansdowne, February 22, 1904, FO/17/1659 (60). See also his private letter to Campbell, February 22, 1904, enclosure in *ibid.*

⁸² Frederick A. McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), pp. 209ff.

in Korean society once Japan's gained control of the Korean government. Japan also realized the potential danger of such a situation developing at the time that its troops headed north to battlefields, leaving only three hundred troops in Seoul where some pro-Japanese officials were intimidated and attacked by members of the conservative Peddlers' Guild, which had been the time-honored instrument of the emperor.⁸³

The Nagamori scheme, however, made Korean society decidedly anti-Japanese. In June 1904, a scheme was put forward to the Korean government which involved giving control of practically all the unoccupied land in the country to a person, named Nagamori, who was an official in the Agricultural Department of Tokyo. This arrangement was suppose to last for fifty years, but was virtually made perpetual by the provision for its renewal and the onerous terms imposed in the improbable event of its redemption. The Koreans fully foresaw the danger that threatened them and were making loud protests against what they characterized as "spoliation of their national heritage."⁸⁴ According to Yun Ch'ihō, Nagamori would grab all the uncultivated, unimproved, and undeveloped portions of the country in the shape of mountains and forests, and streams and lakes, plains and fields, all of which amounted to fully two thirds of the peninsula. In fifty years, which would witness more development than the last five centuries, the Korean population would at least double its present size unless an altruistic friend might see fit to exterminate the whole nation. With the two thirds of the arable and habitable lands and resources controlled by a Japanese monopoly, Koreans would not be able to develop as an autonomous country. To buy back the concession at the end of fifty years the Japanese imposed a five per cent per annum interest charge which arithmetically proved absurd. To Yun, annexation, pure and simple would be far better for the Korean people than the proposed monopoly, and this was no more than a scheme to occupy the peninsula permanently.⁸⁵

The Nagamori scheme united Korean society, which had showed somewhat different attitudes to Japanese policies in the peninsula.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Jordan to Lansdowne, June 30, 1904, FO/17/1660 (144); August 6, 1904. 6. 30, FO/17/1660 (161).

⁸⁵ Jordan to Lansdowne, July 13, 1904, FO/17/1660 (151) and its enclosure.

On July 21, a mass meeting, which was estimated to have numbered five thousand people, was held at the Bell Tower in the center of the city. The Japanese police arrested some five or six of the leaders and made vain attempts to disperse the gathering. Naturally, the emperor was one of the chief promoters of the movement against the scheme by supplying the agitators with funds for the campaign. The mayor of the city and the vice-minister for foreign affairs, Yun, requested the Japanese legation release the leaders of the movement. Even pro-Japanese officials, therefore, were stunned by the surge of anti-Japanese feeling and that all strata of the society from the emperor to the peasant class united to rise against the Japanese encroachment on their land, the very basis of existence in agricultural society. The Japanese military was obliged to intervene to put a stop to the agitation. Japanese troops were used to maintain order both in Seoul and in the more important centers of the country. A field battery was placed on an elevated position commanding the palace and the center of the city, Japanese sentries guarded the city gates, and the capital was, so far as Koreans were concerned, under military law.⁸⁶

In July, it was noted that the Japanese whose behavior had been so exemplary heretofore, were beginning to lose some of their amiable characteristics.⁸⁷ The next month, it was observed that the Japanese were experiencing great difficulty in securing a sufficient supply of Korean coolies for military operation.⁸⁸ In such circumstances, the Nagamori scheme was postponed by the Japanese legation, which ceased for the time being to press the question upon the Korean government. In October, Japan revived the issue by presenting to the Korean government a note which pointed out that the acceptance of the proposal would confer benefits upon Korea.⁸⁹ The idea behind this scheme was later merged into the Oriental Development Company, which was to become the spearhead of the Japanese exploitation of Korean farmers after annexation.

On November 17, 1905, Korea concluded under duress a protectorate treaty with Japan, by which Korea's de-facto independence

⁸⁶ Jordan to Lansdowne, July 22, 1904, FO/17/1660 (154); July 23, 1904, FO/17/1660 (156); and (161).

⁸⁷ Jordan to Lansdowne, July 2, 1904, FO/17/1660 (145).

⁸⁸ Jordan to Lansdowne, August 16, 1905, FO/17/1660 (167).

⁸⁹ Jordan to Lansdowne, August 6, 1904 (161); October 4, 1904, FO/17/1660 (192).

ceased. A deep feeling of gloom and sullen despondency pervaded all classes of Korean society: no one could envision a national regeneration in the foreseeable future.⁹⁰ Min Yonghwan committed suicide on the 29th of the month, and this was followed by a series of attacks on the ministers who had signed the protectorate treaty.⁹¹ As Cockburn correctly pointed out, the abnormal situation in Korea was not due to the inability and corruption of the government but due to the aggression of a foreign power. In this sense, he warned, it should not be regarded as the continuation of confusion, which had been frequently noted in the past.⁹²

Conclusion

Examining the reaction of Korean society to the Russo-Japanese War reveals that the “lost decade” thesis is only partially correct. On the one hand, Kojong and the Korean government did realize, though belatedly, the potential danger that a war between their two neighbors would bring to their country. Their reactions to the crisis, however, were opportunistic, and sometimes reflected their ignorance of the practices and norms in international relations. Given that the recognition of Korean independence by the Great Powers after 1895 was just a fiction, Kojong and his government were surprisingly complacent, taking no specific actions to make the most of the opportunity for Korea. If the government had pursued “prudently” the policy of Korean neutrality, Korea might have escaped the worst case scenario of being absorbed by its neighbor. “Prudence” implies a realist approach to international relations; it is an ability to adopt prescriptions based on the actual environment and to pursue persistently long-term goals. Unfortunately, the Korean government did not possess such abilities. In this sense, the verdict of the “lost decade” is tenable.

The perception and response of humans in society, however, are made of repeated practices over a long span of decades or even

⁹⁰ Jordan to Lansdowne, November 18, 1905, FO/17/1693 (160).

⁹¹ Cockburn to Grey, February 25, 1906, FO/371/44 (12631/12631).

⁹² Cockburn to Lansdowne, December 1, 1905, FO/371/179 (1086/306); December 28, 1905 (4968/306).

centuries. Here, all sorts of value systems such as ideologies, myths, religion and moral beliefs influenced each other. Likewise, most states and political leaders interpret their information on other nations or foreign events with limited images acquired through such various intelligence gathering processes such as education, tradition and news media.⁹³ In this sense, it might be prejudicial of Westerners to believe that the perception, world outlook, and conduct of the foreign policy of Korea could be changed within the short span of “a decade.”

As Nelson perceptively pointed out, in such a short period it was almost impossible for the Koreans to attain a full understanding of the nature and duties of a sovereign state as well as of a civilization and a conception of society, government, and the world completely alien to them.⁹⁴ In an unequal relationship with China over centuries, which had been termed the “tributary system,” the Koreans maintained their de-facto independence, while depending on their protectors for security matters. The combination of paying some form of tribute to eliminate security threats as well as offering China imperial gifts defined Korea’s conduct in international affairs up to 1895. More important was the motive of the Koreans behind this system. Korea wanted to remain aloof and autonomous by limiting its contacts with China to tributary exchanges and trade. Independence and reliance are certainly contradictory notions but the Korean had achieved both in its relations with China in the past. When they entered into treaty relations with the Western countries beginning in the 1880s, the Koreans could not adapt to such new ideas as independence and sovereignty in Western international relations. Thus the Koreans entered this new era in their history requesting “protection” from the Great Powers including Russia. In other words, the Korean emperor and his government still clung to the old fiction that the country could enjoy its autonomy domestically while relying on a foreign power for its security by means of “protection.”⁹⁵

As well, this study reveals several cases of Korean ignorance of

⁹³ For an overview on the question of knowledge in the social sciences, see “Knowledge, Sociology of,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*; Manicas, Peter T., *A History and Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), pp. 261–265.

⁹⁴ Nelson, p. 287.

⁹⁵ An American document described Korean foreign relations in terms of the change of its protectors. [Allen to SS, November 7, 1987, in Burnett, pp. 36–37.]

the norms and practices of international relations. One more case must be added. In January 1895, when the defeat of China in its war against Japan was in sight, the Korean government decided to abolish its legation in Washington and to place its interests in the U.S. in the hands of the Japanese legation there. However, this action was not accepted by the U.S. State Department, as it was in direct contradiction of the avowed desire of the Great Powers for Korea to act as an independent nation.⁹⁶ Early in 1905, D. W. Stevens, the pro-Japanese advisor to the Korean Foreign Ministry, advised the emperor to give orders for the immediate recall of the Korean ministers at Tokyo, Paris and Berlin, the only capitals where fully accredited Korean representatives still resided. All the legations abroad should be left in the care of one secretary each, an arrangement, which was preparatory to their final withdrawal and to the assumption by the Japanese of the foreign representation of Korea in Europe and the United States.⁹⁷ Kojong belatedly realized the significance of his legations abroad for the independence of his country and, in spite of his resistance to the Japanese move, all Korean missions abroad were abolished after the protectorate treaty in November 1905 and the demise of the kingdom followed.

⁹⁶ Hiller to O'Connor, January 9, 1895, Park, p. 495.

⁹⁷ Jordan to Lansdowne, 27 February, 1905, FO/17/1692 (32).

THE WAR AND US-KOREAN RELATIONS

Kim Ki-Jung

Mr. Root advises Mr. Morgan that the representation of the United States in diplomatic matters affecting American treaty rights, persons, or property in Korea is transferred to the American legation at Tokyo, where such questions will be negotiated through the Japanese foreign office. Instructs him to transfer the legation property and archives to the custody of the consul-general; to withdraw from Korea and to return to the United States.¹

With this short telegram from the State Department of the U.S. to the American Minister to Korea on November 24, 1905, diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Korea which had exist since 1882 came to an end. At this moment the framework of Japanese-American cooperation that American policy-makers had sought since the Manchurian crisis of 1903 was carried out in actual policy. Ironically, but not surprisingly, it was not Great Britain, Japan's ally, but the United States that withdrew its diplomatic corps first from Korea. Horace N. Allen, who had been dismissed from Korean service earlier that year, was "shocked at the precipitancy of our action in this matter within ten days of the announcement of the Japanese protectorate and before any announcement on the subject from England, and within a few weeks of the reception by the President's daughter [Alice Roosevelt] of such expensive entertainment from the Korea Emperor."² While Allen was astounded by this prompt action of the U.S., Japan expressed "the cordial appreciation of the Imperial Government of the friendly disposition shown by the United States by favorably entertaining the desire of the Imperial Government and promptly taking the initiative to withdraw the United States Legation

¹ Root to Morgan, Nov. 24, 1905, U.S. State Department, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1905* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1906), p. 631. (hereafter cited as *FRUS*).

² Allen to Joseph H. Choate, Dec. 18, 1905, Allen MSS.

in Korea.”³ America’s hasty withdrawal from Korea, therefore, marked the high point of Japanese-American cooperation in East Asia.

For Koreans, the U.S. had offered a fluctuating image: after Korea was forced to open the door by Japan, the U.S. became the first power to recognize Korea’s independence with a treaty of 1882. Then, ironically, the U.S. was also the first to break diplomatic relations with Korea right after the Korean-Japanese Protectorate treaty was proclaimed in November 1905. The American action became critical not only for Japan to design and implement its policy after the war, but also for Korea which was to experience a turbulent historical path toward colonization in 1910.

*The Manchurian Crisis of 1903 and America’s Japan Policy
before the War*

To explain America’s East Asian policy in the early 20th century, several features need to be considered about the East Asian regional order of that time. First, the decline of British hegemony had become irreversible. As the world entered the 20th century, competitions among the Great Powers over markets and colonies intensified.⁴ By the turn of the century, a transitional phase of relations between nations appeared in East Asia as blocs, such as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Russo-France Entente. Second, the structural transformation of relations among nations in East Asia inevitably increased regional instability. The Manchurian crisis that followed the Boxer rebellion of 1900 revealed the extent of regional instability during this period. This instability eventually evolved into the Russo-Japanese War in 1904. Third, the ethos of colonialism still prevailed in East Asia. The U.S. Open Door principle expressed in 1899 stood in direct opposition to 19th century European colonialism. But the U.S. was only a newly emerging power in this region hence it was not in a position to force all nations to adhere to its Open Door policy.

³ The Japanese Minister for Foreign Minister to the Japanese Minister to the United States, telegram, Nov. 27, 1905, Note, Japan (M-163).

⁴ For explanation of the structural transformation of the world capitalist system during the second half of 19th century, see Kim Ki-Jung, *The Historical Roots of U.S. Engagement in East Asia and Korean-American Relations in the Early 20th Century* (Seoul: Mujisa, 2003), pp. 63–94. (in Korean)

The key to the East Asian policy of the United States was the Open Door policy of 1899. Indeed, the Open Door policy proposed a new principle of dealing with the Chinese market. It assumed collaborative suppression through non-colonial competition for commercial opportunities among the major powers in China. Regarding the East Asian periphery, particularly the huge market of China, the Open Door policy aimed at securing commercial access to the market without administrative burdens.⁵ Avoiding the administrative burden coming from the establishment of a protectorate or the colonization of a pre-arranged portion of the periphery, meant that the U.S. would not commit itself militarily in the tangled competition that defined Great Power colonial practices. Acquiring diplomatic approval to keep the China market open to all powers without military commitment was the goal of the Open Door policy. The U.S., motivated by growing economic capability, tried to keep the huge China market open to free market competition while avoiding major military confrontations with other powers over China or other periphery markets.

In 1902, the U.S. had to redefine its position because of the emergence of the Anglo-Japanese alliance and the Franco-Russian entente. U.S. policy makers had to choose whether or not to align themselves with one of the power blocs in East Asia. In this changing situation American policy aligned itself with Great Britain and Japan. The decision to strengthen ties with the Anglo-Japanese alliance was again determined by Washington's concern for maintaining the open door in China. Particularly toward Britain, American policy-makers were convinced that their interests were identical. As Howard K. Beale has noted, President Theodore Roosevelt believed the "oneness of the American and British interest" and that "in combination the Americans and the British could dominate the world."⁶ "England's interest," Roosevelt later confirmed, "is exactly ours as regards this Oriental complication, and is likely to remain so . . ."⁷ The Roosevelt

⁵ Thomas J. McCormick, *China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire, 1893-1901* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967).

⁶ Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), p. 81.

⁷ Roosevelt to George von Meyer, Feb. 6, 1905; to Cecil Spring-Rice, Dec. 27, 1904, TR MSS.

administration therefore welcomed the Anglo-Japanese alliance and considered it as “renewed confirmation of the assurance” concerning the independence and integrity of China.⁸ Indeed, John Hay’s Open Door Note was a product of American-British cooperation based on perception of identical interests in East Asia.⁹ The U.S. saw the alliance as another proxy to guarantee American commercial interests in Manchuria, insofar as the combination of Britain and Japan ostensibly supported the American policy. Particularly, Japanese efforts to encourage Japanese-American cooperation became open and direct. Playing a leading role in the anti-Russian coalition since early 1901 because of its vital interests in Korea, Japan induced the U.S. to establish a united front with the Anglo-Japanese alliance by frequently reiterating Japanese diplomatic support of the Open Door principle in Manchuria.

In mid-1903, the East Asian crisis intensified when Russia boldly pursued its “Forward” policy. Washington had been alarmed by reports from the American diplomats in China that the first evacuation of Russian troops in 1903 did not materially change general trade conditions in Manchuria.¹⁰ Furthermore, reports that Russia had intensified the crisis by not carrying out its second evacuation and adding the Seven Demands decisively shook Washington’s initial hopes for the Open Door policy. After April 1903, as Michael H. Hunt has shown, American East Asian policy vis-à-vis Russia was reversed.¹¹ In March, 1902, Secretary of State John Hay noted: “We may safely let her [Russia] take the lead, and . . . safeguard all our interest.”¹² A year later, Hay wrote to Roosevelt:

I take it for granted that Russia knows as we do that we will not fight over Manchuria, for the simple reason we cannot . . . If our rights and interests in opposition to Russia in the Far East were as clear as noon-

⁸ *FRUS*, 1902, p. 931.

⁹ Alfred W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York: Harcourt, 1938), p. 89.

¹⁰ Russia continued to exercise supervision of the customs and the civil administration, still controlled the courts, and claimed the right to collect taxes. Edward H. Zabriskie, *American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East: A Study in Diplomacy and Power Politics, 1895–1914* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1946), p. 85.

¹¹ Michael H. Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895–1911* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 69–70.

¹² Hay to Conger, Mar. 19, 1902, Instruction, China (M-77).

day, we could never get a treaty through the Senate, the object of which was to check Russian aggression . . . The only hopeful symptom is that they [the Russians] are really afraid of Japan.¹³

To respond to the escalating crisis in the region during mid-1903, Washington shifted its overall foreign policy to strengthen Japanese-American cooperation. Since the confrontation between Japan and Russia over Korea and Manchuria had become more hostile, the shift in policy revealed that the U.S. would oppose Russia if hostilities erupted against Japan. American policy toward Korea, therefore, followed suit: the U.S. intended to recognize Japan's claims over Korea.

*The Russo-Japanese War and America's Contrasting Policy toward
Neutrality of Korea and China*

The outbreak of war between Japan and Russia provided the U.S. with the perfect opportunity to implement a policy of Japanese-American cooperation. The framework of Japanese-American cooperation began to take shape when the U.S. gave full diplomatic support to Japan. Indeed, this action was aimed at preventing Japan from being diplomatically isolated during the war by possible coalition between Russia and other European powers, especially Germany and France. Simply put, Washington intended to prevent the Europeans from repeating the "Triple Intervention" that had occurred against Japan following the Treaty of Shimoneseiki. Roosevelt later wrote to Spring-Rice:

As soon as this war broke out I notified Germany and France in the most polite and discreet fashion that in the event of a combination against Japan to try to do what Russia, Germany and France did to her in 1894. I should promptly side with Japan and proceed to whatever length was necessary in her behalf.¹⁴

In the same manner, he feared Russia's victory in the war, stating: "in case the Russians begin to win, they would be so intolerable as to force us to take action."¹⁵

¹³ Hay to Roosevelt, April, 28, 1903, TR MSS; Tyler Dennett, *John Hay: From Poetry to Politics* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1933), p. 405.

¹⁴ Roosevelt to Spring-Rice, July 24, 1905, TR MSS.

¹⁵ Roosevelt to Hay, Sep. 19, 1904, TR MSS.

An episode that revealed America's sympathy toward Japan was vividly shown in the starkly contrasting policies of the U.S. toward neutrality of China and Korea. As soon as the war broke out Washington declared its neutrality. But, Washington not only declared its own neutrality, U.S. diplomats also induced China to declare neutrality which ultimately helped Japan in the war. Moreover, the American attitude regarding the neutrality of China and Korea was entirely different toward each country. Toward China, Washington actually advised Beijing that the U.S. considered China to be neutral. On February 10, 1904, Secretary Hay instructed Minister Conger in Beijing to express "the earnest desire of the Government of the United States" in these terms:

that the neutrality of China and her administrative entity be respected by both parties in the course of the military operations which have begun between Russia and Japan, and that the area of hostilities be localized and limited, so that undue excitement and disturbance of the Chinese people may be prevented . . .¹⁶

Such American action designed to induce China to declare neutrality was exactly in accord with Japanese goals. On February 11, three days after the outbreak of the war, Hay received a note from Takahira Kogoro, the Japanese Minister at Washington, in which the Minister notified Washington that Japan had also advised China to observe neutrality and assured Hay that "should China assume an attitude of neutrality, the Japanese Government will respect such neutrality if it is respected by Russia."¹⁷ No word on Korean neutrality was mentioned in this note. Upon the request from the U.S. and other powers, China declared its neutrality on February 12, 1904.¹⁸ The U.S. sent notes to the belligerent powers and to China expressing its desire that the neutrality and administrative integrity of China should be respected.¹⁹ Furthermore, the U.S. government issued cir-

¹⁶ Hay to Conger, Telegram, Feb. 10, 1904, *FRUS*, 1904, p. 118. It seemed that Washington had been well prepared for this diplomatic initiative toward Chinese neutrality: Far Eastern adviser, William Rockhill's memorandum on February 6 contained the same context. Rockhill to Roosevelt, Feb. 6, 1904, TR MSS; See Eugene P. Trani, *The Treaty of Portsmouth: An Adventure in American Diplomacy* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1969), pp. 39-40.

¹⁷ Takahira to Hay, Feb. 11, 1904, Notes from the Japanese Legation, (M-163)

¹⁸ *FRUS*, 1904, p. 121.

¹⁹ Hay to All Diplomatic Representatives of the United States, Feb. 20, 1904, *FRUS*, 1904, p. 2.

culars to Great Britain, France, and Germany urging the belligerents to “respect the neutrality of China and her administrative entity.”²⁰

In contrast with the American initiative toward Chinese neutrality, Washington never adopted any formal policy for the neutrality of Korea. Neither Rockhill’s memorandum of February 6 nor the diplomatic circular sent to the other powers mentioned Korea. In fact, the Koreans had been anxious to maintain their country’s neutral status in the midst of the cruel power struggle. In 1904, realizing the imminence of a war, the Korean Emperor declared neutrality to Japan three weeks before the outbreak of the conflict and notified the other powers, including the U.S., of his policy goals.²¹ For the Koreans, such a proclamation of neutrality was designed to safeguard their independence, at least diplomatically. Immediately after the outbreak of the war, Yi Yong Ik, the Minister of the Imperial Household Treasury of Korea, told Frederick A. McKenzie, a British journalist, that he believed that Korea would avoid becoming a belligerent in any future Russo-Japanese conflict. “Let Russia and Japan fight,” he said, “Korea will take no share in their fighting. Our Emperor has issued a declaration of neutrality, and by that we will abide. If our neutrality is broken, the Powers will act without being asked, and will protect us.”²²

On receiving the declaration of Korean neutrality, the American government simply acknowledged it, but in reality, ignored it. Regarding this action by the U.S., Horace Allen, American Minister to Korea, played a critical role by interpreting Korea’s declaration of neutrality as a product of a Russian covert operation. He sent a telegram to the State Department on January 30, 1904 expressing these beliefs:

Korean authorities quite recently had returned from Russia where they had telegraphed St. Petersburg with Korea’s intention of neutrality in the event of war. The Emperor of Russia wishes for the neutralization of Korea to protect their Government. As a result the Head of

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

²¹ Cho to Hay, January 22, 1904, Notes, Korea (M-166); Yi to Komura, January 21, 1904, Japan, Gaimusho, *Nihon Gaiko Bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Documents) vols. 37–1, pp. 310–11. (hereafter cited as *NGB*).

²² F. A. McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1908; reprint ed. A Series of Reprints of Western Books on Korea, no. 2, Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1969), p. 109. Yi’s comment implied that the “good office” clause included in the treaties between Korea and the U.S. and other powers would effectively work for securing Korea’s independence.

the Government is quite confident he has secured earnestly desired inviolability . . . In spite of the statement that the Russian government is opposed to the neutrality proposition, the results are favorable to Russian Government . . .²³

On the same date, Allen reported to Washington in more detail: "Russia and Japan have not replied [to the neutrality of Korea], and England replied in the form of a mere acknowledgement, through her minister." Hay replied to Allen: "Respecting your apprehension as to the rumor that this government had approved Korea's declaration of neutrality, I have to inform you that the declaration, which was communicated to the Department on January 22 by the Korean Minister, was merely acknowledged, with the remark that due note had been taken for the declaration."²⁴ In addition, the American government excluded Korea from the declared neutral zone which assisted Japan's advance into Korea. Viewed from Washington, Korea's effort to secure neutrality for its independence was treated as mere fiction.²⁵ It was at this time that Russia, realizing the increasing tension between itself and the U.S. over Manchurian affairs, complained about biased American intentions regarding neutrality of China and Korea. The Tsar government inquire: "why the United States, in her eagerness to deprive Russia of Manchuria, had made no mention of the Japanese in Korea?"²⁶

As the Russo-Japanese war proceeded, the U.S. began gradually to acquiesce to the consolidation of Japanese control over Korea. As soon as the war began, Japan took quick action toward Korea when the Emperor's government issued two protocols. The Protocol of February 1904 provided a legal basis for Japan to have political control over Korea—the Koreans would always have to follow Japan's advice in policy matters. Moreover, this protocol gave Japan the right to use Korean territory for military purposes, something the Japanese started during with the February 9th invasion of Korean proper.²⁷ Already considering Korea a Japanese protectorate, Washington did not consider the Korean-Japanese Protocol significant enough

²³ Allen to Hay, telegram, Jan. 30, 1904, Despatches, Korea (M-134).

²⁴ Hay to Allen, March 4, 1904, Instructions, Korea (M-77).

²⁵ Allen to Hay, May 10, 1904, Despatches, Korea (M-134).

²⁶ Quoted in Tyler Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War* (New York: Doubleday, 1925), pp. 69–70; Griswold, pp. 96–97.

²⁷ *FRUS*, 1904, p. 437.

to acknowledge. Hay, therefore, instructed Allen that sending the text of this protocol to Washington was not necessary.²⁸ In August, in another measure for complete control, Japan forced the Korean government to conclude another agreement that gave the Japanese complete control over the appointment of advisers to the Korean finance and foreign affairs departments. Then, Japan took command of the police in Seoul and control over the postal, telegraph, and telephone services in Korea by another protocol of April 1905, before finally imposing the Protectorate Treaty over the Korean government in November of the same year.

The framework of Japanese-American cooperation combined with Japan's heavy handed treatment of Korea revealed that the U.S. supported and followed the Japanese strategy of "linkage between Manchuria and Korea," not "Mankan Kokan" (Exchange between Manchurian and Korea). The solution of the Korean problem thus became a prerequisite for that of the Manchurian problem, insofar as Korea remained a major concern for Japan. In this light, American acknowledgement of Japan's establishment of monopolized control over Korea was a necessary diplomatic action when Japan was "playing America's game in Manchuria."²⁹ The neutrality episode was a clear indication that the U.S. stood ready to execute a firm policy toward Korea within the framework of Japanese-American cooperation in East Asia.

²⁸ Hay to Allen, Feb. 23, 1904, Telegram, Instructions, Korea (M-77). Considering the Protocol as protectorate treaty, Alvey Adee, the Second Assistant Secretary as well as international law specialist in the State Department, sent a memo to Hay that "the United States can have no concern in the proposed arrangement which necessarily would exclude consideration of Article one of our Korea treaty [the good office clause]." The memo was not actually sent to Allen. But it should be noted that Adee's note was made even before he read the full context of the Protocol. The text of the Japanese-Korean Protocol was received at the State Department five days later, Feb. 28, from the Japanese Legation.

²⁹ Roosevelt to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Feb. 19, 1904, Elting Morison, *et al.* ed. *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951-54), p. 724. (hereafter cited as *Letters*).

