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MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OVERVIEW

The modern and contemporary history of Japanese-Sino relations includes a period of intense warfare, and memories of such history are still fresh in the minds of many people in both nations. Particularly acute are Chinese recollections of the injuries suffered during the invasion by Japan. Thus, in contrast with the history of bilateral relations prior to the modern era, achieving mutual understanding on the true nature of the conflict and perceptions of wartime responsibility among people in both countries is a very difficult matter.

Both Japanese and Chinese researchers identified the start of Asia's modern era as being the period of initial contact with modern Western powers. But they did not completely agree on the extent to which modernization was attributable to external shocks or to factors of internal origin. The two sides recognized, though, the significance of encounters with the West; had Western powers not ventured into Asia, neither Japan nor China would have followed the paths they subsequently took. While the two countries experienced shock at different times and in different ways, there was agreement on the basic premise that for China the shock came in the form of the Opium War, and for Japan it was the Black Ships of Commodore Matthew Perry and the Meiji Restoration.

To some extent, the two subcommittees—one investigating the modern and contemporary eras and the other researching the ancient, medieval, and early-modern eras—took different approaches in determining research themes. Members of the former divided the modern and contemporary eras into several chronological stages, further dividing each stage into periods according to developments in Japanese-Sino relations and examining the historical process of each period in a comprehensive manner. Put another way, the papers treated the fundamental process of historical development from a temporal, rather than thematic, angle.

Specifically, the subcommittee established three historical stages—prewar, wartime, and postwar—with the war years (1931–45) positioned in the middle. The first stage begins with each country's opening up to the West through the 1920s, the second stage from the Manchurian Incident until Japan's defeat in World War II, and the third stage from the postwar period until the present. Each stage was further divided into three chronological periods, resulting in the creation of nine periods. Japanese and Chinese papers were written for each period, and these were organized into nine chapters under three parts.

In order to ensure balanced treatment among the two countries' researchers, significant issues for each period were identified as "shared topics of concern." This was to prevent either side from completely disregarding issues that the other deemed important; researchers from both countries were compelled to include an analysis of these issues in their papers. Considering the likelihood of substantially

differing perceptions regarding the basic processes of historical development, we did not seek to come up with a unified interpretation for every incident. Rather, we tried to encourage thorough discussion and exchanges of views by comparing the treatises for each historical period written from the Japanese and Chinese perspectives. After revising the treatises to incorporate points raised by the other side that were considered appropriate, we published both papers side by side. In other words, we adopted an approach whereby each side presented its own conclusions after exchanging views and thoroughly discussing each topic with the other.

The subcommittee for modern and contemporary history met six times to exchange views: on the sidelines of three plenary meetings in December 2006 in Beijing, March 2007 in Tokyo, and January 2008 in Beijing, and separately in November 2007 in Fukuoka, March 2008 in Kagoshima, and May 2008 in Jinan. Individual members also met privately on numerous occasions and conducted on-site research.

Subcommittee members of both countries undertook joint research in a consistently serious, straightforward, and cordial manner. Through the process of research and discussion, we learned that scholars on both sides had the same or nearly the same understanding and perception of a majority of historical facts. This was attributed to the fact that both sides adhered strictly to basic principles of historical research and scholarly criterion, respected historical evidence, and based their search for truth on facts. This was the fundamental reason we were able to conduct joint research so smoothly.

Differences were observed, though, in research methodology and approaches to historical issues. Chinese participants placed greater emphasis on the substance of the various historical incidents involving the two countries; Japanese researchers, on the other hand, tended to focus more closely on the process by which these incidents emerged and developed. Naturally, over the long course of joint research, a degree of mutual understanding was reached on the differences in approach. The Japanese side realized that Chinese historians approached their work quite dispassionately despite the emphasis they gave to the factors behind the war's heavy impact on their country. Those on the Chinese side, meanwhile, came to see that the empirical approach adopted by Japanese researchers did not indicate a refutation of Japan's responsibilities as the perpetrators.

Historians of both countries need to continue their discussions in an effort to avoid simplification and allow for complexity and to deal with cases where there are differing interpretations of the same historical incidents. But the fact that researchers in the subcommittee on modern and contemporary history gained a measure of understanding of each other's views represents a big step forward.

CHAPTER 1 INCEPTION OF A MODERN RELATIONSHIP

Kitaoka Shin'ichi

Introduction

International relations in East Asia until the mid-nineteenth century were premised on an order quite different from that which prevailed in the West. The arrangement was an inconvenience for the Western powers, which, on the strength of their superior military might, demanded changes. This challenge from the West forced a fundamental transfiguration of the East Asian international order. While it would be too simplistic to view this transfiguration solely as a reaction to the “shock” from the West, they would never have occurred without such external stimuli.

Japan and China responded in very different ways, and this had a big bearing on the subsequent relationship between the two countries. This chapter will describe how the two countries' respective histories and traditions shaped the manner in which they dealt with this external shock and how bilateral contact—which had been relatively limited prior to modernization—evolved and deepened in the subsequent years. For this reason, this chapter differs from most others in the section on Modern and Contemporary History in that it details the establishment and development of bilateral relations from the perspective of comparative history, rather than offering a description and analysis of the relationship itself. In the light of this writer's area of specialization, the focus of this endeavor here will inevitably be on Japan.

1. Opening to the West

(1) International Order in the West and East Asia

A China-centered international order existed in East Asia through the first half of the nineteenth century based on the *sakuho* system, under which China granted court ranks and official titles to the rulers of neighboring tributary states that brought tributes (*choko*) to China. The system served to reinforce China's cultural and political superiority while also granting official endorsement and protection to the rulers of the tributaries. In return for the tributes, the countries benefitted from favorable trading terms.¹

¹ This system has been called by various names, but to the extent that it was centered on the *sakuho* imperial edicts and the *choko* (or *shinko*) tributes and also that it was premised on a

Japan was virtually alone in East Asia in insisting on equal terms with China. Owing to domestic political and economic reasons, there have been cases in ancient history and also during the medieval period of rulers (notably Ashikaga Yoshimitsu) receiving the title of “king of Japan” from the Chinese court and paying homage to China as a vassal, but such examples were quite rare.²

As a result, Japan was a relatively remote entity for China. The Qing dynasty tended to maintain close track of its tributaries, but it had very little information on Japan.³ Japan, on the other hand, was quite