*Theodore Roosevelt, his Belief System and Attitudes toward
U.S.-Korea Relations*

President Roosevelt played the decisive role in U.S. foreign policy-making toward Korea at the beginning of the 20th century. As Tyler Dennett has emphasized, he was the "State Department himself," especially since his active role in foreign policy-making dramatically increased after the first two years of his presidency.³⁰ In this regard, understanding the system of beliefs that constructed Theodore Roosevelt's world-view reveals the basis for the U.S. policy of disengagement from Korea in the period immediate before the Russo-Japanese War.

Roosevelt had an image of a world that consisting of two distinctive groups of actors in international politics: the Europeans and Japan composed a "circle of civilization," while the Koreans and other lesser developed nations consisted of a "waste space" of the uncivilized people. In his image of the world, civilized nations conducted high politics in the international arena, while small and weak nations in the uncivilized regions of the world, in Roosevelt's world-view were neither destined to nor capable of playing a noticeable role in global affairs. Indeed, Roosevelt, typical of European Imperialist thinking of the age in which he lived, viewed the uncivilized nations as objects for exploitation, nations and peoples that superior westerns could use as pawns in their colonial games.

The foreign policy of the United States at the beginning of the 20th century was already deeply influenced by what President Roosevelt called the "duty of civilization." Territorial expansion had become a natural process for the civilized powers. Roosevelt insisted that the "expansion of a masterful people was not a matter of regret, but of pride."³¹ He thought it "an advantage to a civilization to have a civilized power gain ground at the expense of barbarianism."³² As a result, the President had been one of the strongest advocates in the United States for the expansion of U.S. power into the Pacific rim

³⁰ Dennett, *Roosevelt and Russo-Japanese War*, p. 7, 336.

³¹ Theodore Roosevelt, "National Duties," Address at Minnesota State Fair, September 2, 1901, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt: National Edition*, vol. 13 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 476. (hereafter cited as *Works*).

³² Roosevelt to G. Becker, July 8, 1901, TR MSS.

since the 1898 Spanish-American War. Roosevelt believed that civilization should spread to “the waste space” of the world. He was certainly influenced by the Social Darwinism of the time through his education and social life. In addition, he strongly insisted on the actual implementation of theory to foreign policy in terms of the duty of civilization.

Japan was the only non-white civilized nation in Roosevelt’s belief-system. He developed this dominant image of Japan mostly from observations of Japan’s military behavior and naval strength. As the Assistant Secretary of Navy (1897–98) he began to view Japan as a dangerous adversary after the 1898 Hawaiian annexation debate.³³ Later, the fighting ability of Japanese soldiers also impressed him when they served in the allied coalition during the relief of Beijing during the Boxer Rebellion. Roosevelt exclaimed: “What extraordinary soldiers those little Japs are! Our own troops out in China write grudgingly that they think the Japs did better than any of the allied force.”³⁴ He said later that he had long felt that “Japan’s entrance into the circle of the great civilized powers was a good omen for all the world.”³⁵ Such beliefs became the basis of his foreign policy: “While I am President the Japanese will be treated just exactly like the English, Germans, French, or other civilized peoples. . . . I think it will be the permanent policy of our Government.”³⁶ Theodore Roosevelt dual image of civilization, therefore, meant that he based his foreign policy on racial differences and inequality. He sought nothing less than to create an international order based on his belief that lesser developed people could and should be dominated by the Great Powers for their own good.

Through the same lens, he framed American foreign policy toward the uncivilized, periphery East Asian nations. Roosevelt viewed Korea as a backward, uncivilized nation just like China and the Philippines, for it did not possess any level of development to warrant consideration as a highly civilized nation. The image of Korea as small rendered it a country that needed to be controlled by a higher,

³³ Roosevelt to McKinley, April 22, 1897, *Letters*, 1:601. See Roosevelt to C. Goodrich, June 16, 1897, *Letters*, 1: 626; to B. McCalla, August 3, 1897, *Letters*, 1:636.

³⁴ Roosevelt to Spring-Rice, Nov. 19, 1900, TR MSS; see also Roosevelt to von Sternburg, Nov. 19, 1900, Mar. 8, 1901, TR MSS.

³⁵ Roosevelt to Kentaro Kaneko, April 23, 1904, TR MSS.

³⁶ Roosevelt to Lloyd Griscom, Jul. 15, 1905, TR MSS.

civilized nation. As long as Korea was categorized as an uncivilized nation, he was convinced that it should be under the tutelage of some civilized power. As early as 1900 when the international situation surrounding Korea had not yet grown into a serious crisis, Roosevelt expressed his desire by noting "I should like to see Japan have Korea."³⁷ His belief remained unchanged when the U.S. took initial action against Korea in 1905. Because Koreans were a backward people who did not have any capabilities for self-defense, he thought, "Japan ought to have a protectorate over Korea, which has shown its utter inability to stand by itself."³⁸ He never considered that Korea had an independence crisis as the result of Japan's aggression in northeast Asia, but as the inevitable product of Korea's inadequacy as a civilized nation in terms of self-government and national economy. "Korea as an independent nation," he later concluded, "could not keep order at home and was powerless to strike an effective blow on her own behalf when assailed from abroad."³⁹

It is not clear how much he had known about Korea and Koreans before he became responsible for American foreign policy. It is clear, however, that he had acquired a negative image about Korea by 1905, when he communicated with journalist George Kennan who had written unfavorably of Korea. It is reasonable to assume that the negative image of Korea that Roosevelt had developed especially in relation to racial distinction intensified when he received further information about Korea from Kennan.⁴⁰

As far as the framework of Japanese-American cooperation in East Asia was concerned, the makers of American foreign policy had found a common ground between concerns about America's commercial interests and Roosevelt's beliefs. As a result, the hasty withdrawal of the United States from Korea turned out to be a confirmation of the Japanese-American cooperation. In addition to American commercial interests in Manchuria that were expected to be promoted

³⁷ Roosevelt to von Sternburg, Aug. 28, 1900, TR MSS.

³⁸ Roosevelt to Meyer, February 6, 1905, TR MSS.

³⁹ Roosevelt, "The Japanese in Korea," in *Works*, vol. 18, p. 406.

⁴⁰ Kennan, the well-known pro-Japanese and anti-Russian journalist, was an influential figure in Roosevelt's advisory circle. The first article of Kennan's series in the *Outlook* was entitled "Korea: A Desperate State," in which negative sides of Korea were described. Roosevelt wrote to Kennan that he liked the article. Roosevelt to Kennan, Oct. 15, 1905, TR MSS.

by Japan, Roosevelt's beliefs in the distinction of civilizations limited his choice of options for foreign policy, thus accelerating his decision to position the U.S. firmly on the side of Japan and against Russia. By the same token, the argument, which most scholars have repeatedly echoed, that Roosevelt's balance of power approach was the fundamental motivation for American policy toward Korea, is no longer valid. If focusing on the analysis of individual factor, his perspective on civilization and racial distinction influenced him to interpret the crisis situation in Korea as another example of why lesser developed civilizations benefited from the Great Power intervention. As Frank Ninkovich has emphatically argued, if neither Japan nor Russia was yet worthy of civilized stewardship, a balance of power would be second best.⁴¹ To be sure, the American policy of disengagement or "selective retreat," as Fred Harvey Harrington has defined,⁴² from Korea was a "cooperative imperial arrangement,"⁴³ and it was formulated and carried out by a president imbued with his own imperialistic ethos.

Roosevelt's Personal Diplomacy and the Katsura-Taft Agreement

In August 1905, Roosevelt had a conversation with his close friend, German Ambassador Speck von Sternberg, where he expressed his views about what Japan should obtain after the war. He asked von Sternberg if "it was practicable from a German point of view," for Japan to have permanent economic and political control over Korea. Roosevelt relayed the content of his conversation with the German ambassador to the Secretary of State, Hay, the next day.⁴⁴ At the beginning of 1905, possible American Policy toward Korea vis-à-vis

⁴¹ Frank Ninkovich, "Theodore Roosevelt: Civilization as Ideology," *Diplomatic History*, 19 (Summer 1986), p. 239.

⁴² Fred Harvey Harrington, "An American View of Korean-American Relations, 1882-1905," in *One Hundred Years of Korean-American Relations*, ed. Yur-Bok Lee and Wayne Patterson (University of Alabama Press, 1986), pp. 58-59.

⁴³ Ninkovich, p. 239.

⁴⁴ Hay Diary, Aug. 10, 1904, Hay MSS, reproduced in Howard K. Beale Collection, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University. See also for the German correspondence, Dennis, *Adventures in American Diplomacy*, p. 390, and Raymond Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1967), p. 101.

Japan became clear when Roosevelt rejected any pro-Korean gesture as “interference” with Japan’s “fruits of victory” from the war. He reaffirmed to Hay that there should be no interference from the U.S., stating the oft-quoted phrase: “We can not possibly interfere for the Koreans against Japan.”⁴⁵ Hay replied, “I entirely agree with you about Korea. We have no business interfering.”⁴⁶ A few days later, Roosevelt, transmitting his intentions to the Russian government regarding Korea, wrote to his trusted American diplomat, Meyer in St. Petersburg, stating that “of course, the military situation may alter; but if peace should come now, Japan ought to have a protectorate over Korea (which had shown its utter inability to stand by itself) and ought to succeed to Russia’s rights in and around Port Arthur, while I should hope to see Manchuria restored to China.”⁴⁷ The President remained firm . . . Korea was not worth disrupting or even aggravating relations with Japan.

Roosevelt even used his personal channels to transmit his convictions about the Korean issue. In February 1905 the President had a conversation with Richard Berry, *Collier’s* correspondent for the Russo-Japanese war, about the situation in East Asia. He had the substance of this conversation sent to George F. Kennan who was in Tokyo as a correspondent. “What I want to do,” Roosevelt stated, “is to assure Japan that she will have the entire support of the United States in whatever legitimate claim she may take.” As for Japan’s demands after the war, he proclaimed that “I would make her hold Port Arthur. She has won it, and it is hers, never to be surrendered again. . . . Japan must hold Port Arthur and she must hold Korea. These two points are already settled.”⁴⁸ As Roosevelt desired, Kennan then had a talk with Katsura Taro, the Japanese Prime Minister, to communicate the President’s views. Katsura replied that he was “deeply impressed by [Roosevelt’s] fairness and impartiality throughout this war” and “extremely grateful to him for his personal sympathy with Japan.” Then Katsura added “on the political side we are fighting for self-preservation and national existence; on the com-

⁴⁵ Roosevelt to Hay, Jan. 28, 1905, TR MSS.

⁴⁶ Hay to Roosevelt, Jan. 30, 1905, Hay MSS.

⁴⁷ Roosevelt to Meyer, Feb. 6, 1905, *Letters*, 4:1115–16.

⁴⁸ Richard Berry to Kennan, Feb. 21, 1905, George Kennan MSS, the Library of Congress, quoted in Trani, pp. 90–91; Roosevelt’s conversation with Berry was also reproduced in Kennan to Roosevelt, Mar. 30, 1905, TR MSS.

mercial side we demand the 'open door' and equal opportunities for all. . . . We recognize the rights of others, and we want only our share."⁴⁹ The Japanese government, therefore deeply appreciated Washington's support in its effort to control northeast Asia.

In June, another nonofficial channel was used for communication with Great Britain regarding America's approval of Japan's control over Korea. Henry Cabot Lodge was sent to London to explain Roosevelt's views and listen to the views of the British Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Senator Lodge reported to Roosevelt that both British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour and Foreign Minister Lansdowne expressed that "new treaty with Japan was proceeding well—that the main points were the return of Manchuria to China and the complete recognition of Japan's control of Korea which he said he understood was what we approved."⁵⁰

With these direct and indirect communications of Roosevelt's attitude toward Japanese control over Korea, the Japanese government officially announced its future plans for Korea to the American government, stating that it would be obliged "to place Korea entirely within the sphere of the Japanese influence and to assume the complete control over the destiny of Korea."⁵¹ In July 1905, Japan sought official approval of the powers for its new course of arrangement concerning Korea which was to make it a full protectorate. It should be noted that the U.S. declared its support for Japan's seizure of Korea prior to Great Britain and Russia. The instrument that clearly defined U.S. acceptance of the new status-quo in Korea is known to history as the Taft-Katsura Agreement of July 1905.

In July 1905, Roosevelt sent William H. Taft, the Secretary of War, to Tokyo to express U.S. approval of Japan's actions in Korea. Taft was another close associate whom Roosevelt held in complete personal confidence. Before sending Taft to Japan, Roosevelt informed him what he intended to do about the Korean problem. "I heartily agree with the Japanese terms of peace, insofar as they include Japan having the control over Korea," he told the Secretary of War.⁵² Taft

⁴⁹ Kennan to Roosevelt, Mar. 30, 1905, TR MSS.

⁵⁰ Lodge to Roosevelt, June 29, 1905, TR MSS.

⁵¹ Katsura to Takahira, June 26, 1905, confidential, Notes, Japan, (microfilm, M-163).

⁵² Roosevelt to Taft, Apr. 20, 1905, TR MSS.

successfully carried out his role, acknowledging that the U.S. approve of Japan's seizure of control over Korea, which Taft expressed in an "agreed memorandum of conversation."⁵³ This official record of a confidential conversation between Katsura, the Japanese Prime Minister, and Taft was signed on July 27, 1905. Katsura further suggested that the two sign another document that would render Korea's new status a logical consequences of the war. Japan was "constrained to take some definite step" to prevent Korea from reverting to her former condition, a vassal of China, or even worse, seek independence or autonomy of any type. Thereupon Taft admitted "the justness of the count's observations" and added:

the establishment by Japanese troops of a suzerainty over Korea to the extent of requiring that Korea enter into no foreign treaties without the consent of Japan was the logical result of the present war and would directly contribute to permanent peace in the east.⁵⁴

Roosevelt immediately demonstrated his approval of Taft's work by replying: "your conversation with Count Katsura was absolutely correct in every aspect. Wish you would state to Katsura that I confirm every word you have said."⁵⁵

While the Taft-Katsura Agreement was regarded by Japan as an official action that acknowledged Japan's control over Korea, Roosevelt's personal diplomacy actually defined America's policy toward Korea in 1905. Taft's diplomatic mission was not known to—or deliberately kept secret from—the State Department and all other parts of the United States government. Before Taft arrived in Japan, Assistant Secretary of the State Department Herbert H. D. Peirce sent a telegram to Lloyd Griscom, the American Minister to Japan. In it he stated: "[The]President feels that it would be advisable, especially in view of the Peace negotiations, [at Portsmouth] that Secretary Taft's visit to Japan should be of as *informal a character* as possible."⁵⁶ As Beale has accurately pointed out, the Taft-Katsura Agreement was a product of Roosevelt's personal diplomacy. No record of the

⁵³ Taft to Root, Jul. 29, 1905, enclosed in Rudolph Forster, Assistant Secretary to B. Barnes, Acting Secretary to the President, TR MSS.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Roosevelt to Taft, Telegram, Jul. 31, 1905, TR MSS.

⁵⁶ Peirce to Griscom, Telegram, Jul. 9, 1905, Instruction, Japan (M-77), italics are mine.

agreement was left in the State Department; neither Secretary of State Elihu Root nor Minister Griscom, knew anything about this until later.⁵⁷

The Taft-Katsura Agreement was the most explicit action by the U.S. government that demonstrated its support for Japan on the Korean issue. Washington had adopted a new policy toward north-east Asia based on Japanese-American cooperation.⁵⁸ This explicit understanding between the two powers hastened Korea's fate. Katsura had been assured that America's East Asian policy was in full accord with Japan's foreign policy, stating: "The only means for accomplishing [peace of the East Asia] would be to form a good understanding between the three governments of Japan, the United States, and Great Britain," and "an alliance in practice if not in name should be made . . . insofar as respects the affairs of the Far East."⁵⁹ The Japanese newspaper *Kokumin* emphasized that the "agreed memorandum" in effect implied a practical alliance that was a part of a larger diplomatic understanding between Japan and the United States:

In fact, it is a Japanese Anglo-American alliance. We may be sure that when once England became our ally, America also became a party to the agreement. Owing to peculiar national conditions, America cannot make any open alliance, but we should bear in mind that America is our ally though bound by no formal treaty: we firmly believe that America, under the leadership of the world statesman, president Roosevelt, will deal with her Oriental problems in cooperation with Japan and Great Britain.⁶⁰

According to the *Kokumin*, the Taft-Katsura Agreement was a part of a *quid pro quo* guarantee of U.S. policy in the Philippines. Besides

⁵⁷ Root was on vacation to Newfoundland during the time of Taft's mission in Japan. Beale, pp. 157–58; Philip Jessup, *Elihu Root*, vol. 2 (New York: Dodd and Mead, 1938), pp. 5–6.

⁵⁸ Regarding the nature of the Taft-Katsura Agreement (Memorandum), scholars' views are split into two groups. While Esthus and Jessup explain that it was not a legal agreement but only an "exchange of views," Beale, Dennett, Griswold, and Chay shared the view that it was an "executive agreement." See Esthus, "The Taft-Katsura Agreement, Reality or Myth?", *Journal of Modern History* 31 (March 1959): 46–51; Jessup, *Elihu Root*, 2:406; Beale, p. 235; Tyler Dennett, "President Roosevelt's Secret Pact with Japan," *Current History* 21 (October 1924): 15–21; Griswold, pp. 125–26; Jongsuk Chay, "The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered," *Pacific Historical Review* 37 (August 1968): 321–26.

⁵⁹ Roosevelt to Spring-Rice, Nov. 1, 1905, TR MSS.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, p. 115.

his racial attitudes toward Korea, Roosevelt's motivation for creating the Taft-Katsura Agreement represented an effort to gain Japanese approval of American imperialism in the Philippines, he claimed that the statement was "merely to clear up Japan's attitude," about U.S. involvement in Asian affairs.⁶¹ Concerning the Korean issue, too, he remarked, "Our position could not have been stated with greater accuracy."⁶² Roosevelt wrote to his British friend Cecil Spring-Rice that "By my direction, Taft reiterated . . . in a talk with the Japanese Prime Minister, Katsura, saying specifically that we entirely approved of the Japanese position about Korea as set forth in the Anglo-Japanese treaty, and as acknowledged in the treaty of Portsmouth."⁶³ To Roosevelt, the implication of the Taft-Katsura agreement was of equal importance with the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance and with the Portsmouth Peace Treaty in terms of the international arrangement regarding Korea. He "approved" of Japan's complete control over Korea, as the Russians and British did in their treaties.⁶⁴

Whether or not the Taft-Katsura Agreement should be regarded as an official agreement between Washington and Tokyo, it certainly provided the most significant turning point in U.S.-Korean relations. The secret agreement between the U.S. and Japan was indeed "Korea's death warrant."⁶⁵ An undisputed view regarding the future status of Korea was exchanged and confirmed between the two high officials of the U.S. and Japan governments. Washington had decided not to comply with the "good office" clause in the American-Korean Treaty of 1882.⁶⁶ The successful strategy of Japanese-American coop-

⁶¹ Roosevelt to Taft, Oct. 7, 1905, TR MSS.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Roosevelt to Spring-Rice, Nov. 1, 1905, TR MSS.

⁶⁴ Jongsuk Chay, "The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered," p. 325.

⁶⁵ Robert T. Oliver, *Syngman Rhee: The Man Behind the Myth* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1954; reprint ed. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973), p. 84.

⁶⁶ The decision that the "good office" could not be applied to the case of Korea was already made within the circle of State Department officials. When Japan forced the Korean government right after the outbreak of the war to conclude the Japanese-Korean Protocol on February, 1904, Alvey Adee sent a note to Hay for diplomatic instruction to Allen; "Not necessary to cable text of Japanese-Korean agreement. You will observe absolute neutrality," which was telegraphed to Allen on Feb. 23, 1904. [Hay to Allen, Feb. 23, 1904, Instruction, Korea (M-77)] In the same memo, the text that was not telegraphed read; "The United States can have no concern in the proposed arrangement which necessarily would exclude consideration of Article one of our Korean treaty." This statement shows that the American official was concerned, partially at least, with legal obligation of the Treaty of 1882.

eration in East Asia found its origins in commercial interests in Manchuria, Roosevelt's pro-Japanese attitudes based on his beliefs in civilization, and growing U.S. commitments in Asia. In Roosevelt's mind, these factors combined rendered former obligations to Korea, specifically the treaty of 1882, obsolete.⁶⁷

The Taft-Katsura Agreement in July was followed by the conclusion of the second Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Portsmouth Peace Conference, each of which officially approved Japanese control over Korea by Great Britain and Russia respectively. On November 8, Takahira visited Roosevelt and they discussed whether Japan desired the withdrawal of the American Legation from Korea. Takahira replied by asking the President to wait for the results of Ito Hirobumi's mission to Korea before receiving an answer to this question. It was in Korea for the negotiation of the Protectorate treaty between Japan and Korea.⁶⁸ As soon as the Protectorate Treaty was forcibly concluded on November 17, 1905,⁶⁹ Komura, the Japanese Foreign Minister, told William Rockhill, then American Minister to China, that "although Japan would not request the powers to withdraw their legations from Seoul, if the President saw proper to withdraw the Legation of the United States, the Japanese will consider it proof of great friendship."⁷⁰ In Washington, Takahira made the same request to Root and Root replied that he would take proper measures after a discussion with the President.⁷¹ On the very next day, November 24, Root sent a telegram to Morgan, the American Minister to Korea, and instructed him to oversee the withdrawal of the American Legation from Korea.⁷² The U.S. had wasted little time acknowledging Japan's domination of Korea.

⁶⁷ For explanation of American policy from this perspective, see John Wilz, "Did the United States Betray Korea in 1905," *Pacific Historical Review* 54 (August 1985): 243-70.

⁶⁸ Takahira to Katsura, Telegram, Nov. 11, 1905, *NGB*, vol. 38-1, p. 530.

⁶⁹ Korean historians' recent works on the Protectorate treaty argue that the treaty did not satisfy several conditions as a treaty and therefore was null and void from the first. See Tae-jin Lee, ed. *Japan's Forcible Occupation of the Empire of Korea* (Seoul: Kachi, 1995). (in Korean).

⁷⁰ Rockhill to Root, Telegram, Nov. 22, 1905, Despatches, China (M-92).

⁷¹ Takahira to Katsura, Telegram, Nov. 23, 1905, *NGB*, vols. 38-1, p. 548.

⁷² Root to Morgan, Telegram, Nov. 24, 1905, *Foreign Relations*, 1905, p. 631.

Peace Terms and the "Yale Symposium"

In October 1904, Anson Phelps Stokes, then the secretary of Yale University, received a letter from Rev. Barnabas Sakai Tukutaro, Stokes' "old Harvard Episcopal Theological friend," who was serving as an aide to the Kaneko mission to the U.S. In the letter, Sakai asked Stokes, "What is the feeling or sentiment among the learned scholars in New Haven as to what terms of peace Japan should make etc.?"⁷³ Considering the request "so important," Stokes replied he would consult with "two or three of the Yale professors," and on the same day he sent duplicate letters to Professor F. Wells Williams, Assistant Professor of Oriental History, and Professor Theodore S. Woolsey, Professor of International Law at Yale.⁷⁴

A week later, Stokes received the professor's opinions on "Principles to govern the *maximum demand* of Japan in a treaty of peace with Russia, if the military situation warrants," and "Terms of Peace." Among the suggested opinion, the articles relating to Korea read as follow: "Japan has fairly earned the right to paramount influence in Korea, by reason of her sacrifice to prevent the Russification of Korea" "So far as is consistent with the foregoing principles the commercial development of all powers, including Russia, should be favored in Manchuria and in Korea, both to forestall European intervention and to evidence Japan's unselfish desire to foster the world's progress"; and in the suggested "Terms of Peace," "Japan to establish such protectorate or other control over Korea as the way the two may agree upon, to cover the latter's military, political and commercial development, with a fortified naval base at Fusan or thereabouts to protect the Japanese littoral."⁷⁵ Among the suggested articles for the "Terms of Peace," Korea was not even regarded as a "fairly debatable" issue.⁷⁶

Yet Woosley asserted they "of course cannot speak for the faculty of the University. We only give our individual views." He added

⁷³ Sakai to Stokes, Oct. 3, 1904, Anson Phelps Stokes Paper, Yale University Library.

⁷⁴ Stokes to Sakai, Oct. 7, 1904, *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Enclosed in Stokes to Sakai, Oct. 14, 1904, *Ibid.* Emphases are original.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* The three important matters which must be covered by a treaty of peace but fairly debatable, as Woosely and Williams noted, included 1) No money indemnity 2) No cession Siberia territory to Japan; and 3) The disposition of the Russian railway property in Manchuria, which was the most difficult point of all.

“our points of views are somewhat different” though the “conclusions are in the main so nearly identical.”⁷⁷ The “Yale Symposium,” however, was cheerfully promoted by the Japanese. As soon as he received the letters from Stokes, Sakai showed them to Kaneko and then handed them to Komura, who was chief Japanese representative at Portsmouth.⁷⁸ Whether or not these suggestions from the two Yale professors had “a very great influence on the terms of the Portsmouth Treaty” for Japan,⁷⁹ Kaneko managed to use them in a different way. Kaneko wrote to Roosevelt of the “Yale Symposium:”

In accordance with my personal request to a friend, the *representative member of the Yale Faculty* had formulated for me their opinions regarding the terms of peace which Japan should suggest in case she is in position to do so. In so acting, I understood, several gentlemen in that institution who are thoroughly conversant with the condition in the East held a private gathering and made the joint statement which, I was told, can be regarded as the views *governing the sentiment of the majority of the professors of that learned society*. In the view of a possible peace with Russia, the statement is highly significant . . .⁸⁰

Though there is no record of Roosevelt response to the “Yale Symposium,” it is hardly difficult to imagine that the President was quite satisfied with these suggestions from the two Yale Professors, since they were mostly in accordance with his own opinions on the peace terms.⁸¹ More important, Roosevelt believed that Japan’s policy toward Korea was acceptable to the American public. The President had good reason to believe Kaneko’s misleading statement about the results of the Yale symposium. As is the case to this day, it is not usual for U.S. political leaders to listen to the sage wisdom of ivy league academics.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the U.S. was becoming one of the major powers in East Asia as well as in the world. As

⁷⁷ Woolsey to Stokes, Oct. 14, 1904, *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Sakai to Stokes, Mar. 17, 1934, *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*; Stokes to Griscom, Jan. 12, 1943, *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Kaneko to Roosevelt, Feb. 9, 1905, TR MSS. Italics are mine.

⁸¹ According to Sakai’s letter to Stokes, Kaneko had showed the Yale suggestions to President Roosevelt. Sakai to Stokes, Feb. 14, 1905, Stokes MSS.

the creator of the Open Door policy in China, the U.S. had vigilantly monitored the development of the East Asian political situation. With the emergence of the power combination of Great Britain and Japan, the situation seemed less unpredictable mainly because the two allied powers were believed to support the Open Door policy in China. Under these circumstances, Japan was perceived to be standing in the forefront to fight against Russia for the sake of securing American interests in the Chinese market. Not surprisingly, the Russo-Japanese war was viewed as Japan "playing America's game."

The framework of Japanese-American cooperation was an explicit product of the general goals and perceptions of American policy-makers, who were overwhelmingly preoccupied with commercial opportunities through the Open Door policy; who refused responsible political and military commitments to achieve the perceived interests; and who desired or expected their perceived interests in the Chinese market to be secured because Japan seemed to support the principle of the Open Door policy. In this sense, the framework of Japanese-American cooperation was a logical extension of American East Asian policy. It is equally important not to overlook the role of imperialistic thinking that was possessed by foreign policy-makers of Washington. Roosevelt, for instance, played a dominant role in the formulation and the conduct of foreign policy. He had strong beliefs concerning racial differentiation and unequal standards of civilization. He thought that a so-called "inferior race" like the Koreans should be under the control of a "civilized race" like the Japanese. As much as he was a racist, he was also pro-Japanese, mainly because the Japanese fit into his category of a "civilized race." Therefore, his interpretation of the East Asian international politics was not contradictory to his belief-system.

In the long run, Roosevelt's East Asian policy after 1903 focussed on Japanese-American cooperation in the hope that the United States would profit from Japan's control of Manchuria. Roosevelt and his colleagues in Washington never considered a policy of active political or military commitment in East Asian affairs; they had neither the will or the capability for such adventurism. Instead, U.S. East Asian policy was rather a product of wishful expectation for securing American commercial interests by Japan's assurance. The situation in East Asia after the war, however, particularly in Manchuria, did not develop as the U.S. policy-makers had expected in the framework of Japanese-American cooperation: indeed, Japanese policy in

Manchuria evolved to exclude foreign powers, somewhat similar to Russia's actions before the war. Accordingly, American commercial access to the Chinese market was blocked as Japan attempted to monopolize control over the region, and American trade in Manchuria declined after 1906.⁸² Moreover, Japan actually divided Manchuria into two spheres of interest through a secret agreement with Russia in 1907. The principle of the Open Door policy was never realized in China and remained only a "myth."⁸³ America's Korea policy was another facet of imperialistic policy in the era of imperialism.

⁸² Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp. 108–9; Trani, pp. 158–59.

⁸³ Paul Varg, *The Making of a Myth: The United States and China, 1897–1912* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1968).

THE MISCELLANY AND MIXED: THE WAR AND CHINESE NATIONALISM

Li Anshan*

By the early twentieth century the de facto partition of China was proceeding relentlessly as the major powers grabbed its land or laid claim to exclusive territorial spheres of influence. Britain was consolidating its base in Guangdong, the Yangzi River area, and Tibet. France took Guangxi, Yunnan, and Hainan, while Germany asserted control over Liaodong. Japan, already in occupation of Taiwan, was now intensifying its economic penetration of central China as well as its coastal regions. The United States took the advantage of the “open door” policy to compete with earlier comers. Under cover of the allied army’s invasion of Peking during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, Russia occupied the northeastern provinces (Manchuria), and then refused to withdraw. This caused the great “Ju E” (Resistance against Russia) protest movement in China, especially among students.¹

The sense of crisis intensified when the Russo-Japanese War started *within* China, a theoretically sovereign state. Because of this as well as the surprising victory of Japan, the war shocked Chinese intellectuals. How was it possible for Japan, a small Asian country, to defeat Russia, a big European power? The answer to this question was vital if they were to understand how to go about strengthening their own obviously weakening nation. Through an analysis of *Dongfang*

* I would like to thank Dr. Wang Chaoguang, senior fellow of the Institute of Modern Chinese History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, for helping me find some materials, and Professor Steven G. Marks, for offering some suggestions in revision. All the errors, of course, remain mine.

¹ This explained why, when the Russo-Japanese War started, most of the Chinese stood on the side of Japan. One of the communist pioneers, Wu Yuzhang, described his experience of the Ju-E movement while in Japan as a student, recalling in his memoirs that “the movement was going on for a long time. After the Russo-Japanese War started in February 1904, people sympathized with Japan because of their hatred towards Tsarist Russia. When they heard of the Japanese victories, they were very happy. How naïve and ridiculous from today’s viewpoint! Both were imperialists and both enemies that invaded China.” Wu Yuzhang, *Xinhai Geming* [The 1911 Revolution] (Beijing, 1969), 55–59.

Zazhi (The Eastern Miscellany), a highly influential journal of international affairs at the time,² this paper assesses the impact of the Russo-Japanese War on Chinese nationalism, a subject heretofore neglected by Chinese and Western scholarship.³ It will argue that Chinese nationalism of a new type emerged in this period, directly related to the war and the consequent ambivalence that developed toward Japan, China's once weak and now strong neighbor.

Coverage of the War

The Eastern Miscellany was published by Shangwu Yingshu Guang (The Commercial Press) and was the most-read journal of international affairs in China in the early twentieth century. Founded by seven Chinese Christians in 1897, the Commercial Press played a very important role in the introduction of Western ideas to China through the publication of periodicals and books, including many translations of European works. Among their various journals, the most prominent was *The Eastern Miscellany*, which was first issued in 1904 and ceased publication in 1948—its forty-five-year uninterrupted

² The materials used in this paper are mainly from the first three volumes of the journal (1904–1906), but it was published until 1948. In 1910 it became the largest journal in the country with a circulation of 15,000. Aside from editorials written by the journal's staff, many important articles from other papers were also reprinted therein, making it an important source for contemporary intellectual trends in general.

³ Few of the recent studies on Chinese nationalism touch on this subject. See Tang Wenquan, *Juexing yu Miwu: Zhongguo Jindai Minzu Zhuyi Sichao Yanjiu* [A Study of the Ideology of Nationalism in Modern China], (Shanghai, 1993); Tao Shu, *Wan Qing Minzu Zhuyi Sichao* [The Ideology of Nationalism in the Late Qing Era] (Beijing, 1995); Luo Fuhui, ed., *Zhongguo Minzu Zhuyi Sixiang Lungao* [A Tentative Study of the Ideology of Chinese Nationalism], (Wuhan, 1996); Wang Lixin, *Meiguo Dui Hua Zhengce yu Zhongguo Minzu Zhuyi Yundong (1904–1928)* [American China Policy and Chinese Nationalism] (Beijing, 2000); Luo Zhitian, *Luan Shi Qian Liu: Minzu Zhuyi yu Minguo Zhengzhi* [Nationalism and Politics in the Republic Period] (Shanghai, 2001); Yang Sixing, *Wenhua Minzu Zhuyi yu Jindai Zhongguo* [Cultural Nationalism and Modern China] (Beijing, 2003). Jonathan Spence, a guru of modern Chinese history, discusses Chinese nationalism of the period, but fails to mention the significant role of the war in his classic *In Search of Modern China* (New York, 1999), 229–36. Similarly with John E. Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism: Germany in Shantung* (Cambridge, MA, 1971). Germaine Hoston, *State, Identity, and the National Question in China and Japan* (Princeton, 1994), is an exception in treating the impact of the war on Chinese nationalism.

run making it an unusual phenomenon in the history of the modern Chinese press.⁴

The journal was modeled after the British *Review of Reviews* and the Japanese *Sun*. The aim was clearly stated in the first issue: “the guiding principle of the journal is to enlighten the Chinese people and to establish [intellectual] contact with East Asia.”⁵ Each issue included editorials and book reviews and covered news of imperial decrees, domestic affairs, warfare and diplomacy, education, finance, business, transportation, religion, and public lectures. Its audience was made up mainly of intellectuals, and the political orientation changed over time. But during and immediately after the Russo-Japanese War, it advocated a constitutional monarchy, which corresponded to the views of the majority of the population.

Coincidentally, *The Eastern Miscellany* and Russo-Japanese War both began in the same year. The journal was launched on March 11, 1904, one month after the start of the conflict, and from then on it kept a close watch on all aspects of the war. Various photographs appeared on the front pages of each issue, including those of important political and military figures, war scenes, and military uniforms. Images of Emperor Meiji Tennō and Czar Nicholas II appeared in the first issue and numerous other individuals thereafter. All told from the first issue of March 11, 1904 through the eighth issue of the second year (September 23, 1905), there appeared thirty-nine photographs of Japanese figures and fourteen of Russians. Among the former were Minister of Defense General Nogi, General Yoshitsugu Tatekawa, Admiral Uriu, Admiral Togo, and captains of Japanese battleships.⁶ Among the Russians were Empress Alexandra and the

⁴ Next to this, the most successful periodicals of the Commercial Press were *Jiaoyu Zazhi* (The Educational Review, 1909–1948), *Xiaoshuo Yuebao* (Novel Monthly, 1910–1932), and *Xuesheng Zazhi* (The Student's Magazine, 1914–1947. The Chinese name of the magazine was changed in 1920 while its English name remained the same, and the magazine was interrupted twice, in 1931–37 and 1941–43). It also published a series of Chinese and Western classics, and became the largest publisher in China in the Republic period. See *Shangwu Yinshu Guang Yi Bai Nian, 1897–1997* [Centenary of the Commercial Press] (Beijing, 1998).

⁵ *Dongfang Zazhi*, *Sheshuo*, 1:1 (1904), 1. At the end of 1903, the founder of the press, Xia Ruifang, proposed the journal. First named *Dong Ya Zazhi* [East Asia Journal], the title was soon changed to *Dongfang Zazhi* [Eastern Miscellany] to avoid repetition of the name of a journal run by the German Council in Shanghai. Chen Jianmin, *Zhi Min zhi Meng: Zhang Yuanji Zhuan* [The Dream of Enlightening the People: A Biography of Zhang Yuanji] (Chengdu, 1995), 123.

⁶ For photographs of eight Japanese captains appearing in one issue, see *Dongfang Zazhi*, 2:7 (1905).

main military commanders: Kuropatkin, Makarov, Stoessel, Linevich, Rozhdestvenskii, etc. Illustrations of warfare were also routinely featured, for example the battles of Jingzhou and the Japanese Sea; in the case of the latter, drawings showed Japanese soldiers launching a torpedo against Russian ships. Also depicted were wrecked Russian ships, the retreat of Russian troops from Jiulian to the city of Fenghuang (Phoenix), the Japanese attack on Fushun, and a Japanese officer visiting captured Russian officers in the hospital. One illustration featured a Russian and a Japanese officer falling into the water in the midst of hand-to-hand combat!

Along with images of war, the journal devoted a special section of each issue to a "Summary of Russo-Japanese Military Affairs." The first one discussed the declaration of war, the Korean battlefields, Russian defensive measures, the number of Russian soldiers in Lüxhun, Japanese defenses, and the neutrality of China, among other related matters. Military engagements were subsequently covered in great detail, for instance in the seventh issue the battles of Gaiping, Xihezhi, Dashiqiao, Ximucheng, and Lüxhun (Port Arthur).⁷ There were reports and analyses of every other imaginable aspect of the war, from newly appointed officers to troop maneuvers, from the diplomacy of the great powers to Russian and Japanese defense finance, from the rising power of "yellow Asia" to the tragic death of 600 Russian sailors aboard the battleship "Petropavlovsk" after it had been struck by a mine.⁸

The extensive and visual coverage of the war in this journal read so avidly by the educated segments of society ensured that it would be uppermost in their thoughts. The stimulation of nationalist sentiments in China that resulted provides an example of the crucial role of the mass media in the development of modern intellectual movements around the world.

Shame and Blame

China's image changed over time. The Western perception of Chinese civilization had gone from sheer admiration to contemptuousness.⁹

⁷ *Dongfang Zhazhi*, 1:7 (1904), 292–96.

⁸ "On the Change of the Russo-Japanese War Situation after the Death of Makarov," *Dongfang Zhazhi*, Junshi (Military), 1:3 (1904), 137–40.

⁹ See Raymond Dawson, *The Chinese Chameleon: An Analysis of European Conceptions*

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, China had lost elements of its sovereignty in a number of wars with imperialist powers. For Chinese intellectuals the Russo-Japanese War was a typical example of this predicament: this war, fought in China to decide which power would end up occupying it, was an unforgettable humiliation for the entire populace. Of course, the situation was nothing new. Even before the war, the Russians and Japanese maneuvered to gain the advantage over each other in China.¹⁰ After Russian troops occupied the northeast in 1900, the tsarist government came under pressure from the Japanese and their new British allies to withdraw by late 1903.¹¹ However, despite its promises and treaty obligations, the Russian government showed no intention of following through.¹²

But the war itself imposed overt suffering on the Chinese people, despite their government's neutrality in the conflict, as Russia and Japan decided to settle their differences in China without consulting the "host" nation.¹³ To add insult to injury both Russian and Japanese troops put pressure on local officials and the populace to support their war efforts. For example, Russian officers once threatened to punish the people of Haicheng if they refused to provide carts for Russian troops.¹⁴ They disregarded their treaty obligations, ordered local Chinese administrators around, and even killed Chinese citizens.¹⁵

of Chinese Civilization (London, 1967), especially 90–154. Also see Upton Close (Josef Washington Hall), *The Revolt of Asia: The End of the White Man's World Dominance* (New York, 1927).

¹⁰ John Albert White, *The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War* (Princeton, 1964), 11–49, 76–94. See also Guan Xunxia & Wan Anzhong, "A Tentative Study of the Rivalry of Russia and Japan in China before the Russo-Japanese War," *Shi Xue Yue Kan* [Historical Studies Monthly], no. 3 (1994), 99–104.

¹¹ Huang Yuebo, Yu Nengmo & Bao Liren, eds., *Zhong Wai Tiaoyue Huibian* [A Collection of Treaties between China and Foreign Countries], (Shanghai, 1935), 354–55.

¹² See White, *Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War*, 50–75, and Igor Lukoianov, "The Bezobrazovtsy," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, ed. John W. Steinberg et al. (Leiden, 2005), 65–86.

¹³ "The leaders of both nations might well have pondered the circumstance that not all the wars which the West had fought with China had wrung from her an acceptance of equality. Yet up to the time of the Russo-Japanese War, the anxious counsels of the few statesmen in both countries who did not see these things fell on deaf ears." Ernest Batson Price, *The Russo-Japanese Treaties of 1907–1916 Concerning Manchuria and Mongolia* (Baltimore, 1933), 17.

¹⁴ Liaoling Provincial Archives, ed., *Ri E Zhangzheng Dang-an Shiliao* [Archival Historical Data of the Russo-Japanese War] (Liaoling, 1995), document 86, p. 141.

¹⁵ Cu Qing, "The Government must not give up," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:3 (1904), 41–44.

The Japanese, for their part, treated China as if it were their own nation, seeking to collect import-export duties at the railroad station in Yingkou, training Chinese militia to fight side by side with them against the Russians, and arresting and torturing Chinese local officials.¹⁶ Both Russia and Japan pressured China to take their side against the other.¹⁷

All this outraged the Chinese intelligentsia and inflamed their nationalist passions. Qiu Jin, a famous female revolutionary, wrote an explicitly nationalistic poem in 1905, in which she expressed anger at the unjust war that “sacrificed the blood of a hundred of thousand heads in order to change the world.”¹⁸ Liu Yazi, another prominent social activist, also condemned the war and expressed a strong patriotism in a poem of his own.¹⁹ Zhou En-lai, the future premier of the People’s Republic of China, learned his first lesson of patriotism at the battlefields of the Russo-Japanese War, where innocent Chinese suffered greatly at the hands of foreign soldiers.²⁰

That this was a national tragedy was without question. But who was to blame—Chinese emperor or corrupt officials, the autocratic political system or the obsolescence of China’s historical legacy, the Chinese people or foreign powers?²¹ And even more pressing was the question of what China should do in order to regain its lost face and national strength.

¹⁶ See the special section “Damages on the Chinese Side,” in Liaoning Provincial Archives, ed., *Ri E Zhangzheng Dang-an Shiliao*, documents 150–272 (especially 85, 112, 113, 117), pp. 289–470.

¹⁷ “On the Chinese Situation,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:3 (1904), 47–50.

¹⁸ Qiu Jin, “To Inscribe *Jiangshan Wanli Tu* and to Answer a Japanese Request for My Poem,” in Qiu Jin, *Qiu jin Quan ji Jianzhu* [Notes and Commentary on the Complete Works of Qiu jin], ed. Guo Changhai and Guo Junxi (Changchun, 2003), 171–172.

¹⁹ Liu Yazi, “To Inscribe *Zhang Changshui Collection*,” in *Liu Yazi Shi Xuan* [Selected Poems by Liu Yazi], ed. Xu Wenlie, with commentary by Liu Sihan (Guangzhou, 1981), 8–9.

²⁰ Chae-Jin-Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years* (Stanford, 1994), 26, 27.

²¹ It would be simplistic to presume that the contemporary Chinese only blamed the Qing dynasty for the depressive situation. “Western analysts, then and now, have debated how seriously imperialism actually disrupted the Chinese economy and social system. There can be no debate, however, on how acutely Chinese of all classes felt the foreign threat and blamed the reigning Qing (Manchu) dynasty for its failure to meet it.” William G. Rosenberg and Marilyn B. Young, *Transforming Russia and China: Revolutionary Struggle in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1982), 74.

Some attributed China's weaknesses to the slow development of patriotic feeling. Since the mid-1800s, China had made concessions and suffered failure whenever it dealt with foreign countries. Why? "Though government officials should be blamed, another reason is that Chinese nationalism was not fully developed."²² "Having realized that its treasury is in deficit, its armed forces vulnerable, its diplomacy failing, the autocratic court is ready to give up anything in order to keep its title and position. The court officials have no patriotic sentiment, and the common people know nothing about national affairs (if living under a constitutional state, they would surely think of the way to self-salvation). Therefore China is divided, and foreign powers plan to bolster their armed forces so that they will not lag behind their rivals in the partition of China."²³ In the view of *The Eastern Miscellany*, it was thus impossible for the isolated Qing government, without the support of a Chinese nationalist movement, to confront foreign countries, in whose lands nationalism was fully developed, inspirational, and mobilized to the full by governments. The war, however, was seen as a turning point and an opportunity for the Chinese to stand up, to "guard our territory and strengthen our race."²⁴

*"Huang Zhong Jiang Xing" (The Yellow Race Will Rise)*²⁵

The war also shattered the myth of the superiority of the white race and held out hopes that the yellow race would one day be restored as master of the East.²⁶

"Universe," "Middle Kingdom" and the "people under the heaven" were the age-old self-perceptions of the Chinese. Now other nations had risen and the Chinese began to realize the bitter fact that they were not at the center of the universe and that other nations held

²² "On the Applicability of Chinese Morale," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:9 (1905), 183-84.

²³ "On the Yellow Peril," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:2 (1904), 35.

²⁴ Zhong You, "On the Applicability of Chinese Morale," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 5.

²⁵ From the title "Congratulations, the Yellow Race Will Rise," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 15.

²⁶ Xian Xiansheng, "On the Seriousness of China's Responsibility," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 3-5.

them in contempt as one of the backward “yellow race.” Given the hierarchy of races in the contemporary European worldview²⁷ plenty of justification existed for the white colonization of Asia.²⁸

But in China as elsewhere in the non-Western world the Russo-Japanese War dealt a blow to European racist theory,²⁹ which would have predicted the victory of the white power in a major military conflict such as this one. “Since the five continents started communication, the white race has been bullying the world, e.g. the red, the black, and the brown races, and the yellow race was nibbled at by the white as well. . . . Yet in the Russo-Japanese War, Russia, with a size advantage of forty times the territory and three times the population . . . was beaten by small Japan. The old theory of race no longer holds water. We yellow people can defend ourselves and stand up with pride.”³⁰ Russia’s defeat at the hands of Japan greatly encouraged Chinese intellectuals, who saw in it a means of persuading their disheartened fellow countrymen that China would rise again in the future—if only it learned the proper lessons from their racial brethren the Japanese. This strategy was evident from the very first issue of *The Eastern Miscellany*, whose “Sheshuo,” or editorial, column in nearly every article reversed the previously normal usage of the term “yellow race”: once derogatory, it was now applied with pride to describe the victorious Japanese and, in their company, the Chinese people.³¹ And its articles attacked Western fears of the “yellow peril” as emanations of white prejudice.³²

Beginning with the pivotal battle of Lüxhun, which was regarded as “the first instance of the white race being humiliated by the yellow

²⁷ On which see, for example, P. Bowler, *The Invention of Progress*, Oxford, 1989; M. Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classic Civilization*, vol. 1 (London, 1987); J. M. Blaut, “The Theory of Cultural Racism,” *Antipode*, 24:4 (1992), 289–99.

²⁸ See J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer’s Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (Guilford Press, 1993), chap. 2 and *passim*.

²⁹ Steven G. Marks, “Bravo, Brave Tiger of the East! The War and the Rise of Nationalism in British Egypt and India,” in *Russo-Japanese War*, ed., Steinberg, 609–628.

³⁰ Zhong You, “On the Applicability of Chinese Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 5.

³¹ See, for example, “Congratulations: the Yellow Race Will Rise,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904); “The Competition between the Yellow Race and the White Race in History,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 3:13 (1907).

³² “On the Yellow Peril,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:2 (1904); “An Argument against the Yellow Peril Theory,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:2 (1905).

race,”³³ the war was seen as a struggle between Asia and Europe, the yellow and white races, autocracy (Russia) and constitutionalism (Japan). Which was better, which was stronger, which was doomed and which destined to glory? These were the questions whose answers were obvious in light of the war’s outcome. “We surely would not state that we prefer the victory of Europe and the failure of Asia, the growth of the white race and the decline of the yellow race, the success of the autocratic political system that has exploited us and the failure of the constitutional political system that favors us.”³⁴ Thanks to Japan the Chinese nation could see clearly that its suffering and humiliation were not due to their race but to the oppressions of an autocratic power. Only with that realization might China take the steps necessary to once again become masters in their own realm.³⁵

As evidenced by these writings, Chinese intellectuals were conflating “race” and “nation.” The logic of this thinking was as follows: the war proved that white racist theories were invalid. If the Japanese could be strong so could the Chinese as members of the same race; if Japan as a nation could rise to greatness so could China. The publishers of *The Eastern Miscellany* were not merely expressing thrill at the successes of a fellow Asian nation, but seeking nothing less than the renovation of their country. And they were enunciating a strategy with which to realize this cherished dream: mobilize the nationalist impulses of the masses by harping on the existence of racial enemies. This strategy was not new to China, but was a common feature of political power in the twentieth century. European imperialists justified their colonizing activities through racial theory; Adolf Hitler stoked racial animosities to secure power in Germany and launch World War II; Japanese nationalism utilized derogatory perceptions of the “Chinaman” (Zhina Ren); Afrikaaner nationalist ideology in South Africa rested on views of the inferiority of blacks.

³³ “On the Yellow Peril,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:2 (1904), 34–36.

³⁴ Bieshi, “On the Relation of the Sino-Japanese Division and Unity,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 1–3. The article recalled the history of the Japan’s resistance against the invasion of the Yuan (the Mongols) and praised the Japanese for protecting their cultural heritage. The author argued that the fight against the Russians was the result of continuity and “past resistance against the Yuan.”

³⁵ “On the Perceptible Opportunity of China’s Promising Future,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:3 (1904), 53–56.

Not only the oppressors adopted the strategy, but so did their opponents, for instance the leaders of African anti-colonial struggles: the Zulu thinker Anton Muziwakhe Lembede tried to use Africanism to unite the blacks in South Africa behind the nationalist movement.³⁶ Leopold Sedar Senghor touted “black beauty” or “Negritude” to inspire his people.³⁷ Kwame Nkrumah formulated a Pan-African ideology for the same purpose.³⁸ What developed among the Chinese intelligentsia leadership was a similar but earlier phenomenon. And although the meaning of the expression “yellow race” was obscure, yet the people and the intelligentsia alike latched onto it, for it gave the Chinese a sense of hope and self-esteem in a world where the strong seemed to be swallowing the weak.

“*Junzi Gui Minqi*” (*Gentlemen Cherish the People’s Morale*)³⁹

In accord with this embryonic nationalist strategy, one of the important issues discussed in *The Eastern Miscellany* was the popular morale,⁴⁰ which it felt should be encouraged, inspired, and strengthened so as to “guard our territory and expand our race.”⁴¹ What they meant by this term was never accurately defined, but according to Liang Qichao, one of the leading reformists at the time, only when “national pride” and the “people’s rights” are non-violable can we speak of “the people’s morale,”⁴² which understanding suggests the links the

³⁶ A. M. Lembede, “Some Basic Principles of African Nationalism,” in T. G. Karis & G. M. Carter, eds., *From Protest to Challenge* (Stanford, 1973), 314–316, 317–318.

³⁷ Leopold Sedar Senghor, *Negritude et humanisme* (Paris, 1964).

³⁸ Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite* (London, 1963) and *Revolutionary Path* (London, 1973).

³⁹ “On the Relations between the People’s Morale and the State,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:6 (1905), 122.

⁴⁰ See for example, “On the Applicability of Chinese Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1(1904); “On Raising the People’s Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:3 (1905); “On the Relations between the People’s Morale and the State,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:6 (1905); “On the Cause of the Decline of Chinese Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:8 (1905); “On the applicability of Chinese Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:9 (1905); “On the Relations between People’s Morale and Diplomacy,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Waijiao (Diplomacy), 3:1 (1906); “On the People’s Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 3:4 (1906).

⁴¹ Zhong You, “On the Applicability of Chinese Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1(1904), 7.

⁴² Liang Qichao, “On the People’s Morale,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 3:4 (1906), 75.

journal saw between constitutionalism, anti-imperialism, and nationalism. In its view, the people's morale determined the condition of the nation: "if the people's morale is strong, the nation is strong. When it is said the state is not to be insulted, it is in reality not the state but the people's morale that is not to be insulted; when it is said the state is not to be destroyed, it is the people's morale that is not to be destroyed. To base the state on the soldiers, the state would perish when the soldiers are finished; to base the state on wealth, the state would perish when the wealth is used up; to base the state on territory, the state would perish when the territory is taken away. But if the state were based on the people's morale, the state would not perish even if there is but one person left."⁴³

The author of this statement takes it to an extreme, but it nonetheless reveals how important morale among the masses was to Chinese intellectuals: it was for them the very essence of the strong nation. "The American people's strong morale is represented by Washington, the French people's strong morale by Napoleon, the British people's strong morale by Victoria, the German people's strong morale by Wilhelm, the Japanese people's strong morale by Meiji." When Japan was fighting with Russia, "the whole nation united as one," "the people only know the nation, without consideration of individuals." Family members saw their menfolk off to the battlefield *with enjoyment*, and "every father, son, husband, and son-in-law was determined to die in battle in order to express his gratitude for the blessings of his nation."⁴⁴ That was the key to Japanese victory, and it was a quality that was lacking in China.

The journal's authors made it clear that the popular morale depended above all on military might, arms, wealth, and education. When the "people have arms, foreigners do not dare humiliate them. When the people are prosperous, it is easy for business to thrive. With education, people come to know and love their country."⁴⁵ Moreover, this morale of the masses is contingent on the wisdom and virtue of the people, and freedom from governmental abuse—which Liang Qichao took great pains to criticize.⁴⁶ While these themes

⁴³ "On the Relations between People's Morale and the State," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:6 (1905), 121–23.

⁴⁴ "On Raising the People's Morale," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:3 (1905), 56–59.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Liang Qichao, "On the People's Morale," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 3:4 (1906),

are redolent of the European Romantic idealization of the folk, this was not a bunch of dreamy utopians airing their ideological fantasies. They believed that in very concrete and pragmatic ways the people's morale, properly mobilized, could benefit the nation's international standing. This was already in evidence with the "rights recovery movement" and the boycott of American goods, both instances in which the government was backed by popular opinion and brought it to bear in negotiations with foreign governments, for example with the United States over Yue-Han railroad rights.⁴⁷

In the minds of these authors, nationalism was intertwined with and sometimes synonymous with the concept of popular morale. In an article entitled "The Application of the People's Morale in China," Chinese nationalism was the theme, and the word "nationalism" appeared ten times, while the expression "people's morale" did not appear except in the title. Nationalism was regarded as the vital force driving human history since the sixteenth century. "Expansion, colonization, and export to other countries all sustained imperialism and all originated in nationalism."⁴⁸ Now it was developing in China too, and according to *The Eastern Miscellany*, it passed through three stages: collective, provincial, and national. In the first stage, the fight was against a foreign power by an organization or organizations within one locale or region alone.⁴⁹ The second stage involved the struggle of several provinces over a single issue.⁵⁰ The economic boy-

75–83. The article was first published in *Xinmin Congbao* and reprinted by *Dongfang Zazhi*.

⁴⁷ For recent studies, see Wang Lixin, *Meiguo Dui Hua Zhengce yu Zhongguo Minzu Zhuyi Yundong*; Wong Sin Kiong, *The Anti-American Protest in Chinese Communities Overseas: History and Documents* (Singapore, 2001); Wong Sin Kiong, *China's Anti-American Boycott Movement in 1905* (New York, 2002). More significant in "wakening up" Chinese nationalism, the American abuse of the Chinese delegation invited to the St. Louis Exposition in 1904 and its exclusionary policies toward Chinese residents of Hawaii and the Philippines greatly angered the Chinese at the time. The Russo-Japanese War, the British attack on Tibet, and America's discriminatory policy toward the Chinese were considered three big challenges the Chinese government had to face. See Cu Qing, "The Government Must not Give up," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:3 (1904), 41.

⁴⁸ "On the Applicability of the People's Morale in China," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 3:9 (1906), 183–85.

⁴⁹ The best example is the struggle against foreigners by Si Ming Gong Shuo in Shanghai, an organization of the Ninbo people. Conflicts occurred twice between that organization and the French in 1874 and 1898. See Yu Hongxin, "A Centenary of the Huihai Road," *Shanghai Tan* (Shanghai Talk), no. 10, 2000.

⁵⁰ The Chinese fight for Yue-Han railroad rights was a symbol of this stage,

cott against the Americans was the symbol of the third stage, which involved Chinese from all walks of life.⁵¹ Whether or not the division of nationalism into these three stages was accurate is not relevant: what is important is that the journal and many Chinese came to see it as a movement with a nation-wide base, deep roots at all levels of society, and capable of effecting the resurrection of China as a truly sovereign nation.

Self-reflection and Mixed Feelings

The Japanese victory over the Russians sent shockwaves running through every level of Chinese society. The intelligentsia sought to comprehend and take charge of the surge of patriotism and nationalist demands that followed—hence *The Eastern Miscellany's* treatment of popular morale. The largest part of its reflections on the war, however, concerned Japan as a neighbor to admire and emulate, but also warily keep at arm's length.

The journal started with the assumption that although China for historic and geographical reasons should not be inferior to Japan, it now was. Japan had defeated China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 and followed that up with another stunning victory over a great European power. Chinese intellectuals were desperate to alter this woeful state of affairs and so urged their countrymen to adopt the Japanese model in politics, education, and the military. This became known as the "Japanning process,"⁵² which Chinese nationalists considered the means of achieving "Qiang Guo Meng," or the "dream of strengthening the nation."

One major conclusion drawn from the Russo-Japanese War was that the constitutional system of Japan was superior to the autocratic

which involved three provinces, Hubei, Hunan, and Guangdong. See "To Borrow National Debt in Order to Promote Railroads and the Mining Industry," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Shiping (Review), 1:5 (1904); "On the Yue-Han Railway," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Jiaotong (Transportation), 1:5 (1904); "The Yue-Han Railway has Become a Diplomatic Affair," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Shiping, 1:7 (1904); "On the Transfer of the Yue-Han Railway Rights," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Jiaotong, 1:10 (1904). See also Wang Lixin, *Meiguo Dui Hua Zhengce yu Zhongguo Minzu Zhuyi Yundong*, 27–57.

⁵¹ See Wang Lixin, *Meiguo Dui Hua Zhengce yu Zhongguo Minzu Zhuyi Yundong*, 58–176.

⁵² W. A. P. Martin, *The Awakening of China* (New York, 1910), 194.

forms of government prevalent in Russia and China. Late Qing scholars greatly favored a constitutional monarchy, and *The Eastern Miscellany* provided a platform for this viewpoint. Among 327 articles published in the first seven volumes (1904–1910) on various topics, thirty-six specifically advocated this form of political arrangement.⁵³ The Qing government had actually adopted a series of political reforms since 1901, but introduction of a constitutional system began only after the Russo-Japanese War. To most of the reform-minded Chinese, the war offered decisive proof of the benefits of constitutionalism.⁵⁴ Previously it had been the conventional wisdom that Russia was strong because it was ruled by an autocracy. Now, thanks to Russia's military defeat, a whole new political logic emerged, which went as follows: in the West, land belonged to the people, who were the masters of their country and were served by government officials and leaders, including even monarchs. Governments such as these could not refuse to carry out the wishes of the populace. In China, the opposite was the case. The emperor was the master of the country, the land was his property, and the officials were his servants. The people were equal to slaves who were excluded from the halls of government. Officialdom served the emperor rather than the people, who had no role in the running of their society and were kept ignorant of the affairs of the nation. As a result, their attitude toward their own country was one of total apathy. It was of no concern to them whether the emperor died or whether the state was destroyed.⁵⁵ Making a contribution to the nation did not even enter their minds.⁵⁶ People would become patriotic and strive to contribute to the society at large only after they were granted the right to participate in politics.

In this debate over the political system, the pro-constitutional school's emphasis on "min quan," or the people's rights, was influenced by the European Enlightenment.⁵⁷ But it is noteworthy that Chinese

⁵³ Fang Hanqi, *Zhongguo Jindai Baokan Shi* [A Modern History of Chinese Newspapers and Journals] (Taiyuan, 1981), 297.

⁵⁴ "On the Japanese Victory as the Sign of Constitutionalism," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:6 (1905), 115–17.

⁵⁵ "China Must Change its Politics before Reform," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), pp. 10–13.

⁵⁶ Zhong You, "On the Applicability of Chinese Morale", *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 4–5.

⁵⁷ "On the Emphasis on People's Right," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:5 (1905), 94–95.

students absorbed many of these ideas while studying in Japan and then took an active part in advocating and organizing on behalf of a constitutional monarchy.⁵⁸ The nation-wide pressure for such a regime became so great that the Dowager Empress had to appoint two missions to investigate constitutionalism abroad in 1905.⁵⁹ One of the conclusions of these official missions was that people would be more concerned about the nation and more willing to serve its needs when they were allowed to participate in political affairs.⁶⁰ Accordingly, on September 1, 1906, the Qing government issued an edict that stated the following: "now the time has arrived for us to consider, observe, and put into effect constitutional government. Supreme power will be retained by the court, but the various affairs of governance will be handled together with public opinion. Thus the state will establish a moral foundation to last for ten thousand years."⁶¹ But the Qing court feared losing its power and was not ready to relinquish any of it, as the edict makes clear. Consequently, the Qing regime survived only another four years.

Education was another major aspect of the Japanizing process Chinese intellectuals hoped to undertake in their country. Education was a key component of Chinese cultural life for centuries, but it was now apparent that the most needed was modern education of the sort taught in Japan. After 1894 the Qing government sped up educational reform by issuing the New Principle of the School and sending promising young students to study abroad. Now the Russo-Japanese War provided another stimulus for learning about the Japanese educational system. Nearly every analysis of the Japanese victory emphasized the role of education. "How did Japan win its

⁵⁸ Zhang Xueji, "On the Role Played by the Chinese Students in Japan in the Constitutional Movement of the Late Qing Era," in *Xinhai Geming Xin Lun* [New Treatises on the 1911 Revolution], ed. Liu Yangyang (Changsha, 1996), 162–86.

⁵⁹ One of the missions was originally supposed to start its journey in summer but was delayed by a bomb explosion which slightly injured two members. The mission finally set off in December 1905.

⁶⁰ "Document 52: A Report on Constitutional Governments Abroad, 1906," in *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839–1923*, ed. Ssu-yü Teng and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, MA, 1979), 208–209. For details of the mission's activities, see Dai Hengci, *Chi Shi Jiu Guo Riji* [Diary of the Mission to Nine Countries] (Changsha, 1986).

⁶¹ Ming-Qing Archives Department of the Palace Museum, ed., *Qingmo Choubi Li Xian Dang-an Shiliao* [Archival Materials on Constitutional Preparations in the Late Qing Era], vol. 1 (Beijing, 1979), 441.

hegemony? If we explained this as a result of the advantages of its finance and the strength of its arms, we would be wrong. Japan achieved its success due to its stress on education, [which taught] . . . the patriotic duty of dying in battle for the sake of historic honor, patriotism, and safeguarding of the nation.”⁶²

From 1904 on, China learned about the Japanese educational system in three ways. First, the government sent officials to Japan either for training and educational purposes. In 1905, more than 300 officials were sent to Japan to study law and politics.⁶³ Second, the Qing court imported a host of Japanese instructors, the earliest in the military sphere to assist in the modernization of the army and navy, but other Japanese professors were engaged by public and private institutions to introduce educational reform. “Even in agriculture, on which they have hitherto prided themselves, the Chinese have put themselves under the teaching of the Japanese, while with good reason they have taken them as teachers in forestry also.” Many Japanese in every handicraft specialty were also employed in China.⁶⁴ Third, according to Japanese scholar Saneto Keishu, “1904, the year of the Russo-Japanese War, witnessed a great increase in the number of Chinese students in Japan.”⁶⁵ If not sponsored by the court or provincial governments, they went at their own expense, and the number increased yearly between 1904 and 1908 from 1,300 to more than 15,000.⁶⁶ The students played a very important role both in the late Qing reforms and the downfall of the regime. Tongmeng Hui, the organization that led the 1911 Revolution, was founded in Japan in

⁶² “Japan’s Total Hegemony in East Asia,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:9 (1905), 179–81.

⁶³ Jing Linxiang, ed., *Zhongguo Jiaoyu Zhidu Tongshi* [General History of the Chinese Educational System], vol. 6 (Shandong, 2000) 279–81.

⁶⁴ Martin, *Awakening of China*, 194.

⁶⁵ Saneto Keishu, *Zhongguo Ren Liuxue Riben Shi* [The History of the Chinese Students in Japan], trans. by Tan Ruqian and Lin Qiyan (Beijing, 1983), 34. On the wave of Chinese students studying in Japan, see also Shu Xincheng, *Jindai Zhongguo Liuxue Shi* [History of Chinese Studying Abroad] (Shanghai, 1927), 46–71; and Jing Linxiang, *Zhongguo Jiaoyu Zhidu Tongshi*, 268–92.

⁶⁶ Y. C. Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West, 1872–1949* (Chapel Hill, 1966), 64. See also Saneto Keishu, *Zhongguo Ren Liuxue Riben Shi*, 35–43. Although the wave of Chinese students going to Japan was speeded up by the Russo-Japanese War, yet another reason was the abolition of *keju*, the civil service examination system in 1905, so that study abroad became a new shortcut to entering the ranks of officialdom.

1905. Of the forty important military officers of the Yunnan Army who first supported that revolution, thirty-one had been students in Japan.⁶⁷

The other fundamental feature of the Japanese model Chinese commentators wanted to adopt involved the strengthening of China's military, both spiritually and materially. A strong army and navy were the preconditions for the construction of a strong nation, and China, it was argued, should learn everything about them from Japan. Special attention was paid to the construction of a decent navy. The war of 1894 had destroyed China's navy, after which foreign powers were able to force the imperial government to grant them railroad and mining rights, control of ports, etc. The Russo-Japanese War again indicated the importance of naval warfare and fired up hopes that China would one day be able to compete in this arena. These views were expressed in *Shi Bao* (The Times), whose lengthy article on the subject was reprinted in *The Eastern Miscellany*. If Japan's navy could essentially be built in ten years and then destroy the Russian fleet, China should learn how to do the same, and issue long-term public bonds and increase taxes to pay for it. For, a "navy is the key to the defense of a nation's rights and independence."⁶⁸

Military spirit or militarism ("*Shang wu zhuyi*") was regarded as an important factor in the Japanese victory and it was important for China to learn this lesson. "When meeting soldiers on the street, the Japanese people salute them to show respect, and when the letter of victory arrives, they gather together to celebrate and praise their soldiers' heroism. That is why an island country can make giant strides in the world and come out on top."⁶⁹ China, by contrast, was seen to have suffered so many humiliations in modern times due to the absence of a similar militaristic spirit among the masses.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Wang Xiangrong, *Zhongguo Jindai Hua yu Riben* [Chinese Modernization and Japan] (Changsha, 1987) 50. For their role in modern Chinese history, see Jing Linxiang, *Zhongguo Jiaoyu Zhidu Tongshi*, 287–92; for their role in the reform, see Shang Xiaoming, "Liu Ri Xuesheng yu Qing Mo Gaige" [Chinese Students in Japan and Late Qing Reform], MA thesis, Department of History, Peking University, 1994.

⁶⁸ "On the Revival of the Navy," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Junshi (Military), 2:10 (1905), 323–40.

⁶⁹ "On the Personality of the Military World," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Junshi, 2:9 (1905), 298–99.

⁷⁰ Shen Shu, "On the Cause of the Weakening of the People's Morale in China," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:8 (1905), 154–56.

"The people's character is the element of a nation, the base of a society, the cause of its rise and decline, and the origin of strength and weakness. It is what the nation depends on. If the people's character is militant, the nation is strong, and thus survives. If the people's character is not militant, the nation is weak, and thus perishes. Why can Great Britain, France, Germany, and the U.S. be strong? Their strength rests on the militarism of the people's character. Why did Poland and India perish? Because their peoples were not militant."⁷¹ In Japan since the Meiji Restoration, engendering a militaristic spirit was the first principle of the educational system, and its people had come to view death in battle as an honor. It thereby succeeded in defeating China and then mighty Russia. If China wanted to become strong, it needed to inculcate the values of militarism. How to do so? "Emphasize the soldiers' honor, raise the status of soldiers, promote national military training, emphasize that military service is the duty of every citizen, and instill the heroic spirit of bushido, which values death in combat as the highest form of happiness and the courage to die as the highest moral value. In this way, our race can be guarded and the nation protected."⁷² Likewise, shaming the people was seen as an effective means of promoting their bravery and heroism.⁷³ The desire to inculcate these values was not limited to *The Eastern Miscellany*: in resistance against the Russia's refusal to withdraw from Manchuria, several Chinese student organizations were set up in Japan. The motto of the "Youth Association" was "nationalism as tenet, destruction as purpose" while that of the "Militant Nationals Educational Association" was "Raise militarism, practice nationalism."⁷⁴

Although learning from Japan was a strong tendency after the Russo-Japanese War, it is undeniable that the Chinese had mixed feelings about the Japanese, in which admiration mingled with fear, hatred, and condescension. In general China had always looked down on Japan as a small and less civilized country. Although China was badly beaten by Japan in 1894, this mentality continued to exist,

⁷¹ "On Militarism," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:5 (1905), 98.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 99.

⁷³ "On Bravery," *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:8 (1905), 160.

⁷⁴ Jiang Weichiao, "The Memory of China's Educational Association," *Xinhai Geming* [The 1911 Revolution], vol. 1, ed. China's Historical Society, 485–96; Jing Linxiang, *Zhong Guo Jiaoyu Zhidu Tongshi*, 282.

and even after the Russo-Japanese War, some derogatory terms were still used to describe Japan, for example “cuo’er xiao guo” (tiny little country), “dongfang xiao guo”⁷⁵ (little Oriental country), or “ququ dao guo”⁷⁶ (trivial island country)—and these were even to be found in articles that praised Japan. Japan was China’s neighbor and had imitated Chinese culture for centuries—it was hard to get used to the new reality that China would have to imitate Japan.⁷⁷ This attitude can be regarded as a survival of the “Middle Kingdom and neighboring barbarians” notion which reflected the long-lasting view of China as *Laoda Digu* (old and big empire).

This Chinese brand of chauvinism was mixed with fear. For a long time an expanding Russia had been the main object of Chinese anxieties, but even before the Sino-Japanese War there was an awareness of a Japanese threat. In a secret report of 1885, Li Hongzhang, one of the most important political figures in modern Chinese history, warned, “in about ten years, Japan’s wealth and power will be considerable. She is China’s future disaster, despite not being our present anxiety.”⁷⁸ The prediction came to pass with the 1894 war, at which point some even thought about forming an alliance with Russia to counterbalance Japan. Liu Kunyi, Imperial Commissioner and Governor-General of Liang-Jiang, for instance, submitted a confidential memorandum to this effect.⁷⁹ By defeating Russia in 1905, Japan established its hegemony in East Asia and placed China in a subordinate position.⁸⁰ China’s trepidation about Japanese power

⁷⁵ Shi Zhao, “On Colonial Policy,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:8 (1905), 175.

⁷⁶ “On the Personality of the Military World,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Junshi, 2:9 (1905), 299.

⁷⁷ In one article, the author indicated that the Japanese Vice Admiral Togo Heihachiro benefited from Chinese scholar Wang Yangming’s philosophy. Li Zhao, “China Has the School For Mending Its Weakness and Reversing Its Decline,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Junshi, 1:4 (1904), 61–63.

⁷⁸ See “Li Hongzhang’s Secret Report to Zhongli Yamen in 1885,” in *China’s Response to the West*, ed. Teng and Fairbank, 119–20.

⁷⁹ He pointed out, “the impending disaster from other countries is still slow in coming, but that from Japan is imminent. This is because she is close to us; after she has obtained Taiwan and Liaotung, the way for her entrance will be even more convenient, as if her army could start directly from our pillow and mat—it can invade any part of our territory at will.” See “Liu Kun-I’s Secret Proposal,” July 1895, in *ibid.*, 197–98.

⁸⁰ Han Fu, “On the Phenomenon of Power in East Asia after the Japanese Victory over Russia,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:9 (1905); “Japan’s Total Hegemony in East Asia,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 2:9 (1905). There was a wish that China could share power with Japan since they both were members of the yellow race.

thereafter was accompanied by the hope that if the Chinese nation regained its strength “then we would not have to admire Japan or fear the white race.”⁸¹

Hatred of Japan was intermingled with these other sentiments, a psychological response to the nation’s humiliation by a supposedly inferior power. Besides defeating China in 1894, Japan imposed a large indemnity of 263 million taels (US\$200 million payable in gold), occupied Chinese territory, and exhibited a thirst for more. Although during the 1904–1905 war the general feeling was pro-Japanese and anti-Russian out of racial solidarity, this changed rapidly after the war as the Japanese exhibited their arrogance and imperiousness. “A great nation [Russia] had been defeated, Japan was exalted and supreme, China was nothing. They [the Japanese] came not as deliverers but as victors, and treated the Chinese with contempt as a conquered people. Then with peace came crowds of the lowest and most undesirable part of the Japanese nation. The Chinese continued to suffer as before.”⁸² As the loser, Russia had to accept Japan’s dominance in Korea, transfer to Japan her rights in Lüxhun and the Liaotung Peninsula, and hand over to Japan her railways in southern Manchuria. Japan became a new colonizer and thus a new potential enemy of China.

Afterthoughts

Simultaneously with this sense of wariness Chinese felt a great deal of admiration for Japan, as this article has conveyed. The combination of abhorrence and veneration, tinged with varying degrees of envy, fear, self-abasement, and adoration, should come as no surprise given our current understanding of the paradoxes of nationalism, one of the more complex phenomena of modern history. All scholars are indebted to the works of those theoreticians of nationalism from various disciplines—most prominently Eric Anderson, John Breuilly, Karl Deutsch, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Giddens, Eric Hobsbawm, Elie Kedourie, Hans Kohn, Boyd C. Shafer, and Anthony

⁸¹ Xian Xian-sheng, “On the Seriousness of China’s Responsibility,” *Dongfang Zazhi*, Sheshuo, 1:1 (1904), 5.

⁸² Quoted from Chae-Jin-Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years* (Stanford, 1994), 27.

Smith—who have so revealingly debated the relationship of nationalism to modernity and identified the dual ethnic and civic conceptions imbedded within nationalist ideologies. For the purposes of this article, however, a somewhat different conceptualization is worth emphasizing. What we see at play in the emotional, ideological, and political-organizational elements of Chinese nationalism in the Russo-Japanese War era are the reactions of a once-glorious empire to foreign aggression, national defeat, and the possibility of salvation offered to it by a neighboring people.

China was at a critical moment in its history when the Russo-Japanese War took place. The danger of possible dismemberment had already given rise to an incipient nationalism that was primarily expressed in the form of xenophobia, as seen in the Boxer Rebellion. After 1904, it took a different, more thoughtful and pragmatic turn, as called for by *The Eastern Miscellany*: Chinese nationalism should “unite organizations, integrate popular forces, and work for the common interest, . . . [and] not burn churches, kill missionaries, or imitate the Boxers.” If the Chinese government were clever enough, it could exploit nationalism as a naturally developed force for social and political cohesion.⁸³

Japanese military victories brought about this new phase in the history of Chinese nationalism. Japan’s triumphs were seen as China’s too insofar as they stimulated racial pride and gave the Chinese hope of one day shaking off the humiliations they had endured under white hegemony.⁸⁴ As W. A. P. Martin, a former President of the Chinese Imperial University, reported, his Chinese contemporaries felt that “if our neighbor can do this, why may we not do the same? We certainly can if, like them, we break with the effete systems of the past. Let us take these island heroes for our schoolmasters.”⁸⁵ In the various ways that we have seen, Chinese intellectuals now viewed the Japanese model as desirable for their own country. Nationalism is usually thought of as a European intellectual import, but in China as elsewhere in Asia and even Africa it is important to note the role

⁸³ “On the Applicability of the People’s Morale in China,” *Dongfang Zazhi, Sheshuo*, 2:9 (1905), 185.

⁸⁴ Bieshi, “On Sino-Japanese Division and Unity,” *Dongfang Zazhi, Sheshuo*, 1:1 (1904), 3.

⁸⁵ Martin, *Awakening of China*, 193.

the rising military power of Japan played in stimulating this formative movement within the non-Western world.⁸⁶

To indicate how substantially attitudes had changed among the Chinese as a result of the Russo-Japanese War, we conclude by quoting Sun yat-sen, who in 1905 found that nationalism had become the prevalent ideology among Chinese revolutionaries: "I advocated nationalism before, but [within] . . . the mainstream of the society, few answered the call. [Now, however,] . . . nationalism is spreading rapidly in the society. Nobody considers revolution unnecessary [and] . . . I am welcomed by your gentlemen just because I have promoted nationalism."⁸⁷ This potent force in China's modern history was now active.

⁸⁶ See Marks, "Bravo, Brave Tiger of the East," and Paul Rodell, "Inspiration for Nationalist Aspirations? Southeast Asia and Japan's Victory," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, ed. Steinberg, 629–654.

⁸⁷ Sun Zhongshan, "Address at the welcoming meeting of the Chinese students in Tokyo," (August 13, 1905), *Sun Zhongshan Quanjī* [Complete Works of Sun Yat-sen], (Beijing, 1981), Vol. 1, p. 282.

QING CHINA'S NORTHEAST CRESCENT: THE GREAT GAME REVISITED

Nakami Tatsuo

Preamble: A War That Broke Out in a Complex Region

Many studies of the Russo-Japanese War have appeared both in Japan and Russia, the two countries directly involved, and also in Europe and North America, and today, on the occasion of its one hundredth anniversary, there are moves afoot to reconsider its significance. But in China, where the war was fought, it has been exceedingly rare for scholars to take up the Russo-Japanese War itself as a topic of research, a fact that is evident in the dearth of scholarly works published in China that deal directly with it.¹ This does not mean, however, that the Russo-Japanese War had virtually no impact on China. Moreover, when we look at a map of Northeast Asia today, we see immediately that Mongolia is located adjacent to the former battlefields of the Russo-Japanese war. It is therefore natural to ask what the impact of that war was on Mongolia and the Mongols. But this actually turns out to be an extremely difficult question to answer.

As for Mongolia, it was not an independent state in 1904–05 when the Russo-Japanese War took place, and there is also the important question of the actual extent of the region covered by “Mongolia” at the time.² If Mongolia is defined as the area inhabited

¹ In the PRC, since 1949, only two concise books have appeared on the Russo-Japanese War as well as a collection of archival documents. Mu Jingyuan, Mao Minxiu and Bai Junshan, *Ri-E Zhanzheng-shi* [A History of the Russo-Japanese War] (Shenyang: Liaoning Daxue Chubanshe, 1993); Liu Zhichao and Guan Jie, *Zhengduo yu Guonan: Jiachen Ri-E Zhanzheng* (Shenyang: Liaohai Chubanshe, 1999); Liaoningsheng Danganguan ed., *Ri-E Zhanzheng Dangan Shiliao* [The Collection of the Archival Sources on the Russo-Japanese War] (Shenyang: Liaoning Gujia Chubanshe, 1995). As to historical studies on the relations between the Russian Empire and Japan until 1917, only one book was published in China. Zhou Qiqian, *Ri-E Guanxi Jianshi, 1697–1917* [A Concise History of Russo-Japanese Relations, 1697–1917] (Tianjin: Tianjin Renmin Chubanshe, 1985).

² As to Mongolia in the 18th to early 20th centuries, see Tatsuo Nakami,

by the Mongols, then the majority of them lived within the borders of the Qing Empire and were subjects of the Qing emperor at the time of the Russo-Japanese War. Of course, they did not conceive of the Qing Empire as the Chinese Empire or “China”, nor did they think of the Qing emperor as the Chinese emperor, but as the Manchu emperor, and their relationship with him was that of liege subjects and their emperor. What is more, Mongols were found not only in the Qing Empire but also in the Russian Empire.

Under Qing rule, that part of Mongolia lying to the north of the Gobi Desert was referred to as “Outer Mongolia” and that to the south of the Gobi Desert as “Inner Mongolia”, but these designations derived from the viewpoint of the Han Chinese, and the term “Inner Mongolia” was, moreover, still hardly in use in the first decade of the twentieth century. The forty-nine Mongol banners, the administrative unit, to the south of the Gobi, as well as several areas under the direct jurisdiction of the Qing emperor, had come under the rule of the Qing emperor earlier than Khalkha Mongolia and Western Mongolia to the north of the Gobi Desert. The eastern part of Inner Mongolia inhabited by Mongols was referred to by the Mongols as “East Mongolia”.³ In the view of the Mongols, any region inhabited by Mongols formed part of “Mongolia”. As for “Manchuria”, which became the main theatre of war during the Russo-Japanese War, there existed no corresponding designation in either Manchu or Chinese. The use of the term “Manchuria” as a place-name had begun with the Japanese in the eighteenth century, and it was later introduced to Europe by Philip Franz von Siebold.⁴ This usage continued into the twentieth century, even as the greater part of the inhabitants of Manchuria became Han Chinese. With the construc-

“Mongolia from the eighteenth century to 1919” *History of Civilization of Central Asia* Vol. VI (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005). See also Tatsuo Nakami, “New Trends in the Study of Modern Mongolian History: What Effect Have Political and Social Changes Had on Historical Research?”, *Acta Asiatica* No. 76 (1999), pp. 7–39.

³ As to “East Mongolia” or the Mongols in Manchuria, see Owen Lattimore, *The Mongols of Manchuria* (New York: Macmillan, 1934).

⁴ Nakami Tatsuo, “Hokutô Ajia kara mita Higashi Ajia” [“East Asia” seen from “Northeast Asia”], Hamashita Takeshi ed., *Higashi Ajia Sekai no Chûiki Nettowâku* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1999), pp. 57–70. Mark C. Elliott, “The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies”, *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 59, No. 3 (2000), pp. 603–646. Nakami Tatsuo, “Hokutô Ajia ha donoyôni, toraerarete kitaka” [Identifying “Northeast Asia” on the world map] *Hokutô Ajia Kenkyû* Vol. 7 (2004), pp. 43–56.

tion of the Chinese Eastern Railway, there was a still greater influx of settlers from China proper, especially the North Chinese provinces of Shandong and Zhili.⁵

In addition, the boundary between “Manchuria” and “East Mongolia” was ill-defined. For example, today Changchun is the capital of Jilin Province, and it was also the capital of Manchukuo, but originally it had been the pasture land of a Mongol prince of East Mongolia and had developed as a transit point after the opening of the Chinese Eastern Railway. But up until the 1920s, prior to the founding of Manchukuo, the main centre of the Jilin region was not Changchun but Jilin City, where a general was stationed. During the Qing period, Mongols belonged to special administrative units called “banners”, but institutionally speaking the Mongol banners were not under the control of generals, but were under the supervision of the Court of Colonial Affairs in Beijing. By the twentieth century, many of the Mongol banners in East Mongolia were no longer purely Mongol pastures, but had been settled by large numbers of Han-Chinese peasants, and the pastures were being converted into farmland.

Matters are further complicated by the fact that at the time of the Russo-Japanese War the notion of “ethnic group” (*minzu*) had not yet taken root in the Chinese language. The present-day Chinese term *minzu* was borrowed from the Japanese *minzoku*, coined in the nineteenth century, probably when translating the German term *Volkerkunde*. It was common knowledge at the time that the Qing emperor was of Manchu descent. But of great importance for the Qing dynasty was the existence of groups of “bannermen (*qiren*)”, who underpinned the foundations of the régime, and these bannermen included not only Manchus, but also Mongols, Han Chinese and even Russians.

Bearing in mind the above background to a complex region with many different ethnic groups, in this paper I shall examine the impact of the Russo-Japanese War on and its significance for the Mongols and Mongolia. In addition, I shall also consider how regional conditions and international relations changed before and after the Russo-Japanese War in what Mark Mancall has called “the northeastern

⁵ Inaba Iwakichi, *Zôtei Manshû Hattatsu-shi* [The History of Development in Manchuria, the Revised Edition], (Tokyo: Nihon Hyôronsha, 1935).

crescent zone” of the Qing Empire, that is, the originally non-agrarian, nomadic areas of Mongolia, Tibet and Manchuria which formed the non-Confucian cultural sphere of Tibetan Buddhism.⁶

Mongolia and Manchuria between Russia and China

The frontier between the Qing and the Russian empires was first demarcated along the Amur River (Heilongjiang) with the Nerchinsk Treaty of 1689, and the boundary between Outer Mongolia and Siberia was later established by the Kiakhta Treaty, ratified in 1728. With the signing of these two treaties relations between Russia and the Qing were stabilized, and trade between the two empires took place at the border town of Kiakhta, growing steadily from the late eighteenth century through to the middle of the nineteenth century. As a result of the Kiakhta Treaty the Buriat, a Mongol people living in the vicinity of Lake Baikal, came under the rule of the Russian tsar.⁷ Great Britain gained a foothold for its advance into China with its victory in the Opium War, but initially Russia had no intention of revising the principles underpinning its relations with the Qing as confirmed in the Treaties of Nerchinsk and Kiakhta. However, with the signing of the Treaty of Kuldja in 1851 Ili and Tarbagatai were opened to Russian traders, and Russia began to plot the further spread of its influence into East Turkestan (Xinjiang) and Outer Mongolia. The subsequent confrontation between Great Britain and Russia occasioned by the outbreak of the Crimean War also had repercussions in East Asia, and as the *Arrow* incident unfolded in China, Russia succeeded in acquiring from the Qing vast swathes of land along the northeastern frontier through the Treaties of Aigun and Tianjin in 1858 and the Convention of Beijing in 1860.⁸

⁶ Mark Mancall, “The Ch’ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay”, John K. Fairbank ed., *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 63–89.

⁷ Mark Mancall, *Russia and China, Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971). Yoshida Kin’ichi, *Roshia no Tōhō Shinshutsu to Neruchinsuku Jōyaku* [Russia’s Eastern Expansion and the Nerchinsk Treaty] (Tokyo: The Tōyō Bunko, 1984).

⁸ R. K. I. Quesed, *The Expansion of Russia in East Asia 1857–1860* (Kuala Lumpur & Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1968).

It was in the context of this global struggle for domination by the British and Russian empires and the weakening of the Qing Empire that there occurred a series of events that included Yaqub Beg's uprising in East Turkestan, the Russian occupation of Ili, the Qing counteroffensive, and the resultant establishment of Xinjiang Province in 1884. During this period Han-Chinese officials came to the fore in the Qing government and seized the initiative. This meant that even though the emperor was of Manchu descent, there was increasing "Sinicization" of the Qing government. For the Han-Chinese officials, the "frontier defense" of the "Chinese Empire" had been put at risk. During the Ili crisis, they feared that if the Qing took any conciliatory action, Russia might next set its sights on Mongolia, by which they meant Outer Mongolia.⁹

To the contrary, the next target of Russian imperialistic interests was not Mongolia, but today's Northeastern China, the birthplace of the Qing empire, which was known to contemporary Westerners and Japanese as "Manchuria."¹⁰ The occasion for this interest was, moreover, provided not by Russia itself, but by Japan. In 1894 Japan, desirous of removing all Qing influence from the Korean peninsula and extending its own influence there, started the Sino-Japanese War, during the course of which fighting between the Japanese and Chinese armies was not confined to the Korean peninsula, but also spread to southern Manchuria. With the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, which brought the war to an end, Japan initially succeeded in forcing the Qing government to cede the Liaodong Peninsula.

The reason that Japan sought to acquire the Liaodong Peninsula was military and was based on the demands of the Japanese army, which wanted to exercise control over Korea and Beijing. Worth noting in this regard is the fact that hereafter Japan always perceived the situation in Manchuria as being linked to its goal of ensuring predominance on the Korean peninsula.¹¹ During the Sino-Japanese

⁹ Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Ili Crisis: A Study of Sino-Russian Diplomacy 1871-1881* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).

¹⁰ As to Russian expansion into "Manchuria", see R. K. I. Quesed, "Matey" *Imperialists?: The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria 1895-1917* (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1982) and David Wolff, *To The Harbin Station: The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

¹¹ Nakami Tatsuo, "Chiiki Gainen no Seiji-sei" [The Political Nature of the Concept of Regionality], Mizoguchi Yuzô et al. ed., *Ajia kara kangaeru [I]: Kôzaku suru Ajia* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Suppankai, 1993), pp. 273-295.

War the Qing army had sent to the battlefield Mongol troops and horses stationed in Urga (present-day Ulaanbaatar) in Outer Mongolia and had assigned Chahar (Čaqar) Mongol troops from Inner Mongolia to the defense of Shanhai Pass (Shanhaiguan), but it has been pointed out by Mongolian scholars that these troops resented being mobilized into the Qing army and were reluctant to fight.¹² In contrast, at the time of the *Arrow* incident, the Mongol troops under the command of the Mongol nobleman Senggerincin are known to have been the only troops among the retreating Qing forces to have put up a good fight, so it is clear that the consciousness and allegiance of the Mongols was changing.

Having acquired the Liaodong Peninsula with its victory in the Sino-Japanese War, Japan was forced to relinquish it as a result of the tripartite intervention by Russia, Germany and France, and it was returned to the Qing. But then in 1898 Russia obtained a lease for it from the Qing and established the Guandong (Kwantung) *Oblast*. In 1891 Russia had begun constructing the Trans-Siberian Railway, and in 1896 it had also won from the Qing government the right to build the Chinese Eastern Railway, a branch of the Trans-Siberian Railway cutting across northeastern China, to improve transport links with Vladivostok. Furthermore, in 1899 Russia concluded the Scott-Muraviev Agreement with Great Britain, whereby Great Britain pledged not to seek any railway concessions beyond the Great Wall. This agreement represented a division of British and Russian spheres of influence regarding railway concessions alone, and it cannot be regarded on a par with the general division of their respective spheres of influence by Japan, Great Britain, Russia and France after the Russo-Japanese War. It is, however, true that Great Britain adopted the stance of avoiding any confrontation with Russia in Manchuria and Mongolia.¹³

After the Sino-Japanese War Russia began its advance into Manchuria, and the first thing to be noted in this regard is the existence and designation of the Kwantun (Guandong) *Oblast*, established in territory leased by Russia inside the Qing Empire in 1898.

¹² Kh. L. Jamsuran, "Nisshin Sensô to Mongoru" [The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 and Mongolia], *Nisshin Sensô to Higashi Ajia Sekai no Henyô* Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Yumani Shobô, 1997), pp. 257–264.

¹³ L. K. Young, *British Policy in China 1895–1902* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 267–294.

The word “*Oblast*” had originally referred to administrative units set up in areas to the east of the Urals or in areas occupied by non-Russians.¹⁴ The Kwantun *Oblast* was the only “*Oblast*” founded beyond the borders of the Russian Empire down to 1917. The designation “Guandong,” moreover, would undoubtedly have seemed strange, at least to the Chinese. While it derived from Chinese, it signified the area to the east of Shanhai Pass, the eastern extremity of the Great Wall. The area leased by Russia, on the other hand, was centred on the ports of Lüshun (Port Arthur) and Dalian (Dalnii, Dairen), and while it would have been understandable had they called it Liaodong, the reason for naming it Kwantun (Guandong) remains obscure.¹⁵

The notion of Northeastern China had not yet been established at the start of the twentieth century. This region was governed by three ethnically Manchu banner generals, who ruled over the provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin and Shengjing. Such was the situation in Manchuria when the Russian troops, availing themselves of the opportunity presented by the Boxer Rebellion, crossed the Amur and Ussuri rivers into China. Russia focused primarily on the situation in Manchuria, and it had no special concerns in Mongolia. While the route from Kiakhta to Beijing via Urga was an important trade route for the Russians, the occupation of Outer Mongolia was not a practical option.¹⁶ Not only did Russia not possess the military capacity to occupy Outer Mongolia in addition to Manchuria, but its decision was also based on the careful calculation that even if it placed the vastnesses of Outer Mongolia under its control, the benefits would be meagre in comparison with the costs entailed in enforcing its rule. Thereafter, never once until the collapse of Tsarist Russia did Russia show any ambition to incorporate Outer Mongolia into

¹⁴ E. V. Mesentsev, “*Oblast*”, *Gosudarstvennost Rossii*, Vol. 3 (Moscow: Nauka 2001), p. 196.

¹⁵ After the Russo-Japanese War, this designation was appropriated by Japan as “*Kantō-shū*”, which took over Russia’s rights in the region, probably because the Japanese were unable to come up with any suitable name for this region other than that used by the Russians, and it also gave its name to the famous Guandong Army (*Kantō-gun*).

¹⁶ Contacts between Russians and Mongols, up until this time, had been strictly limited. Russia had set up consulates in Urga and several other localities in Outer Mongolia, where Russian traders and travelers had been active, but it was Chinese merchants who founded commercial networks in Outer Mongolia.

the Russian Empire. Rather, it was deemed that the most practical approach best suited to Russian interests was to leave Outer Mongolia within the Qing Empire while ensuring that it was not infiltrated by the influences of other powers. But with the Boxer Uprising, Russian relations with the Mongols, especially those in or near Manchuria, increased.

Mongolia and the Mongols during the Russo-Japanese War

The Russians paid particular attention to the Mongols in East Mongolia, especially to the existence of the Mongol princes who controlled the banners, and tried to make contact with them for the purpose of extending their own influence. The best-known example of such a relationship between the Russians and an East Mongolian prince is probably that of Udai (Otai) of the Qorčin Right Banner.¹⁷ His relationship with Russia, details of which have been recorded in both Russian and Chinese sources, began in 1901. Like most of the Mongol banners, the financial circumstances of his banner were deteriorating, and so the Russians helped him out of his plight by extending credit to him for 200,000 roubles.¹⁸ Eventually other Mongol princes are also said to have sought contact with the Russians through Udai. Communications between Udai and the Russians or between other Mongol princes and the Russians were mediated by Buriat Mongols living within the Russian Empire.

But it was not just the Russians who were paying attention to the Mongol princes in East Mongolia. The Japanese, wary of Russian advances into the area, did the same. Prince Güngsügnorbu¹⁹ of

¹⁷ Nakami Tatsuo, "Haisan to Otai: Bogudo Khaan Seiken-ka niokeru Minami Mongorujin" [Kaisan and Udai: Two Inner Mongols under the Bogdo Khaan Regime] *Tōyō Gakuhō*, Vol. 57, Nos. 1–2 (1976), pp. 125–170; "The Minority's Groping: Further Light on Khaisan and Udai" *Ajia Afurika Gengo Bunka Kenkyū* No. 20 (1980), pp. 106–120; "Qaisan's Secret Letters from Urga" *Mongolica, an International Annual of Mongol Studies*, Vol. 26, (1994), pp. 394–8.

¹⁸ "Nashi torgovye interesy na Vostoke" *Vestnik Azii* 1 (1909), ctp. 127; Xu Shichang ed., *Dongsansheng Zhenglüe* [Political History of Three Eastern Provinces] Vol. 2, p. 10.

¹⁹ Nakami Tatsuo, "Gunsannorubu to Uchi-Mongoru no Meiun" [Prince Güngsügnorbu and the Fate of Inner Mongolia], Mori Masao ed., *Nairiku Ajia, Nishi Ajia no Shakai to Bunka* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1983), pp. 415–435.

the Qaračin Right Banner was an influential figure related by marriage to the Manchu-Qing imperial family, and the Japanese government invited him to Japan in 1903 and also sent a young Japanese woman and two military instructors to serve as teachers at the schools he had established. According to this woman's memoir, the Russians were also interested in Güngsügnorbu and were in contact with him, and some of his chief retainers leaned towards Russia.²⁰ In point of fact, he received loans from both the Russo-Asiatic Bank and the Yokohama Specie Bank.²¹

Over and above their objective of extending their respective spheres of influence, Russia and Japan both made approaches to the Mongol princes for the very practical reason that, as tensions rose between the two countries, both wanted to secure local forces sympathetic to their own cause in the event of a military confrontation. Once the Russo-Japanese War broke out, it is a fact that within certain bounds their prewar policy of making approaches to the Mongol princes bore fruit for both the Russians and the Japanese. Udai's cavalry prevented Japanese from passing anywhere near the Chinese Eastern Railway,²² while two Japanese agents visited the Japanese teacher working for Güngsügnorbu and, with her help, left on an operation aimed at sabotaging the southward movement of Russian troops by blowing up the Chinese Eastern Railway. Güngsügnorbu feigned ignorance of this visit by Japanese agents, even though he was aware of it. The two agents were, however, exposed by Russian troops and were put to death in Harbin.²³

Although Manchuria became the battle field in the Russo-Japanese War, the Qing government declared its neutrality, and local forces, including the Mongol princes, made no moves to actively side or cooperate with either party. Even so, both the Russian and Japanese armies employed Han Chinese and Mongols in Manchuria to indirectly sabotage the military operations of the opposing side.²⁴ But

²⁰ Ichinomiya Misako, "Nyu-Mô Tōji no Kaiko" [A memoir for my visit into Mongolia] in her *Shinpan Mōko Miyage* (Tokyo: Seibunsha, 1944), pp. 28–29.

²¹ Nakami Tatsuo, "On the daily life of the Mongol Prince Güngsügnorbu in the Late Qing as seen in Wang Guojin's *Neimenggu Jūwen* (Inner Mongolia: a Memoir)", *Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne* 90 (2004), p. 105.

²² S. S. Grigortsevich, *Dalnevostochnaia politika imperialisticheskikh derzhav 1906–1917 gg.* (Tomsk, 1965), pp. 396–397.

²³ D. B. Pavlov i S. A. Petrov *Tainy russko-iaponskoi voyny*, (Moscow 1994).

²⁴ David Wolff, "Intelligence Intermediaries: The Competition for Chinese Spies",

the outcome of the war was decided by military engagements between the regular armies of both countries, and it is unclear how effective these indirect operations of destruction and sabotage by third parties actually were. Nor were their activities accurately recorded.

One exception is the Mongol Babuujab, whose activities are well-known and were mentioned in the Japanese writings, and even taken up in Japanese popular novels.²⁵ Babuujab was of the Tümed tribe from East Mongolia and a leader of Mongol resistance against the influx of Chinese peasants, and he is said to have ended up becoming a bandit. It has also been reported that during the Russo-Japanese War he participated in actions organized by Japanese officers to harass the rear guard of the Russian army. After the 1911 Revolution the Qing dynasty collapsed, the princes and Buddhist monks in Khalkha Mongolia of Outer Mongolia declared independence, and the so-called Bogdo Khaan government was established, whereupon Babuujab moved to Outer Mongolia and worked to transform the Bogdo Khaan government into an independent régime uniting all Mongol banners within the former territory of the Qing Empire. But once the position of the Bogdo Khaan government had been reduced to that of an autonomous government geographically limited to Outer Mongolia under the suzerainty of the Republic of China as a result of the Kiakhta Russo-Chinese-Mongol Tripartite Agreement of 1915, he began acting on his own accord with his own troops. He was then approached by Japanese “expansionists (*taigai-kô*)”, and eventually members of the Japanese army, including the young Koiso Kuniaki, Japanese Prime Minister in 1944–45, tried to use him in their campaign to overthrow Yuan Shikai.

After the subsequent establishment of Manchukuo, the Japanese puppet state in northeastern China (1932–45), these Japanese plans came to be known in Japan as the “second Manchu-Mongol independence movement (*Daini-jî Man-Mô dokuritsu undô*).”²⁶ But this is a

John W. Steinberg et al. ed., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective World War Zero* (Leiden & Boston, 2005), pp. 305–330.

²⁵ Nakami Tatsuo, “Babuujab and His Uprising: Re-examining the Inner Mongol Struggle for Independence”, *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* No. 57 (1999), pp. 137–153.

²⁶ Kokuryû-kai (Kuzuu Yoshihisa) ed., *Tôa Senkaku Shishi Kiden* [Biographical Portraits of Pioneer Patriots in East Asia], Vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kokuryû-kai, 1936), pp. 625–682.

hindsight construction. In fact, their goal was not the independence of Manchuria and Mongolia, and following Yuan Shikai's sudden death the Japanese army suspended its assistance to Babuujab, who was later killed in a surprise attack by troops belonging to the warlord Zhang Zuolin. Yet many Japanese are still under the misapprehension that there actually was a "second Manchu-Mongol independence movement."

But did Babuujab really participate in actions organized by the Japanese to harass the rear guard of the Russian army during the Russo-Japanese War? Babuujab's name cannot be found in any of the relevant materials or documents dating from the Russo-Japanese War or later. The expression used in a report submitted in February of 1916 to the Japanese army by a group of Japanese activists with an interest in him after their visit to his headquarters is quite nuanced, for it is stated that "Babuujab may have fought for Japan during the Russo-Japanese War."²⁷ This is, moreover, the first reference to Babuujab's activities during the Russo-Japanese War. If he had really taken part in rearguard harassment activities, his achievements would have been described in concrete detail. His name would also have been clearly remembered by Japanese army officers. In other words, there is a strong possibility that the Japanese activists linked Babuujab to the rearguard harassment unit in order to impress upon the Japanese Government that Babuujab had always been "pro-Japanese."

In the final analysis, it can be said that, as the Russo-Japanese War unfolded, it had virtually no real impact on Mongolia or the Mongols, as a whole. The only Mongols to be affected by it were a small number living in Manchuria and neighboring East Mongolia. In Outer Mongolia and the western regions of Inner Mongolia in particular the war had no impact to speak of, nor was Russia's prestige damaged by its eventual defeat. During the Soviet era, Communist bloc states spoke frequently of the 1905 Revolution, including its effect on Outer Mongolia, but this has now been completely rejected. It is, however, true that the Buriat Mongols were affected by the 1905 Revolution, and above all they served in the Russian army during the Russo-Japanese War.²⁸ One of them by the name of

²⁷ The Terauchi Masaki Papers at the National Diet Library in Tokyo, anon, "Babojabu" [Babuujab], reported in February, 1916.

²⁸ *Iz istorii revoliutsionnogo dvizheniia na Dal'nem Vostoke v gody pervoi russkoi revoliutsii* (Vladivostok, 1956).

Gantimur was the descendant of a Mongol who had fled to Tsarist Russia in the early Qing and had caused problems between Russia and the Qing.²⁹ His activities during the Russo-Japanese War are even mentioned in Shiba Ryotaro's novel, *Sakanoue no Kumo* (A Cloud at the Top of the Slope), the most popular post-1945 account of the Russo-Japanese war.

International Relations after the Russo-Japanese War and Their Impact on the Northeastern Crescent Zone of the Qing Empire

It would be no exaggeration to say that, apart from some isolated instances, the actual fighting during the Russo-Japanese War had almost no direct impact on the Mongols and Mongolia. But the results of the peace, especially shifts in Russo-Japanese relations, were to determine the future fate of the Mongols. The Russo-Japanese War also had a decisive impact on Manchuria, where the war was fought. As was noted earlier, prior to the war Heilongjiang, Jilin and Shengjing had each been ruled by a bannerman general, and "Manchuria" had not been perceived as a single, vast entity by anyone in China. In 1907 the Qing government reorganized the above three areas into the three provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin and Fengtian and established the supervisory post of Governor-General of the Three Eastern Provinces, to which Xu Shichang, a Han-Chinese official, was appointed.³⁰ The notion of "Three Eastern Provinces", or "Northeastern China", was officially born at this time.

The year 1907 was to become an important year for Russo-Japanese diplomacy as well. Japan had already concluded the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902, and there also existed a Franco-Russian Alliance. In 1907 there were concluded a Franco-Japanese Entente, an Anglo-Russian Entente, and a Russo-Japanese Entente, resulting in an entente between these four powers. During the negotiations

²⁹ Wakamatsu Hiroshi, "Ganchimûr no Rosia Bômei Jiken wo meguru Shin Rosia Kôshô" [The Qing-Russian Negotiations on Gantimur's Flight to Russia] *Kyôto Huritsu Daigaku Gakujutsu Hôkoku (Jinbun)* No. 25 (1973), pp. 25-39; No. 26 (1974), pp. 1-12.

³⁰ Enatsu Yoshiki, *Banner Legacy, The Rise of the Fengtian Local Elite at the End of the Qing* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, the University of Michigan, 2004).

with Japan, Russia demanded that Japan recognize its special interests throughout Mongolia, but in the end, in return for Russian respect for Japan's predominant position in Korea, Japan agreed to recognize Russia's special position only within the borders of Outer Mongolia. Japan's and Russia's respective spheres of influence were also established in Manchuria. The Qing government's creation of the Governor Generalship aimed at administrative centralization to ward off Japanese and Russian incursions, but at least in the short term, it had failed.

With each passing year, Russo-Japanese relations progressively changed from their former hostility to a more friendly relationship. The 1911 Chinese Revolution brought about the collapse of the Qing dynasty, but prior to this the Qing government had been attempting to implement radical changes in its previous policies for governing Mongolia. Until then, the basis of Qing policy for governing Mongolia had been to keep Mongol areas separate from Han-Chinese areas wherever practicable and to preserve the Mongol areas as a traditional nomadic zone. But it now began to introduce Chinese influences with the aim of opening up Mongolia and strengthening its border defenses. But the Mongol princes and Buddhist priesthood of Khalkha Mongolia in Outer Mongolia resisted these moves by the Qing and sent a secret mission to Russia. Eventually, through diplomatic intervention by Russia, the Qing suspended the implementation of its new policies, but at this point the Qing dynasty collapsed. In response to this new development, the Khalkha Mongol leaders set about establishing an independent state with the Tibetan "Living Buddha" of Urga as emperor, and they attempted to extend the territory of this independent state beyond Outer Mongolia to the regions to the south of the Gobi Desert inhabited by Mongols, that is, Inner Mongolia.³¹ The aforementioned Udai and Babuujab responded to these moves by going to Urga and participating in the new government, the Bogdo Khaan government.

Although the Russians were asked for assistance by the Mongols in achieving their goal of independence, the Russians had no intention

³¹ Nakami Tatsuo, "A Protest Against the Concept of the 'Middle Kingdom': The Mongols and the 1911 Revolution", Etô Shinkichi and Harold Z. Schiffman ed., *The 1911 Revolution in China, Interpretive Essays* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1984), pp. 129–149.

whatsoever of taking any hand in the creation of a Greater Mongolia that would also include Inner Mongolia.³² Eventually, under the skillful diplomatic guidance of Russia, negotiations took place between the Bogdo Khaan government, the Beijing government and the Russian government, and with the Kiakhta Tripartite Agreement of 1915 a high degree of Mongol autonomy under Chinese suzerainty was recognized within a region limited to Outer Mongolia.

Meanwhile, in the Russo-Japanese Entente of 1907 Japan received Russian recognition of South Manchuria as a Japanese sphere of influence, and since then it had been seeking to extend its influence to the Mongol areas of Inner Mongolia adjacent to or partially included in South Manchuria, corresponding to what was known to the Mongols as East Mongolia. Because of these circumstances, before moving to mediate in the question of Mongolian independence, Russia had first concluded in 1912 a third Russo-Japanese Entente which established Japanese and Russian spheres of influence in Inner Mongolia, and as a result most of East Mongolia became part of the Japanese sphere of influence. Since its agreements with Japan were of primary importance in Russia's East Asian diplomacy, it restricted Mongol autonomy to Outer Mongolia. It was also from about the time of this third Russo-Japanese Entente that there emerged in the geographical perceptions of the Japanese the strange term "*Man(shû)-Mô(ko)*." This was an abbreviation meaning literally "Manchuria and Mongolia," but at this point in time it referred specifically to South Manchuria and East Mongolia, that is, Japan's sphere of influence as recognized by Russia and other Western powers.³³

It was mentioned earlier that the emperor of the Bogdo Khaan government established as a result of the Mongolian declaration of independence in 1911 was a Tibetan "Living Buddha" in Urga, and, as is suggested by this fact, Tibet, Mongolia, and also the Manchu Qing emperor were closely bound by the bonds of Tibetan Buddhism.³⁴ During the time when tensions had been rising between Japan and

³² Nakami Tatsuo, "Russian Diplomats and Mongol Independence, 1911–1915", Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman ed., *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century, Landlocked Cosmopolitan* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), pp. 69–78.

³³ Nakami Tatsuo, "Chiiki Gainen no Seiji-sei", pp. 79–106.

³⁴ Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).

Russia, a major event had also taken place in Tibet. At the start of the twentieth century Russia and Great Britain were waging a "cold war," known as "the Great Game," in the area extending from Turkey to Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia.³⁵ Under the Qing, Tibet had enjoyed a far higher level of autonomy than Mongolia, and the Tibetan authorities had also banned all foreigners, including Englishmen and Russians, from entering Tibet. It then happened that a Buddhist monk by the name of Agwan Dorjiev, who was a Buriat Mongol and therefore a subject of the Russian tsar, made approaches to the 13th Dalai Lama, the ruler of Tibet. Dorjiev's intentions are by no means clear, but he held aspirations for a form of pan-Tibetan Buddhism, and it is also true that he was receiving a certain amount of support for his activities from the tsar.³⁶

These movements by Dorjiev excited the suspicions of the government of British India, although this was not because it had any imperialistic interest in extending its sphere of influence in Tibet. Even more so than Outer Mongolia for the Russians, Tibet was a region that would be nothing but a burden for Great Britain and from which it could expect no benefits whatsoever were it to take possession of it. But the infiltration of the influence of Britain's rival Russia was the one thing that it found difficult to accept in terms of India's security. In 1904 British troops under the command of Colonel Francis E. Younghusband, dispatched by the Indian government, invaded Tibet, and the Dalai Lama fled together with Dorjiev to Urga in Outer Mongolia. The history of the tribulations of the Tibetan people, which have continued down to the present day, began at this time.³⁷ However, the Indian government had not launched its military campaign because of rising tensions in Russo-Japanese relations, for apart from the Buriat Mongol monks there was not a single Russian in Tibet, and it was quite inconceivable that Russia would take any retaliatory action. The British aim was to stamp out all signs of danger, and insofar that they were intended

³⁵ Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game* (London: John Murray, 1990).

³⁶ John Snelling, *Buddhism in Russia, the Story of Agwan Dorzhiev* (Massachusetts: Element, 1993).

³⁷ As to Tibetan history during the first half of 20th century, see Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913–1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

to check the expansion of Tsarist Russia in East Asia, these actions, like the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, were based on a consistent foreign policy on the part of Great Britain.

It was on account of these aims that Great Britain concluded the Treaty of Lhasa with the Tibetan authorities in the absence of the Dalai Lama and made them recognize Britain's preeminent position in Tibet. Then in 1906 Great Britain concluded an agreement with the Qing whereby, in return for British recognition of Qing suzerainty over Tibet, the Qing confirmed the principles of the Treaty of Lhasa with some supplementary provisions. Relations between the Qing and Tibet had originally been structured around the relationship between the Dalai Lama, head of the Buddhist priesthood in Tibet, and the Qing emperor, who was his patron.³⁸ This traditional relationship was thus different in nature from one based on suzerainty as defined in modern international law, but as a result of these events Qing rights over Tibet shifted to the latter basis.

When the Russo-Japanese War, with all its international ramifications, is considered from the perspective of the northeastern crescent zone of the Qing Empire, the war itself had almost no impact except in Manchuria. But in the wake of the war, there were considerable changes in the state of affairs in this region. A series of agreements partitioned this region into Japanese, Russian and British spheres of influence, while the Qing government, under the leadership of Han-Chinese officials, set about recovering its sovereignty and consolidating its rule. The Dalai Lama, who had fled to Outer Mongolia, eventually returned to Lhasa but was then driven out by Qing forces intent on strengthening their control and fled to India, where he heard the news of the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911. The establishment of the Three Eastern Provinces in Manchuria was likewise an attempt by the Qing to counter Japanese and Western perceptions of this region as "Manchuria," with its own conception "Northeastern China." Similarly, in Mongolia the Qing tried to change its policy of rule, as a result of which the Mongols became wary of the Chinese and declared independence once the Qing

³⁸ Suzuki Chusei, *Chibetto wo meguru Chu-In Kankei-shi* [Tibet and Sino-Indian Relations] (Tokyo: Hitotsubashi Shobô, 1962).

dynasty collapsed. When considered in light of its outcomes, the Russo-Japanese War brought changes to the connections between local regions and international relations in the northeastern crescent zone of the Qing Empire and also provided the occasion for modifications to the structure of Qing rule.

PORTSMOUTH DENIED: THE CHINESE ATTEMPT TO ATTEND

Hirakawa Sachiko

One interesting aspect of the Russo-Japanese War is that the battles took place on the territory of neutral countries. Indeed, the very course of warfare physically destroyed large swathes of battlefield, while greatly impacting the spaces used for troop positioning and rear facilities. Many inhabitants of Korea and the Chinese Northeast (Manchuria) lost both their arable land and means of livelihood. At the outbreak of hostilities, the Chinese government declared neutrality because the Manchu dynasty allegedly was too weak politically, militarily, and financially to have any other option. Furthermore, most studies on the significance of the war for China focus on the postwar effects on her domestic political development such as constitutionalism, nationalism, or the movement to study abroad. China's actual policy toward the war has been largely neglected as a topic.¹

For example, Ian Nish, an authority on the war, mentions China only in passing, and sums up China's role in the origins of the war as: "it was the known wish of some Chinese, and indeed some foreigners, that China should not fail to take part in any battles fought on her territories."² Instead, Nish focuses on Japanese determination which favored Chinese neutrality as opposed to aiding Russia. According to him, "Japan concluded that it was most desirable to confine hostilities to Russia and Japan, otherwise, if China joined in and other powers followed, a world-wide conflagration could not be avoided, hence the potential of a World War."³

¹ Other articles in this two-volume set of the *Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* that deal with aspects of China's experience of the Russo-Japanese war are Li Anshan, "The Miscellany and Mixed: The War and Chinese Nationalism" in this volume and David Wolff, "Intelligence Intermediaries: The Competition for Chinese Spies" in Volume One.

² Ian Nish, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War*. (London, 1985) p. 200.

³ Ibid.

One recent Japanese study opened new discussions regarding China's independent response to the war. Kawashima Shin argues that China's policy of neutrality can be understood as an attempt by the ruling Manchus to recover lost sovereignty, an expression of distrust toward Russia, of caution toward Japan, an application of international law, and a projection of postwar expectations.⁴ According to his study, Chinese decision-makers had already decided on a policy of neutrality sometime around November/December 1903. Kawashima summarizes that China's primary goal was to recover her sovereignty of the three eastern provinces (Manchuria) from the occupying Russians. While knowing that siding with Japan was strategically more advantageous than siding with Russia, China, in its best national interest chose neutrality to defend against being attacked by any external or internal enemy. Bansei Rihachiro, a Japanese military advisor to Yuan Shikai, wrote in his memoir, "It was fortunate that China adopted a policy of benevolent neutrality" and even averred that he himself wrote the declaration of China's neutrality.⁵

The Chinese government followed Japan's advice on this issue, because they had little choice but to believe that Japan's intention was to "return" the Manchurian land to China after ousting the Russian troops who had remained after the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. In fact, the Chinese government pretended to follow Japanese advice and looked on as battles between foreign powers devastated Manchurian soil, the land where the dynasty's roots lay. Nonetheless, the war was occurring on their soil so the Chinese government had the means to closely follow the events leading up to, the conflict itself, and the peace process that followed the Russo-Japanese War.

During the war, a period of maximum foreign "intervention," the Chinese government, because of the "Open Door" policy, regarded the United States as a natural ally. In fact, some US documents recorded sporadic Chinese approaches to the United States to seek protection of Chinese sovereignty. China's requests to the US for mediation and arbitration had begun before the war occurred and

⁴ Kawashima Shin, "The Russo-Japanese War and Chinese Neutrality." *Gunji Shigaku* Vol. 40. The Russo-Japanese War (I) International Context (December 2004) pp. 79–96.

⁵ Bansei Rihachiro, "Sonokorono nihon to shina" in *Sansen niyu shosei nichiro taisen o kataru* (Tokyo, 1935) p. 303 as cited in Kawashima, p. 80.

continued until shortly before the Portsmouth Peace Conference. China's active diplomatic will is more conspicuous in Sino-US relations than in Sino-Japanese relations. This paper reveals China's intention to send her delegation to the Portsmouth Conference and the US response to China's request. As the relevant Chinese archival sources are limited, this research is largely based on U.S. and Japanese diplomatic documents along with memoirs and news articles from various countries.

China's approach to the US before and during the war

In March 1899, US Secretary of State John Hay circulated his first Open Door note, which as a reaction to imperialism argued for commercial equality among great powers. His second Open Door note of July 1900 more clearly stated that the US policy toward China aimed to protect China's territorial and administrative integrity while preventing any conflicts in Asia. It basically established the American image for Chinese of the US as a moral and reliable nation.

Operating under these assumptions, China approached the U.S. to ask for assistance in keeping the peace and protecting China's sovereignty. In September 1903 an official of the Waiwubu (ministry of foreign affairs) asked Edwin Conger, US minister to China, to mediate Russo-Japanese relations and the American minister promised that he would transmit the request to Washington, although he did note that the United States had little influence on such matters in St. Petersburg and Tokyo.⁶ At the end of 1903 Conger's view of the situation was:

Hence war seems probable. If it shall come the situation of China will be wholly unique, extremely difficult and critical; much of the land-fighting will be by two foreign nations upon her territory and important sea battles may be fought in her waters. The vessels of either may enter her ports, violate all international rules of neutrality, and China in her utter helplessness can only protest in vain . . . Some of the leading spirits in China are advising the Imperial Government to make common cause with Japan, and join in the expulsion of Russia. The

⁶ Luo xianglin, *Liang cheng de chu shi Meiguo* (Xianggang, 1977). Appendix. 'Liang cheng shi mei suo yi wen jian'. p. 249.

wiser and more conservative officials see only suicide in such a course and will advise the strict neutrality. But the usual policy of China is so stupid and vacillating that she may unconsciously drift into either camp.⁷

Not only did the U.S. have little influence over the warring powers, Conger made clear that he had little respect for Chinese policy makers, although, in fact as pointed out above, the Chinese had already adopted Conger's "wiser course."

Meanwhile, in the Chinese imperial court, the sense of crisis gradually rose. As of November, already expecting a fearful confusion similar to what followed the Boxer Rebellion, about fifty to a hundred eunuchs escaped from the court every day. Empress Dowager Cixi grieved that she was not able to rely on even Li Lianying, the head of eunuchs, and every morning checked overseas press and Reuters reports. She told Yuan Shikai, Viceroy of Zhili, that the best policy for China was to strictly maintain her neutrality no matter how the dispute between Russia and Japan unfolded. She added, "I can't stand an awful war like the Sino-Japanese war" and told him to order all officials not to offer any comments that might implicate China in the growing impasse.⁸

At the beginning of 1904, the Japanese government started to pursue a policy designed to maintain China's neutrality in the event of war. As a result they contacted Prince Qing, the head of the Waiwubu with a formal neutrality proposal. Actually, even within China, all powerful people such as the Empress Dowager, Prince Qing, Yuan Shikai, and Zhang Zhidong, Viceroy of Huguang, agreed that the best course to follow was one of strict neutrality. Remarkably, Wu Tingfang, a newly appointed vice minister of the Waiwubu, proposed that China call a special international conference to publicly declare her neutrality. He further suggested that China should call foreign ministers in Peking to discuss measures to ensure China's neutrality. Wu Tingfang was one of China's most outstanding diplomats in those days. He had been Chinese Minister to the US from 1897 to 1902 and during his term he successfully concluded the loan

⁷ Dec. 26 1903 Conger to Hay, *American Diplomacy and Public Papers: The United States and China* (Scholarly Resources Inc: Wilmington, Delaware), vol. 9, p. 251 (hereafter cited as *ADPP*).

⁸ Tokurei Sugao no kotaigo (Tokyo, 1987), pp. 207–215.

treaty for constructing the Macao-Hankou Railway and China's first equal treaty with Mexico. Wu had a reputation for eccentricity, but many in the diplomatic community appreciated his abilities.⁹

In late January, as war loomed, China proposed another way to avoid the outbreak of war. Chang Poxi, an official of the ministry of administration, and Lian Fang, a representative of Viceroy Zhang Zhidong, informally asked Britain, France, and the US ministers in Beijing for joint mediation.¹⁰ While the British minister rejected the proposal, the French minister indicated the willingness of his government. Therefore, these Chinese officials visited the US minister Conger to seriously ask cooperation from the US. They appealed that they were determined, despite China's helpless condition, to do whatever was possible to prevent the war.

Conger's response was cool, even though he first emphasized that no country cherished more sincere friendship for China than did the US. He explained that Japan had already declared its unwillingness to consider mediation, while asserting that the US was more familiar with the Russo-Japanese negotiations than China. He also advised China to ask major powers for joint mediation through the individual Chinese ministers in each country. Furthermore, he found French political motivation suspect and advised China to be careful. In short, Conger had no intention of seriously considering China's request. China was powerless to prevent a war on her own territory. On February 8, 1905 the Russo-Japanese war began.

On February 12, the Chinese government formally declared its neutrality. The same day, Yuan Shikai and the Waiwubu sent letters to government officials in the three eastern provinces to order China's neutrality policy and command the protection of foreign property, the maintenance of regional stability and the suppression of groundless rumors. It was China's opinion that the neutrality policy could be applied to the battlefield itself. It is supposedly based on the concept of "strict neutrality" from the perspective of international law. More importantly, China demonstrated that Manchuria was a part of China. The Chinese government consistently insisted

⁹ Lo Huimin, ed., *The Correspondence of G. E. Morrison I. 1895-1912*. (Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 248-249.

¹⁰ Conger to Hay, *ADPP*, vol. 9, (January 30, 1904), p. 283.

that its neutrality policy covered the whole of China, including Manchuria, while other great powers tended to see Manchuria as a separate entity from China proper. Thus, some countries developed divergent policy conceptions for the eastern provinces as compared to the rest of China.

In January 1905, when Japan occupied Lushun (Port Arthur), the rumor that Russia was seeking peace began to circulate and it was reported that China would offer to mediate between Japan and Russia.¹¹ On the reception of these reports, the Japanese foreign minister, Komura Jutaro, immediately ordered Matsui Keishiro, acting Japanese minister to China, to investigate the truth and interrupt any Chinese attempt for peace. Komura gave strict instruction that if necessary Matsui was permitted to mention the guarantee of Manchuria to persuade China.¹² In fact, one Chinese paper reported that the Waiwubu had already transmitted the mediation question to the imperial court. When Matsui asked if it was true or not, Prince Qing partially admitted that some officials were raising similar opinions but no mediation had been offered. Matsui emphasized that the best way for China was to simply follow Japanese recommendations. He also told Prince Qing that China's unsuccessful action for mediation would only humiliate China itself.¹³

In February, Japan's intervention at the Manchu court continued. Uchida Kosai, Japanese minister to China, who had just returned to Peking, himself visited Prince Qing to again persuade him not to consider any peace initiatives. At the same time, Uchida also advised Prince Qing not to take any arbitrary action that would affect Japan's interests. Prince Qing initially replied that as Manchuria was China's territory, China would make decisions after discussions with Japan and Russia. However, Matsui firmly replied that Japan would never allow another country's intervention over this issue. Then Prince Qing finally conceded and said that he would first ask Matsui for Japan's consent and then bring the issue to Russia to discuss. Moreover, Uchida intentionally told Prince Qing that Japan might leak her will for peace to Great Britain and the US. According to Uchida, the

¹¹ Kawashima, "The Russo-Japanese war and Chinese neutrality," pp. 85-88.

¹² Komura to Matsui, No. 81. *Nihon Gaiko Bunsho, Nichiro Senso V.* p. 89 [Japanese Diplomatic Documents, the Russo-Japanese War vol. V. (hereafter cited as NGB, RJW.)]

¹³ Matsui to Komura, No. 85. NGB RJW, p. 90.

Chinese government well differentiated Anglo-American governments from European Continental governments in terms of their China policies and tended to regard the former as not ambitious. Therefore, Matsui gave China a sense of security by stressing that Japan was also in the Anglo-American line of communication.¹⁴

Meanwhile, much of Manchuria had been laid waste for two straight disastrous harvests. Not only cultivation stopped, but also commercial activities were interrupted. The cities were filled with dead bodies, widows, and orphans. Facing these miseries, local officials in Manchuria repeatedly appealed for an immediate armistice and peace to the central government.¹⁵ They specifically proposed to invite foreign ministers of major powers to Beijing in the Emperor's name for the international peace conference.

In fact, the Chinese government again showed its interest in approaching the US. The February 23 telegram from Yuan Shikai to Liang Cheng, the Chinese minister to the US, described the multinational movement for arbitration, but when Japan and Russia would accept the good offices was unknown. Yuan's telegraph also stated his fear that after the war the mediating nations would expect rewards from China. His perception was serious enough to warrant comparison with the bad dream of extinction of the Shang Dynasty (1046 A.D.). With this sense of crisis, Yuan offered the US secret help on the appropriate timing.¹⁶

China also showed her active will for peace on February 26 when Prince Qing and Wu Tingfang visited Uchida. The Japanese minister to Beijing noticed Wu Tingfang was unusually curious about Japan's intention on possible places for negotiations and conditions for peace. Uchida suspected Wu Tingfang had been preparing for Yuan Shikai to propose something under order of Prince Qing because in Uchida's eyes the relationship between Yuan and Qing seemed to be warming.¹⁷

¹⁴ Yoshimura Michio, "Nichiro kowa mondai no ichi sokumen- Nichibeino taishin taido o chushin ni." *Nihon Gaikoshi Kenkyuu-Nissin Nichiro Senso* (Tokyo, 1962) The primary source is Gaimusho Kiroku Teikoku Shogaiko Kankei Zassan Nisshikanno Ichi. At Japanese Foreign Ministry Archives. (hereafter cited as JFMA.)

¹⁵ Liaoningsheng danganguan, "Rie zhanzheng dangan shiliao" (Liaoning, 1995), p. 216.

¹⁶ Liang cheng shi mei suo yi wen jian, p. 284.

¹⁷ Uchida to Komura, Confidential No. 29, Gaimusho Kiroku Teikoku Shogaiko Zassan Nisshikan no Ichi JFMA.

As a matter of fact, Uchida's fear was correct. In March, Prince Qing and Yuan Shikai together went to Conger and requested US initiative in the international arbitration. They strongly requested the US to take an important part together with other friendly nations in the final adjustments and not to allow unnecessary despoilment of China in the terms of settlement.¹⁸ Conger superficially replied, "The US government could in future, as in the past, be relied upon to do whatever, as a friend to China, she might properly and legally do to secure her fair treatment, save her people from spoliation, and to protect the international right which she, together with other Powers, had acquired in the Empire." Conger was to leave the position within the week. Furthermore, the US was already preparing another scenario. President Theodore Roosevelt was offering his personal good offices to Japan and Russia.

Roosevelt appeases China to counteract the Chinese expulsion law

President Roosevelt shared many of the dominant ideas of his day, such as progressivism, social Darwinism, imperialism, and naval expansionism. He tended to favor Japan over China, considering the latter as backward. However, in May 1905, the Chinese expulsion law, a draconian expulsion law aimed at all Chinese immigrants, turned his attention to Chinese nationalism and sovereignty. People in China as well as overseas Chinese boycotted US products, a movement which later was transformed into the more comprehensive nationalist movement. Before May 10, the planned date of passing the Congress, several Shanghai commercial guilds had first organized anti-US boycott committees. Within two weeks, the calls for the boycott movements spread to more than twenty cities with trade connections to the US.

Coincidentally, William Rockhill was just arriving in China as a new US minister to Beijing replacing Conger. Telegrams and wires from the consul staff and US citizens of many cities such as Fuzhou, Guangdong, Hankou and Tianjin everyday arrived and piled up on Rockhill's desk. Facing such a situation, Rockhill in his first appointment with Prince Qing, firmly requested that measures be taken as

¹⁸ Conger to Hay, *ADPP*, vol. 10, pp. 87–89 (March 31, 1905).

soon as possible. Unexpectedly, the Chinese court seemed to do nothing to counteract the anti-US boycott, which gradually convinced Rockhill that the court had unofficially approved the boycott.¹⁹

On the other hand, Roosevelt wrote to Rockhill soon after the outbreak of the boycott, evincing a new interest.

I have been interested to learn from various sources, including the Chinese minister here, that China is not anxious to see Japanese win an overwhelming victory because China is rather afraid of the Japanese. I have been told that just as the Japanese who study civil and military affairs abroad come home bent upon using that knowledge in the interest of Japan as against any foreign nation, so the Chinese students who study military affairs under Japanese instructions have no intention whatever of becoming mere followers of Japan, but intend to use the knowledge they gain from the Japanese for the interests of China as against Japan or any other power. Do let me know about all this. I am trying in every way to make things easy for the Chinese here. Chinese laborers must be kept out of this country, but I want to secure the best possible treatment for Chinese businessmen, students, and travelers.²⁰

In June, Roosevelt followed up on this interest. On June 16, he called for "special and rigid" instructions to the officials of the Immigration Bureau that the US not tolerate discourtesy or harsh treatment in connection with Chinese merchants, travelers, and students.²¹ Within a few days, he again wrote that even the possibility of harsh treatment to Chinese might cause trouble for the Japanese peace delegation "in connection with Oriental people."²² Roosevelt's concern regarding discrimination against Chinese may be justified by the memoir of Elihu Root, who later directly dealt with the problem as Secretary of State.

There was dreadful treatment of the Chinese in California. Many were turned back at the ports destitute and many died on the way back. I had the situation looked into shortly after I became Secretary and was satisfied there was serious mistreatment parallel to our mistreatment of the negroes and Indians . . . Changes in law were too slow—too slow for the people interested in this matter and, as a result, Chinese

¹⁹ Rockhill to Hay, *ADPP*, vol. 10, pp. 102–104 (July 6, 1905).

²⁰ Roosevelt to Rockhill, Elting E. Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* vol. IV (Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 1184 (May 18, 1905).

²¹ Roosevelt to Metcalf, *Ibid.*, p. 1235 (June 16, 1905).

²² Roosevelt to Metcalf, *Ibid.*, p. 1240 (June 19, 1905).

were arrested when they landed. There was collusion between our consuls and the Chinese officials who were giving fraudulent certificates and visas.”²³

In late June, determined to protect the higher class Chinese, Roosevelt micromanaged administrative changes in the Immigration Bureau and ordered the US diplomatic and consular representatives in China to check closely the identifications of Chinese who were going to the US in order for Chinese students, merchants, and travelers to be fairly protected. He declared that officials who offended against the president's will would be instantly dismissed.²⁴ Nevertheless, in spite of Roosevelt's expectation, the storm of the anti-US boycott was not yet spent. Soon, Chinese newspapers began boycotting American advertisement. Chinese demands expanded to the modification of Chinese immigration laws in Hawaii and the Philippines. In this situation, it was reported that China had proposed to send a special mission to Washington to facilitate a settlement.²⁵

In American eyes, the Chinese government had taken almost no measures to suppress the anti-US boycott with the sole exception of Viceroy Yuan Shikai, who controlled Tianjin. Even at the peak of the boycott, Tianjin continued to trade freely with the US. Furthermore, Yuan Shikai aggressively advised other viceroys and governor-generals to forcefully suppress the boycotts.²⁶ Yuan's attitude derived from his expectation over the post-war settlement. He believed that the US was a possible future guarantor of China for the post-war Manchurian administration and in the broader view China should not antagonize the US.²⁷

At the same time, as for the peace conference, the Chinese imperial court remained attentive, especially in June when Japanese Dietman Hiraoka Kotaro toured China. In conversation with Prince Qing, Hiraoka, a well known continental expansionist asked fiercely: “Japan openly declared the return of Manchuria, but is China prepared to receive or not?” He added harshly, “if the war is to happen again, Japan can not return easily because we fought at the risk

²³ Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root* (New York, 1938), pp. 44–45.

²⁴ *The New York Times*, June 26, 1905.

²⁵ *The New York Times*, June 28, 1905.

²⁶ Rockhill to Hay, *ADPP*, vol. 11 (July 6, 1905); *New York Times*, June 28, 1905; *Mainichi Shinbun*, June 26, 1905.

²⁷ *Xinmin Congbao*, 3rd year, No. 20.

of the national fate and sacrificed our lives.” Prince Qing replied, with tears welling up in his eyes, “If I were a Japanese, I would think similarly to you.”²⁸

A few days later, the Chinese government formally asked viceroys, government generals, and overseas ministers to make suggestions for Chinese policy toward the coming peace conference and Manchurian question.²⁹ Meanwhile, inspired by the anti-US boycott, many Chinese students assembled to advocate the rescue of China.³⁰ Some students studying in Europe and the US wrote to the Chinese government letters of proposal for the peace conference.³¹ With all these opinions, the court held several secret meetings and finally Prince Qing made a bold decision.

It was around June 23 that Prince Qing visited Rockhill and informed him that China strongly desired to participate in the forthcoming Russo-Japanese peace negotiation. According to Prince Qing, the Chinese Emperor would like to send directly to the President a request to ask US cooperation to protect China’s sovereign rights.³² Rockhill immediately dissuaded the Prince from hasty measures that would not only embarrass friendly nations but also end up most disadvantageously to China’s interest. “While the President would be undoubtedly pleased to receive a telegram from the Emperor evidencing His Majesty’s belief in the friendly disposition of our country, it did not seem to be at all necessary. The policy of the United States in Far Eastern affairs is well known to him, and to the world generally, by our often repeated declaration in favor of the integrity and independence of the Empire. No new declaration on our part is needed. The Prince might feel sure that we would, whenever necessary, use our best efforts to have our views accepted by all interested Powers, but I did not believe that the proper time for supporting our view was during the peace negotiations between Japan and Russia, but after their conclusion.” He further said, “I did not believe there was the least probability that in the peace negotiation, terms involving China’s sovereign rights would be settled. The United States

²⁸ Conversation of Dietman Hiraoka Kotaro with Chinese High Officials, Gaimusho Kiroku Teikoku Shogaiko Zassan Nissikan no Bu. JFMA.

²⁹ Wang Yanwei et al. eds, *Qingji waijiao shiliao* (Beijing, 1987) Vol. 190, p. 2960.

³⁰ *The North-China Herald*, June 30, 1905.

³¹ *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, July 15, 1905.

³² Rockhill to Hay, *ADPP*, vol. 11, pp. 167–169 (July 1, 1905).

believed implicitly in Japan's declaration that in the present war she did not seek aggrandizement at the expense of China, and we had also the utmost faith in her declaration pledging herself to the maintenance of the 'open door' and the independence of China. She would do nothing in the peace negotiations to shake our faith in her."

After successfully dissuading Prince Qing, Rockhill called Yuan Shikai in Tianjin to make sure that China would remain quiet during the Russo-Japanese negotiations. Overall, Rockhill's view on China was very critical. "The lack of any settled policy among the high officers of Chinese government, I refrain from using the word statesman as I fear there is not one to be found in China at the present day, is terribly evident. Indecision and a determination to drift with any current is shown on every side. It is manifest to the most casual observer that China is quite unable to manage her international affairs without strong support and constant pressure from without." Rockhill believed that the US, like Japan, should stop China's interfering in the termination of the war.

In late June, news reports that China requested to participate in the peace conference began circulating. Some indicated China's conspiracy with Russia from the early stages. For example, the Chinese court was looking forward to the arrival of the new Russian minister Dmitrii Pokotilov, who had been an old friend of the court and in the past had managed the Russo-Chinese Bank and the Chinese Eastern Railway Company offices in China.³³ According to George E. Morrison of the *London Times*, Pokotilov was the "most formidable minister Russia has ever had in Peking." Pokotilov was "clever and unscrupulous. With his knowledge and powerful personality he impresses the Chinese and he speaks Chinese with a power and grace such as few men possess. With equal fluency he speaks English, French, German, Russian, and Chinese. He will have unlimited means at his disposal and he knows the subject down to the ground."³⁴

Morrison reported Russia had successfully inspired China to be present at the conference proposed by President Roosevelt, which they believed, had been "prompted by Japan." Russia was going to the conference "not with the desire for peace, but because it is impossible to disregard the invitation of President Roosevelt."³⁵ In fact,

³³ *The London Times*, June 27, 1905.

³⁴ Morrison to T. V. Chirol Lo, *The Correspondence of G. E. Morrison*, p. 298 (May 5, 1905).

³⁵ *The London Times*, July 3, 1905.

Novoe Vremia, a Russian paper, claimed the US was “at the bottom of China’s request to be represented at the peace negotiations in Washington.” It critically wrote, “The United States continues to champion the cause of the Chinese government for selfish motives, and Mr. Roosevelt has decided the admission of a Chinese representative as an offset against the exclusion of Chinese from America.”³⁶

These reports embarrassed the Japanese government. Furthermore, the fact that Pokotilov had arrived earlier than the original schedule was ominous enough to verify the rumor, although later the Japanese government learned it was because he was concurrently appointed as a delegate to the peace conference. Foreign Minister Komura, before his departure to Washington as plenipotentiary, had left a “confidential note,” which stated that “No interference and participation was allowed in the Russo-Japanese negotiations. Matters regarding Chinese interests will be negotiated and decided directly with China at appropriate times.”³⁷ Following instructions, Japanese minister Uchida investigated and learned that the majority of Chinese government officials supported China’s participation in the conference and the government had unofficially appointed Natong, a Manchurian officer in the Waiwubu, as Chinese plenipotentiary for the conference.³⁸

Actually, two days later, Natong himself visited Uchida and proudly said, “Manchuria is China’s territory and therefore our participation is different from others’. Other nations as well as Russia and Japan should have no objection. Therefore, I came here to officially tell Japan, preceding Russia. We never know what Russia may do, but Japan should agree to our decision.”³⁹ Then, Uchida again learned that the Chinese opinion supporting participation in the conference resulted from answers of more than thirty high-class officials in Beijing and local officials to the imperial question, and he realized the situation could not be turned over easily by just his personal recommendation. Uchida felt that in order to interrupt China’s attempt the most official way would be necessary. In other words, a letter of inquiry with reasonable recommendations should be directly passed

³⁶ *The London Times*, July 5, 1905 (dispatch from St. Petersburg datelined July 4).

³⁷ Komura to Uchida, No. 149 NGB RJW Vol. V, pp. 157–158.

³⁸ Uchida to Komura, No. 146. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

³⁹ Uchida to Katsura, No. 150. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

to Prince Qing. Furthermore, Uchida believed this Japanese interference must be completed before China's official announcement not to damage the Sino-Japanese relationship. He was determined to "eradicate the foolish plan now."⁴⁰

China's Dispatch of Letters of Inquiry for the Peace Conference

Despite Natong's strong opinions which disturbed Uchida, the Chinese government actually made a concession the next day. When Uchida conferred with Prince Qing, Natong, and Zhu Hongqi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Chinese side told Uchida that taking Japanese advice they had given up on sending a plenipotentiary mission. However, in order to win the hearts of the people who had wished China's participation in the peace conference they proposed a new idea: China would not approve China-related articles without previous consultation with China, of which China would soon officially inform Russia and Japan by dispatch.⁴¹

Learning China's new proposal, Katsura Taro, Prime Minister and concurrently acting Foreign Minister replacing Komura, while absent at Portsmouth, transmitted a strict order., Katsura ordered Uchida to firmly persuade China to stop immediately because this kind of letter would only obstruct the Russo-Japanese negotiations and delay the conclusion of the war. The final comment of Katsura's original order even stated that if China would not take this advice Japan could not help withdrawing the initial declaration on the restoration of Manchuria and taking free action. Nine hours later, Katsura cancelled the statement.⁴² However, this time Uchida answered it was still necessary and he would take the final responsibility.⁴³

On the same day, Uchida with the order from Katsura, made every effort to stop China from dispatching letters of inquiry. However, Prince Qing was absent because he went to attend the presentation of Pokotilov in the Emperor's summer palace. Instead, Uchida called Natong and disappointedly learned that the Chinese government had

⁴⁰ Uchida to Katsura, No. 151. Ibid., pp. 159–161.

⁴¹ Uchida to Katsura, No. 152. Ibid., p. 162.

⁴² Katsura to Uchida, No. 153. Ibid., p. 162.

⁴³ Uchida to Katsura, No. 154. Ibid., p. 163.

already dispatched letters of inquiry. Uchida then rushed to the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to directly intercept and suspend the letters, however he was able to do nothing because all powerful officials were absent because of attending the same ceremony in the summer palace.⁴⁴ Finally, on the next day, China's letter of inquiry, which should not have arrived, did arrive in Katsura's hands through Yang Shu, Chinese Minister to Japan.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, in the US, John Hay died on July 1 after his long illness. Roosevelt was occupied in nominating a new Secretary of State. On July 5, Roosevelt through Rockhill received a confidential message from the Chinese emperor.⁴⁶ The message conveyed China's gratitude for the US proclamation that China's territorial integrity and sovereignty must be protected. It added that "the Chinese Government hopes that the President will exert his influence for the protection of the territorial rights of China in Manchuria and all China's interests, preserving her sovereignty complete without loss." The message did not mention China's participation in the peace conference.

On the next day, US Acting Secretary of State Pierce coolly replied, "the Government of the United States will do everything possible to preserve the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of China in the coming peace negotiations, but the United States is only endeavoring to bring the two countries together, and will have nothing to do with the actual negotiations themselves."⁴⁷ Actually, a similar attitude is also found in Roosevelt's personal comments. On July 8, in conversation with Japanese special ambassador Kaneko Kentaro in the Presidential retreat at Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt said, "Recently the Chinese Emperor asked my help on the Chinese territorial integrity and sovereignty in Manchuria. I answered the issues which should be decided in the peace negotiations will not belong to my sphere of influence." At the same time, Roosevelt suspected a Russian stratagem behind China's actions.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Uchida to Katsura, No. 155. Ibid., pp. 163–164.

⁴⁵ Chinese Minister in Japan to Katsura, No. 156. Ibid., pp. 164–165.

⁴⁶ Rockhill to Pierce, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter cited as FRUS), p. 816 (July 5, 1905).

⁴⁷ Pierce to Rockhill, FRUS, p. 817 (July 5, 1905).

⁴⁸ Komura to Katsura, No. 457. NGB. RJW Vol. V, p. 741.

Nevertheless, China continued to approach the US. In Beijing, Rockhill received a letter of inquiry from Prince Qing. It said that "in this present war it is Chinese territory that has been used for military operations, and if in the articles of peace now about to be negotiated there should be anything involving Chinese interests, it will be impossible to recognize any arrangement whatever, made at this time, concerning which agreement shall not have first have been reached with China. My board has already sent a dispatch to this effect to the Japanese and Russian ministers residing in Peking, thus making a plain declaration beforehand."⁴⁹ The issue date of the dispatch was July 6. It was the day when Uchida rushed around to stop the dispatch. Soon thereafter, the same dispatch arrived in Washington. Liang Cheng, Chinese Minister to the US, passed the letter to Acting Secretary of State Adee.⁵⁰

China prepared to send responsible specialists in order to indirectly participate in the peace conference hoping that China's proposal would be approved. Reportedly, the Chinese government appointed Wu Tingfang as a formal observer to protect Chinese interests.⁵¹ With his rich experience, he was also expected to visit the US for the disposal of the troublesome Chinese expulsion law and to concurrently watch the peace conference. In fact, he had already prepared specific proposals for modifications of the law in order to improve Sino-US relations.⁵² In the US, Wu Tingfang was often regarded as an instigator of the anti-US boycott in China.⁵³

Wang Daxie, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, was appointed as Minister for the peace negotiations to serve a "secret mission".⁵⁴ Coincidentally, the Chinese government decided to send in the end of July five ministers for an investigation trip to several advanced countries including Russia, Japan and the US. Some media speculated that they also worked as observers for the peace negotiations.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Rockhill to the Secretary of State, FRUS, p. 818 (July 8, 1905).

⁵⁰ Chinese Minister to Acting Secretary of States Adee, FRUS, pp. 818-819 (July 10, 1905).

⁵¹ *The Japan Weekly Mail*, July 8, 1905. *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, July 18, 1905.

⁵² Wu Tingfang to D. A. Tompkins, letter of Aug 9, 1905 (D. A. Tompkins papers: Southern Historical Collection, Library of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

⁵³ *The Washington Times*, Aug 9, 1905; "Marquis D. R. "Wu-The Personality behind the Chinese Boycott" *American Illustrated Magazine* LXII (May, 1906) pp. 74-77.

⁵⁴ *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, July 20, 1905; *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 21, 1905.

⁵⁵ *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, July 17, 1905.

Thus, China seemed to attempt to send observers to the US under various names. The court scholars collectively submitted their opinions on the problems of the three eastern provinces and began to explain China's sovereignty in Manchuria.⁵⁶ However, despite China's preparations, replies from other countries were not positive. Japan, on the day following receipt of the Chinese letter, rejected China's request. Japan insisted that "the Chinese note in no way affects Japan's planned actions in the peace negotiation."⁵⁷ Russia soon replied somewhat more sympathetically. The Russian note stated that "the negotiations will be conducted by Russian and Japanese Plenipotentiaries, inasmuch as the war has been between Russia and Japan. At the same time, Russia, who is in relationship with China, recognizes that the Chinese Government is interested in certain of the questions which will be discussed."⁵⁸

In fact, China's official notification requesting her indirect participation in the peace conference was not delivered to Roosevelt for about two weeks. The president first looked at it in late July, when Chinese Minister Liang Cheng himself was already spending summer vacation in Amherst, Massachusetts.⁵⁹ Regarding the sending of any representative to Portsmouth, no further instructions from Beijing seemed to reach Washington. Thus, before the end of July, the possibility of China's participation in the peace conference totally disappeared. On August 10, the Russo-Japanese peace conference opened and on September 5, the two powers signed the peace treaty. It stipulated that Russian interests in Manchuria would transfer to Japan. There was no prior consultation with China.

Conclusion

Three distinct reasons why China requested participation in the peace conference can be discerned. The first arises from domestic factors. Especially as the anti-US boycott fanned Chinese nationalist movements, this anti-foreign movement naturally shifted toward the issue

⁵⁶ Uchida to Katsura, No. 372. NGB, RJW. Vol. V, pp. 590–594.

⁵⁷ Katsura to Japanese Minister in China. No. 160. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁵⁸ *The London Times*, July 19, 1905 (dispatch from St. Petersburg of July 18). The formal reply from the US, on whom China most relied, has not yet been found.

⁵⁹ *The Washington Post*, July 21, 1905.

of sovereignty in Manchuria. According to Morrison, a correspondent of the *London Times*, the request for participation originated from the appeal to the court by Chinese students in Europe and the US.⁶⁰ However when the Chinese government broadly asked the opinions of viceroys, local officials, and foreign ministers at the end of June, they answered with one voice in favor of Chinese participation. The peace conference became the national opinion. The Chinese government was not able to ignore this trend.

Second, the Chinese government became very alert to Japan's postwar influence on Manchuria. During the war, Japan already frequently contained China's efforts for peace or arbitration, and sometimes even threatened China by bringing up the issue of the return of Manchuria, an area already under Japanese military control. The fact that Pokotilov, the new Russian minister to Peking and an intimate of the court, was also appointed as an attendant for the peace conference suggested the possibility that China was able to take advantage of the conference by collaborating with Russia, actually a former enemy.

Third, the situation of Sino-US relations from the end of June to early July in 1905 offered opportunities advantageous to China. In order to cope with the controversial Chinese expulsion law, Roosevelt tried to appease China and enhance Sino-US dialogue. US immigration policy separated the Chinese elite from the laboring classes. Politically, the Chinese government thought the timing was just right to send a mission to Portsmouth and became very positive for the realization of participation in the conference.

However, the US never seriously considered China's formal request for several reasons. First, at the most basic level, the US decision makers on China did not believe China was able to take a role equal with other great powers in international society. Roosevelt was a realistic peace seeker and realized that additional voices at the table would not make it easier to reach an already difficult compromise peace. Reports from Conger and Rockhill always emphasized indecision and inability, another reason to refuse the Qing entry to the Portsmouth negotiations. In starkest contrast, the US had absolute trust in Japan at that time. The US wanted to believe that the "open

⁶⁰ *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, July 15, 1905.

door" in China and respect for her sovereignty were achieved when Japan, replacing Russia, advanced in Manchuria. Roosevelt suspected Russia was influencing China behind the scenes. Therefore, China's participation in the conference would greatly complicate the task of reaching an accord.

Furthermore, despite US appeasement policy in the end of June, the Chinese government did not take effective action to suppress the anti-US boycott. In this deteriorating situation, the question of China's participation did not rank high on the agenda. Summer vacation also doomed China's dispatch as did the death of John Hay leaving no one to talk with in the State Department. Lastly, the vacillations of the Chinese leaders and the determination of the Japanese diplomats must be pointed out as reasons why China's request for participation in the peace conference came to naught.

THE “RAT MINISTER”:
KOMURA JUTARO AND U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS

Tosh Minohara

In the first year of their war with Russia, the underdog Japanese scored victory after victory over their formidable enemy.¹ The Battle of Mukden in March 1905 had seemingly proven decisive, but the adversary still had one final weapon that could alter the war's course in their favor: the mighty Baltic Fleet. Meanwhile, despite many triumphs, by now Japan was on the brink of total material and financial exhaustion. With ammunition and other basic war supplies growing scarce, the empire's ability to sustain a prolonged conflict was being stretched to the limit.² Although munitions plants were operating around the clock, demand continued far to exceed supply. It was increasingly apparent to Tokyo's leadership that the crucial question was not whether to end the fighting, but rather how and when to do so. Only through diplomacy would Japan be able to secure the fruits of the war that she had fought so hard. But even to begin talking about peace, Japan first needed to strike a crushing blow on the Russian tsar's hopes by destroying his armada.

The final showdown between the two mighty navies took place on May 27, 1905, at Tsushima.³ When by the following morning its guns finally stopped firing, Admiral Togo's ships had virtually annihilated the Baltic Fleet.⁴ As Russian vessels sank to the Tsushima Straits' chilly depths, so did Nicholas's hopes for reversing the war's

¹ For a thorough account of the military dimension of the war, see the classic study by Toshio Tani, *Kimitsu nichirozenshi* (Tokyo, 2004). A detailed examination of the war's prelude is in Ian Nish, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 1985). The standard work on the subject from the Japanese perspective remains Seizaburo Shinobu and Jiichi Nakayama, *Nichirozensoshi no kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1959).

² For a general overview, see Tetsuo Furuya, *Nichiro senso* (Tokyo, 1966), pp. 161–165.

³ Shuhei Doman, *Akiyama Saneyuki* (Tokyo, 1995), p. 219.

⁴ Shinobu Oe, *Baluchiku kantai* (Tokyo, 1999), pp. 169–178, provides a detailed account of the naval aspect of the war including a wealth of information on the Baltic Fleet.

course. Tokyo was confident that the stage was finally set for St. Petersburg to acknowledge defeat and negotiate a peace. The military phase of the war had come to an end and the battle would now be fought amongst the diplomats who convened in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, at the invitation of the U.S. president, Theodore Roosevelt in August 1905. Only a decisive victory at the bargaining table would ensure that the war with Russia had been a worthwhile endeavor.

Norman Saul has already examined America's dealings with Russia during the Portsmouth Peace Conference in Volume One.⁵ This chapter will therefore study Washington's relationship with Tokyo in the context of the talks. What were the Japanese government's objectives and aspirations in her quest to win the diplomatic phase of the war? More important, what was President Roosevelt's role? Did he indeed betray Japan by failing to disclose critical information that might have significantly altered the course of the negotiations?⁶ And, finally, are historians right in characterizing US-Japan relations right after the war as increasingly hostile. These are the questions this essay will address.

The Path to Portsmouth

Japanese peace overtures began long before the meeting at Portsmouth. Already in July 1904, with the Germans acting as intermediary, the ambassador to Britain, Hayashi Tadasu, sought a meeting with the influential Russian statesman, Sergei Witte, in a neutral county.⁷ The plan came to naught when it became clear that St. Petersburg was not yet seriously interested in peace. Although domestic unrest was beginning to trouble the Russian Empire, the situation on its Far Eastern front hardly seemed to warrant coming to terms

⁵ See Norman E. Saul, "The Kittery Peace," in John W. Steinberg et al. eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective* (Leiden, 2005), vol. 1, pp. 485–507.

⁶ The catalyst of this view was the documentary program aired in Summer 2004 by Nippon Hoso Kyokai. *Sonotoki rekishi ga ugoita*, June 16, 2004, episode no. 187.

⁷ John A. White, *The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War* (Princeton, 1964), p. 198. This is an excellent study that provides immense detail regarding the pre-Portsmouth diplomacy of the two nations. A classic study is Tyler Dennet's, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War* (Garden City, 1959).

with its enemy. Indeed, Hayashi's initiative did little more than suggest that Japan was more eager for peace than Russia.

As long as tsarist confidence in its military prowess remained the leading obstacle to the bargaining table, it was only natural that each Japanese victory would lead it one step closer. Port Arthur's surrender in January 1905 encouraged Tokyo again to try diplomacy. Now helped by President Roosevelt, its efforts met with a second firm rebuff from St. Petersburg. Tsar Nicholas was not about to lose face by coming to terms with the upstart Asians. Efforts by Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II to urge his cousin Nicky to contain the "Yellow Peril" may also have had an effect.⁸ Three months later, however, after the humiliation at Mukden and with an increasingly restive population at home, peace's charms now began to appear more attractive to St. Petersburg.

Matters were also changing in Tokyo as Prime Minister Katsura Taro and Foreign Minister Komura Jutaro, both of whom had initially opposed a diplomatic settlement, now began to favor a more pacific course as well. Although Japan had just successfully secured more loans abroad, it was readily apparent that these would not be enough to sustain a prolonged conflict. As its treasury and armories began to run out, the empire's capacity to continue the war became increasingly doubtful. In any case, the rout at Mukden had successfully checked Russia's ambitions in Manchuria and Korea. Having achieved their primary war aim, peace now made good sense to the Japanese.

By late April 1905, Tokyo's leadership decided once more to seek Roosevelt's services as a mediator. Although the American president publicly professed strict neutrality, he was clearly friendly to Japan. Having received the formal request for his good offices, the president began his efforts to bring the Russians to the peace table in earnest. Two men proved to be particularly helpful: The competent American Ambassador George von Lengerke Meyer, who had just recently ended his posting to St. Petersburg, and—somewhat surprisingly—the German Kaiser, as fear of his subjects' susceptibility

⁸ Michael Balfour, *The Kaiser and his Times* (London, 1972), pp. 260–261. For an excellent treatment of the concept of "Yellow Peril," see Bunzo Hashikawa's, *Koukamonogatari* (Tokyo, 2000). A briefer explanation is in David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun* (DeKalb, 2001), pp. 94–96.

to Russia's revolutionary contagion temporarily dampened his characteristic bellicosity.

One episode illustrates Meyer's diplomatic skills. Nicholas was adamant that his decision to accept Roosevelt's mediation be kept secret until after the Japanese had publicly announced their intention to negotiate. The ambassador had therefore promised not to divulge this information to the Japanese. At the same time, he also knew that he somehow had to alert Tokyo so that it would indeed take the first step. Meyer accordingly leaked the information to Britain and Germany's foreign offices so that Japan would get the message. In this way, Myer kept his word with the Tsar in the strictest sense, if not in spirit, while also successfully achieving his primary objective.⁹

The formal announcement of the peace conference was made on June 9. But getting the two sides to agree to talk was just one of many hurdles to be cleared before the fighting could end. First Japan and Russia haggled about where the conference should take place, with the former requesting Chefoo (Zhifu) and the latter a European city such as Paris, The Hague or Geneva.¹⁰ Japan firmly insisted that any European location would be unacceptable. After a few weeks of quibbling, the American capital of Washington D.C. emerged as a mutually acceptable venue. Roosevelt was not overly enthusiastic about hosting the conference on American territory.¹¹ And there was also a serious drawback with Washington. In the days before air conditioning, the city's oppressive summer heat and humidity made a conference inhumane at that time of year. After a survey of other towns along the East Coast the delegates settled on Portsmouth. Cool in summer, not overly crowded, and with a naval base, the site in New Hampshire provided an ideal location.¹²

Komura at Portsmouth

Once it had agreed on a site for the conference, the Japanese government's next important decision involved who would lead the

⁹ Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore, 1956), p. 253.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 251, n. 17.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

¹² Raymond A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle, 1966), p. 75.

delegation. Prime Minister Katsura Taro's first choice was the former prime minister Ito Hirobumi. Comparatively friendly to Russia, the latter had many high level contacts in St. Petersburg.¹³ However, Ito demurred. Having strongly opposed a confrontation from the very beginning, Ito felt that the pro-war group should clean up its own mess. He also cited precedent; after all when Ito was prime minister, had he not been the plenipotentiary to the Shimonoseki Peace Conference ten years earlier?

Faced with firm resistance from a much senior statesman, Katsura realized that it would be futile to try to convince Ito to accept. At the same time, however, Katsura felt that it was imperative for him to remain in Japan to maintain a close watch over the domestic situation. The next logical choice was the foreign minister, who had shared his hawkish stance towards Russia. Komura Jutarō, then fifty years old, gladly accepted the position of plenipotentiary. He would be assisted by the able ambassador to the United States, Takahira Kogorō. In Komura's absence, Katsura assumed the responsibility of acting foreign minister, positioning himself in the capacity of overseeing the entire diplomatic strategy at Portsmouth.

The head of the Japanese delegation was an intriguing individual.¹⁴ Endowed neither with charisma nor charm, he was far from being a natural leader. Slight in stature, his habit of scurrying around town perpetually clad in a shabby black coat earned him the epithet of "rat minister." Komura was born to a modest samurai family that served under the lord of the *Obi-han*, a small clan in Miyazaki Prefecture. Obi had had long history of conflict with its neighboring giant, the domain of Shimazu, which would later become the powerful *Satsuma-han*. For a time, the Obi lord had been ousted from his domain and sought asylum in northern Kyushu while the Shimazu clan occupied his land. As a result, Komura was quite familiar both with being an underdog as well as dealing with a larger and more

¹³ Nobuo Kanayama, *Komura Jutarō to Potsdamu* (Tokyo, 1984), pp. 29–30.

¹⁴ For biographies of Komura, see the following: Uhei Masumoto, *Shizen no hito Komura Jutarō* (Tokyo, 1914); Yukichi Kurogi, *Komura Jutarō* (Tokyo, 1941); Kumataro Honda, *Tamashi no gaiko* (Tokyo, 1941); Junpei Shinobu, *Komura Jutarō* (Tokyo, 1942); Koji Shirai, *Komura Jutarō* (Tokyo, 1943); Toshikazu Kase, *Gaikokan* (Tokyo, 1957); Yukichi Kurogi, *Komura Jutarō* (Tokyo, 1968); Katsumi Kimura, *Ningen Komura Jutarō* (Tokyo, 1995); and Hisahiko Okazaki, *Komura Jutarō to sono jidai* (Tokyo, 1998). Also available are several pamphlets on Komura that can be obtained from the Komura Memorial Museum in Nichinan-shi, Miyazaki Prefecture.

formidable power. These skills would serve him well in dealing with the Russians.

His late father's many debts had made Komura's early life one of abject poverty, but these hardships did not keep him from excelling at school. His academic abilities provided an escape from Obi, as he pursued his studies elsewhere, first at Nagasaki and then Edo. Komura particularly excelled in English, and since Japan was rapidly modernizing, knowing any European language was an important asset. In 1873, he was awarded the first Japanese government scholarship to study abroad, at Harvard Law School.¹⁵ After completing an internship as a law clerk in the U.S., he finally came back to his homeland in 1880.

With solid legal training and near fluency in English, Komura quickly secured a job in the Japan's growing bureaucracy upon his return. He was immediately employed by the Ministry of Justice, which sent him to the Osaka district court as a clerk. He turned out not to be well suited to the Japanese legal system, which still required literacy in *kanbun* [Chinese texts] and the ability to write elegant calligraphy with a brush, in neither of which he was particularly adept. Fortunately, Komura's fortunes took a turn for the better when he was transferred to the translation office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Komura's might have never had made history had his chief, Foreign Minister Mutsu Minemitsu, not recognized his enormous potential as a diplomat.¹⁶ Mutsu supported Komura at the translation section of the Gaimusho (the foreign ministry), where his talents blossomed. Seventeen years later at the age of forty-seven, Komura would follow in the footsteps of Mutsu by becoming foreign minister. His foreign policy—*Komura Gaiko*—would largely follow along the lines of his mentor, Mutsu.

¹⁵ Contrary to popular belief, Komura never met Roosevelt, who was then an undergraduate at Harvard. Harvard Law School and Harvard College were entirely different worlds, the former open to ambitious foreign students, while the latter catered to America's wealthy elite.

¹⁶ Mutsu is the father of modern Japanese diplomacy as well as an adroit statesman who guided Japan during the Sino-Japanese War. The tradition of his realpolitik diplomacy was continued by his admirer, Komura Jutarō, and would later be the basis of the so-called mainstream diplomacy, or *Kasumigaseki seitōha gaiko*. See also Okamoto Shumpei, "Meijinihon no taichugoku taido no ichidamen: Komura Jutarō no bai," in Seizaburo Sato and Roger Dingman eds., *Kindai nihon no taigaitaido* (Tokyo, 1974), pp. 65–92.

On July 3rd, the Japanese government announced the names of its delegation's members. In addition to Komura and Takahira, from the Gaimusho Sato Aimaro, Yamaza Enjiro, Adachi Mineichiro, Honda Kumataro, Ochiai Kentaro, Hanihara Masanao, and Konishi Kotaro would also make their way to Portsmouth. They would be joined by an American advisor, Henry W. Denison (with a salary nearly twice the foreign minister's) as well as Commander Takeshita Isamu and Colonel Tachibana Shoichiro, from the navy and army, respectively.¹⁷

The delegates were under no illusions that their mission would be easy. Not only did they have to contend with the proud Russians, but there were also the unrealistically high expectations of Japanese public opinion. In order to conceal its many military shortcomings, the Japanese public had been intentionally misled to believe that its armed forces had dealt Russia a crushing blow. As the essays in Volume One make clear, the truth was rather less cheery: Not only was the island empire running out of ammunition and other supplies, but it also lacked the men and money for a prolonged conflict.

Outside of the government's higher circles, few realized that only a speedy end of the war would ensure Japan's survival.¹⁸ To most, the iron precedent was the Shimonoseki Conference that had ended the war with China ten years earlier, gaining Japan territorial concessions and steep indemnity. Tokyo's officials, however, were keenly aware that extracting such demands from Russia would be extremely difficult. As a result, these desiderata were realistically given a lower priority. As the Japanese delegation set sail from Yokohama on July 8, 1905, Komura looked out from the deck of his ship to the cheering, flag-waving crowd below, and glumly remarked that this fervor might very well end up costing him his life upon his return.¹⁹

Despite a few days of rough seas at the beginning, the two-week sail to Tacoma, Washington, had generally been pleasant. Since

¹⁷ For brief biographies of the participants, see Akira Yoshimura, *Portsumasu no hata* (Tokyo, 1979), pp. 51–53.

¹⁸ In fact, Takahira had earlier informed Roosevelt that "peace without indemnity or territory" was acceptable. His logic was that prolonging the war would easily exceed any amount of indemnity that Japan could obtain from Russia. Beale, *Roosevelt*, p. 249.

¹⁹ Shumpei Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and Russo-Japanese War* (New York, 1970). This is perhaps the best English language study of the Japanese decision-making process leading up to the war.

Komura had not been in contact with Tokyo during the transpacific journey, when he reached the Japanese consulate at Seattle, he immediately immersed himself in the Gaimusho's cables. It was only now that Komura learned that his adversary at the conference table would be Witte. Komura saw this in a positive light because Witte had been opposed to the war from the very beginning. Perhaps now the Tsar was serious about peace. Komura also learned that Witte would reach New York a fortnight after his own arrival to the US, which would allow him to meet Roosevelt ahead of the Russian statesman.²⁰ Without wasting any time on the West Coast he boarded the first transcontinental train from Seattle. Arriving in New York on the morning of July 25, he was greeted at the station by Ambassador Takahira, who had just traveled from the legation in Washington D.C. Comfortably settled at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, the Japanese delegation's first objective was to reconfirm the "good offices" of Roosevelt.

It was at this time that the final act of the military drama was unfolding north of Hokkaido on Sakhalin Island.²¹ President Roosevelt had already helpfully suggested to Takahira that occupying Russian soil would dramatically improve his empire's hand during the peace talks. Although the Japanese Army's chief of staff, Nagaoka Gaishi, had independently reached the same conclusion much earlier, the navy had been unwilling to spare any warships before the Baltic Fleet's impending arrival. The victory at the Battle of Tsushima in May had now freed resources for the campaign. With the blessing of both the American president and Japan's navy minister, what had previously been a low priority operation was now transformed into a mission of utmost importance. Meeting only scattered opposition from the Russian defenders, Japanese troops managed to occupy Sakhalin just before the conference. With tsarist soil now in Japan's hands, the fate of the islands would become a major point of contention between the two parties.

Public diplomacy, especially with regard to American popular opinion, would be an important aspect of the Portsmouth talks. In this respect, Japanese intelligence played an important role. The humint

²⁰ Eugene P. Trani, *The Treaty of Portsmouth: An Adventure in American Diplomacy* (Lexington, 1969), p. 119. This is another excellent account of American diplomacy involving the Russo-Japanese War.

²¹ For the specifics of the operation, see *Nichirozenshi*, pp. 302–330.

aspect of the *joho-sen* (information war), such as Colonel Akashi's Stockholm-based operations, is well documented.²² However, in addition to the Imperial Army's General Staff, the Gaimusho was also actively engaged in espionage and covert efforts to sway international sentiments in Japan's favor.²³

Posted to the nation that would host the peace talks, Ambassador Takahira had as one of his most important jobs keeping Americans sympathetic to his nation's cause. To help him in this vital task, the diplomat was joined by Kaneko Kentaro, a Harvard Law School graduate and a friend of Roosevelt. Kaneko's public diplomacy and his role behind the scenes are well documented,²⁴ nevertheless their effectiveness should not be exaggerated. Takahira was not particularly fond of Kaneko, and by confiding his doubts of the latter's character to Roosevelt, he may have undermined the effectiveness of the entire operation.

In the area of sigint, the Gaimusho's track record seems to have been abysmal as Tokyo could not break the Russian diplomatic code. What diplomatic traffic they were able to obtain usually came from British cryptanalysis. On the other hand, the Russian *Cabinet Noir* broke the relatively primitive Japanese codes with relative ease, and was able to read a large portion of Japanese diplomatic traffic to its legations in China and Europe.²⁵ The Gaimusho first became aware that its codes had been compromised on Christmas Day 1904, when Sir Cecil Spring-Rice of the British Foreign Office met with Minister

²² Colonel Akashi Motojiro, the commander of the operations, was also engaged in activities of subversion against the Russian government. For details see, Antti Kujala, "The Japanese General Staff and the Issue of Concerted Anti-Government Action in the Russian Empire, 1904-5," in Steinberg, *Russo-Japanese War*, vol. 1, pp. 261-280. General Fukushima Yasumasa was given command of army intelligence, of which the Akashi Operations comprised a major component. *Nichirozenshi*, pp. 249-275.

²³ Diplomats engaged in espionage included the ambassador to Britain, Hayashi. Assisted by the two military attachés, Utsunomiya Taro of the Army and Kaburagi Makoto of the Navy, Hayashi was able to transmit highly valuable information to Tokyo. Similarly, Minister Motono Ichiro in France, Minister Inoue Katsunosuke in Germany, and Minister Takahira were all ordered to gather intelligence.

²⁴ Masayoshi Matsumura, *Nichiro Senso to Kaneko Kentaro: koho gaiko no kenkyu* (Tokyo, 1987).

²⁵ For a fuller treatment of Russian cryptanalytic successes, see Evgenii Y. Sergeev, "Russian Military Intelligence and in the War with Japan, 1904-5," in Steinberg et al., *Russo-Japanese War*, v. 1, pp. 281-304. See also *Portsumasu no hata*, p. 82, 89-92.

Inoue in Berlin to inform him that Nicholas had been privy to the most secret communications between Tokyo and its representative to the Russian court. It was only at this point that Tokyo realized that St. Petersburg had known all along about its decision to go to war against Russia in February 1904.²⁶ In the wake Sir Cecil's startling revelation, Komura promptly ordered a completely new set of codebooks to be used specifically for the Portsmouth Conference. Sato, the leading code expert in the Gaimusho, was included as a member of the delegation for the sole purpose of handling this new code.²⁷

As the two plenipotentiaries met at Portsmouth, the stage was set for the final phase of the Russo-Japanese War. Although Japan had achieved resounding successes on land and sea, victory could only be confirmed at the bargaining table. Russia in 1905 did not resemble the utterly devastated Japan of August 1945. If its will had begun to falter, the Romanov dynasty still possessed the capacity to continue fighting. And there were many in St Petersburg who still advocated continuing the struggle, including the Tsar, whose hawkish zeal was perhaps only exceeded by his wife, Alexandra Fedorovna. Under these circumstances, Japan's only viable option was to seek a "soft peace" that would not exact an impossibly harsh sacrifice from Russia.

Japan divided its demands into three categories.²⁸ The first were considered to be entirely non-negotiable, and they involved the very reasons that Japan had gone to war in the first place. In the event that any of them were rejected, there would be no choice but to continue the war of attrition. Hence, Komura had specific instructions not to compromise on any of the following:

- 1) Any and all Russian influence will be eliminated from Korea. Korea will be placed under the sole control of Japan.
- 2) Both Russian and Japanese troops will withdraw from Manchuria.
- 3) The right to lease the territories of Lushun, Dairen and other parts of the Liaodong Peninsula as well as the railways and mines south of Harbin will be transferred to Japan.

²⁶ The codebooks were stolen from the Japanese consulate in The Hague.

²⁷ *Portsumasu no hata*, p. 93. This was in contrast to the Washington Conference of 1920–21 in which the Americans were reading nearly all of the Japanese diplomatic traffic through the sigint operations of the Black Chamber led by Herbert O. Yardley. See David Kahn, *The Codebreakers* (New York, 1996), pp. 356–364.

²⁸ Japanese Foreign Ministry ed., *Komura gaikoshi* (Tokyo, 1966), pp. 491–492.

On the other hand, the Japanese government provided Komura with some discretion to negotiate the following demands:

- 1) Russia will pay an indemnity to Japan of up to 15 billion yen.
- 2) Russia will surrender warships that have been interred in neutral ports.
- 3) Russia will cede Sakhalin and the outlying islands to Japan.
- 4) Russia will concede coastal fishery rights to Japan.

Finally, a third group consisted of terms that the Russians were most likely to reject outright. These were not essential items for Japan, and Komura was instructed to use them as bargaining chips to gain leverage against the Russians.

- 1) Russia will limit its naval presence in the Far East.
- 2) Russia will demilitarize Vladivostok and convert it into a commercial port.

As long as the non-negotiable high priority items were included in the peace treaty, Komura had plenty of room to negotiate the finer points with the Russians. Given Tokyo's desire for peace, the bar was set as low as possible. Nevertheless, the talks did not progress smoothly, and Komura drove a hard bargain by obstinately seeking territorial concessions as well as an indemnity for Japan. These happened to be the two crucial points that Russia could not accept lest it would be viewed as suffering a humiliating defeat by a non-White power. Conversely, Komura steadfastly demanded these concessions since he was fully aware that Japanese public opinion, ignorant as it was of military realities, was entirely out of line with the government. Komura's firmness may also have been motivated by the ambition to emulate the success of his mentor, Mutsu Munemitsu, at Shimonoseki a decade earlier.²⁹

Did Roosevelt Betray Japan?

The conflict's centenary has renewed Japan's interest in the war with Russia. While perhaps welcome, this recent trend has been

²⁹ For a detailed account of the negotiations, please see Ministry of Foreign Affairs ed., *Nihon gaiko monjo: nichiro senso*, vol. 5, (Tokyo, 1960). The account that follows is taken from this primary document.

accompanied by some unfortunate developments, most notably a revisionist interpretation of President Roosevelt's role. Roosevelt had long been seen as a friend of Japan, since he spared no effort in advancing Japanese interests during his term in office. Before the war he had enthusiastically supported Japan's opposition to Russian influence in Manchuria and Korea, and during the Portsmouth Conference he was eager to lend a hand so she could keep the fruits of her victory. Roosevelt advised Japan skillfully, to the point of even suggesting the occupation of Sakhalin to improve Japan's hand. Roosevelt's policy attitudes were based on pragmatism rather than altruism or excessive japanophilia. His help was primarily motivated by the fact that the two governments' interests coincide, thereby establishing a somewhat symbiotic relationship.

The traditional image of Roosevelt as sympathetic to Japan has recently come under fire, in part because of anti-American sentiment resulting from the invasion of Iraq in 2003. This view, which is based on a grossly expanded interpretation of a comment found in the *Komura Gaikoshi*, portrays Roosevelt as a traitor who betrayed Japan outright by not conveying some important information during the Portsmouth Conference.³⁰ The argument hinges on a telegram Ambassador Meyer sent to the president that contained a startling revelation. According to the diplomat, Nicholas was finally willing to part with the southern half of Sakhalin. The revisionists argue that Roosevelt hoped to sabotage the conference so that he could bring the parties together again in New York where a treaty would be successfully concluded under his direct supervision. In other words Roosevelt wanted to gain domestic political capital that he could use in the upcoming election.³¹

Does the conspiracy theory involving the *other* Roosevelt hold any water? It is true that neither the Japanese government nor Komura in Portsmouth were initially aware of the Tsar's dramatic compromise. Since Nicholas had hitherto been so staunch in his opposition to accepting a humiliating peace, even the elder statesmen and influential army leader, Yamagata Aritomo, had reconciled himself

³⁰ *Komura gaikoshi* implies that Roosevelt acted treacherously by questioning why the president did not reveal the information to the Japanese. *Komura gaikoshi*, p. 585.

³¹ This was the central theme of the Nippon Hoso Kyokai documentary, *Sonotoki rekishi ga ugoita*, episode no. 182, June 16, 2004. See also NHK Coverage Group ed., *Sonotoki rekishi ga ugoita*, vol. 30 (Tokyo, 2004), pp. 114–159.

to a peace without any indemnity and/or territory. This shift in policy was based on the stark reality that Japan did not possess the resources to continue fighting, particularly in light of the fact that the Russian army had been given ample time to regroup and resupply.

The final decision to accept a peace treaty that lacked both indemnity and territory was made by the cabinet in the afternoon of August 28 and reported to the Emperor.³² The instructions to the delegation were encoded and wired at precisely 20:35,³³ but because of the international dateline Komura received the telegram at 13:00 on August 28. He read it with a heavy heart, but understood the logic behind the government's decision. Komura was now prepared to make the final Japanese offer, which amounted to a near complete capitulation to Witte's final proposal. It is at this time that a series of remarkable developments altered the outcome of the peace conference.

After the telegram had been sent off to Komura, the Gaimusho was temporarily at rest. At last there was a slight reprieve from the frantic pace of the past few weeks. The head of the commerce bureau, Ishii Kikujiro decided that this would be an opportune time to meet with the British minister, Sir Claude MacDonald, who had requested an appointment the night before. As Ishii was under tremendous stress, he had been annoyed over how late the call had been made and was not looking forward to meeting the Scot.³⁴

Despite Ishii's lack of enthusiasm, he was flabbergasted by MacDonald's revelation. According to information the British diplomat had received from London, Nicholas had grudgingly agreed to cede the southern half of Sakhalin to Japan under the pretext that it had only been in Russian hands for the past thirty years. Upon learning this stunning news, Ishii rushed back to Gaimusho and then to Prime Minister Katsura's residence to apprise them. Just after dawn the following day, the Emperor was also informed and Komura received his new orders: Japan was now to demand the cessation of the southern half of Sakhalin.³⁵ Unaware of the reasons behind this volte-face, Komura was skeptical that Witte would agree to such a

³² *Portsumasu no hata*, p. 217.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Komura gaikoshi*, pp. 584–586. This is the infamous "top secret telegram no. 154," that altered the nature of the peace agreement.

drastic departure from his initial position. Nevertheless, Witte accepted Japan's offer and peace was at hand. Upon learning the news, Roosevelt exclaimed, "Magnificent! Nothing for years has pleased me so much."³⁶

Not a single document supports the suggestion that Roosevelt intentionally withheld this information from the Japanese for his own political gain. Furthermore, there were no assurances that Japan and Russia would agree to meet again. It was equally clear that if an agreement could not be reached in Portsmouth, the fighting would resume. This in turn would become a political liability for Roosevelt as it would mean that his mediation had ended in failure. He therefore devoted himself to helping the adversaries conclude a peace treaty.

These reasons all suggest that Roosevelt's omission of information was not deliberate. However, the single largest flaw of this conspiracy theory is that the presidential election had already taken place in November 1904. When the Portsmouth Peace Treaty was concluded in September 1905, Roosevelt had been in office for less than six months. Furthermore, Roosevelt had publicly announced his intention of not running for a second term.³⁷ Thus the theory that Roosevelt intended to sabotage the peace conference for his own personal political gain is simply untenable. Yet if the conspiracy theory makes no sense, what is the explanation for Roosevelt's perplexing action? The fact that he did not inform Komura about the Tsar's latest concession over Sakhalin has long puzzled historians.

There may be a less cynical explanation for the president's motives. Ambassador Meyer had informed Roosevelt of the Tsar's decision to cede the southern half of Sakhalin on August 23.³⁸ However, the president was not satisfied that Meyer had conveyed his plan to Nicholas *in toto*. Roosevelt was particularly anxious to know if Nicholas had been told about the proviso that a payment for the return of

³⁶ *Komura gaikoshi*, p. 587.

³⁷ This was a decision that he would later regret, and perhaps the greatest mistake of his presidency. Dissatisfied with Taft's conservative domestic policies, Roosevelt would later split the Republican Party and run on the Bull Moose ticket in 1912; the unintended consequence being that it would hand over the presidency to the Democrats.

³⁸ Myer met Nicholas at Peterhof and persuaded him to accept this plan that had been by Roosevelt. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 86. Witte was informed of this decision via Lamsdorf on August 24.

northern Sakhalin was to be left to future negotiation. It was important for the Tsar to confirm his pledge to accept the idea of paying for the islands' return in principle.³⁹ Since this remained ambiguous, Roosevelt asked Meyer to clarify this point. Without waiting for a reply from his ambassador, he also sent another direct appeal to the Tsar on August 25 that essentially repeated the specifics of his proposed compromise. Two days later, on August 27, Russia replied that it would not agree to any form of payment.⁴⁰ On the following day, the Tsar's attitude hardened even further, and he ordered Foreign Minister Vladimir Lamsdorf to instruct Witte that Russia would not accept the Japanese peace demands in any shape. The talks were to be broken off immediately.⁴¹

Under these circumstances, how could Roosevelt possibly inform the Japanese of the content of the August 23rd telegram from Meyer? The Tsar was notoriously indecisive about important issues, and frequently changed his mind at the last moment. As far as Roosevelt was concerned, Nicholas' concessions of August 23 remained unconfirmed. Were he to pass this information on to the Japanese and it turned out to be untrue, Roosevelt would have to shoulder the blame. This was a risk that he was clearly unwilling to take. Of course there was a slight possibility that the Tsar would remain true to his initial promise and in that case, Japan needed to have this vital piece of information. It is therefore quite plausible that Roosevelt hedged his risk and used a backdoor channel to inform the Japanese by leaking the information to the latter's British ally. After all, a precedent existed for this sort of diplomatic maneuver. As we have already seen, Nicholas had agreed to negotiate peace under the condition that Japan would make the announcement first. This confidential information had been quietly leaked to the British so that it could be secretly conveyed to the Japanese.

By using the British as intermediaries, Roosevelt was cleverly avoiding responsibility for the information's accuracy. At the same time, the Japanese would be privy to this development and thereby might be able to respond in an appropriate manner. However, one should not forget that this information became extremely crucial only because

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 90.

⁴¹ Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 92.

of an additional development. Witte had decided to disobey a direct order from the Tsar and was determined to accept a peace treaty along the lines set forth on August 24. It was at this moment that peace was to prevail. In light of the larger picture, the issue of southern Sakhalin was a trivial matter and it merely made the peace more attractive to Japan. Ultimately, since the concession came so late it would not have significantly affected the negotiations. Tokyo had already decided that it would be "peace without an indemnity or territory." Looking back on the events at Portsmouth, one can make a strong case that it was Witte, not Roosevelt, who truly deserved the Nobel Peace Prize.

Washington and the Emergence of a New Power in East Asia

World War Zero and the subsequent Portsmouth Conference had a profound impact on international relations. The most dramatic was the rise of a new East Asian power in the form of Japan. Until the early 20th century Asia, much like Africa, had been a passive arena for European imperial rivalry and conquest. Britain, France, Germany, and Russia had been the leading players in the colonial contest, but Japan's stunning victory against Russia now made it a major actor as well. Moreover, this had been accomplished at the expense of Russia. Checked by the Japanese in her advance on the Pacific, the latter would no longer be able to dominate Northeast Asia's fate.

Japan's entry onto the global stage resembled that of the United States after the Spanish-American War of 1898. In that case, the European powers not only had to adjust to Spain's virtually complete withdrawal from global affairs (although it marked the culmination of a long and gradual decline), but they also had to reconcile themselves to America's emergence as a Pacific power. By acquiring Spain's former possessions, most notably the Philippines, the United States now possessed a vital interest in the region.⁴²

America's new Asian role encouraged it to form a strategic partnership with Japan.⁴³ Despite its rise, the U.S. still did not possess

⁴² For a fuller treatment see, A. Whitney Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New Haven, 1938). Although unrelated to the Spanish-American war, the United States also acquired Hawaii in the same year, making the Pacific an important element of their foreign policy.

⁴³ Studies of U.S.-Japan relations in this period include, Payson J. Treat, *Japan*

the naval capability to defend its recently acquired territories and it was particularly concerned about the vulnerability of the Philippines.⁴⁴ Japan's victory against Russia therefore made it an ideal Asian partner for the US. To the extent that Japan respected America's hold on its new possessions, she was free to establish her own sphere of interest—as long as the open door principle was respected and maintained in China. It is in this light that the two nations concluded the 1905 Taft-Katsura and the 1908 Root-Takahira agreements.

At the international level, U.S.-Japan relations were in relative harmony. Both nations were determined to collaborate in Asia by preserving their respective national interests and maintaining regional stability. Nevertheless, some historians contend that U.S.-Japan relations dramatically worsened after the Portsmouth Conference.⁴⁵ Their argument is based on three post-war developments: The fierce anti-American protests in Japan, particularly the Hibiya Riots, a surge in racist hysteria against California's Japanese residents, and the naval arms race.⁴⁶

Public opinion was behind the unrest in Japan. Moreover, the Hibiya riots in the capital were aimed at the Japanese government as well as at the United States. Since the populace had been intentionally misled to believe that Japan decisively defeated Russia, it was quite natural for it to be angered by news of the Portsmouth Conference. Nevertheless, the disturbances had virtually no impact on official relations between the two countries.

The same was true for American racism against Japanese Californians. The 1906 San Francisco School Board Incident did lead to a mini-war crisis as jingoistic West Coast papers wrote about an impending war with Japan.⁴⁷ However, Roosevelt's intervention

and the United States, 1853–1921: Revised and Continued to 1928 (Stanford, 1928); William Neumann, *America Encounters Japan: From Perry to MacArthur* (Baltimore, 1963); and Charles E. Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship: Theodore Roosevelt and Japan, 1906–1909* (Cambridge, 1967).

⁴⁴ Griswold, *Far Eastern Policy*, p. 35.

⁴⁵ This thesis is clearly evinced in the most recent monograph to examine U.S.-Japan relations, Walter Lafeber's, *The Clash: A History of U.S.-Japan Relations* (New York, 1997).

⁴⁶ For example, see chapters five both of Kazuki Iguchi, *Nichiro senso no jidai* (Tokyo, 1998) and Yoichi Hiram, *Nichiro Senso ga kaeta sekaishi* (Tokyo, 2004).

⁴⁷ The incident is discussed in great detail in Thomas A. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese American Crises* (Stanford, 1934). See also Toshihiro Minohara, *1906 nen san furanshisuko gakudokakurijiken to nichibeikankei: hainichi undo no genten, Rokkodai Ronshu* 43, no. 1, July 1996, pp. 119–139.

defused the crisis, thereby reassuring Tokyo. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 was a clear indication of the two powers' amity, and President William Howard Taft, who succeeded Roosevelt in 1909, continued his government's proactive immigration policy.

The naval build-up reflected the simple fact that both nations had more ocean to protect. Mahanian doctrine mandated that to maintain power, a nation needed to protect its sea-lanes. The war plans of both nations—War Plan Orange and the *Teikoku Kokubo Hoshin* (Imperial Defense Plan)—did not signify any bellicose intent towards the other. Since Japan and the United States were major naval players in the Pacific, it made good sense that their navies would draft plans that considered the other as a potential foe, just as alternate scenarios foresaw conflicts with other powers. There were also institutional grounds for magnifying any potential maritime threat, since this would legitimize costly fleet build-ups. Nevertheless, the basic tenet of U.S.-Japan relations was one of mutual cooperation, not confrontation.

To be sure, American policies in Manchuria—Taft's Dollar Diplomacy to be precise—did momentarily become a sore point in U.S.-Japan relations. Japan was annoyed by E. H. Harriman's plan of neutralizing the railway in Manchuria and regarded it as an encroachment on Japan's sphere of influence. However, it never once came close to becoming a *casus belli* between the two nations. Although perhaps not quite as sympathetic to Tokyo as the previous administration, under Taft ties with Japan were never seriously jeopardized. After all the president, as architect of the Taft-Katsura agreement, clearly understood the need to respect Japan's sphere of influence, which included not only Taiwan and Korea, but Manchuria as well. As long Japan kept the door open in Manchuria and betrayed no designs on the Philippines or Hawaii, there would be no major friction between the two new Asian powers. In the eight years after the Portsmouth Peace, U.S.-Japanese relations kept a steady course, and they would have continued to do so had Washington not deviated from the diplomatic realism espoused by President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Elihu Root.

It would be under the more idealistic sentiments of Woodrow Wilson's presidency that the clouds of discord first began to form. With respect to East Asia, the new president and his supporters in the State Department would do everything in their power to reverse Roosevelt and Root's carefully crafted policy with its stress on concord

with Tokyo.⁴⁸ In hindsight, it was Wilson's "New Diplomacy" that would put the two nations on the path of eventual rupture. But under the Republicans, U.S.-Japan relations had never been unduly strained. If anything, for Roosevelt and Taft, Japan's victory over Russia had transformed it into a viable economic and military East Asian partner.

⁴⁸ James C. Thomson Jr. et al., *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia* (New York, 1981), pp. 148–161.

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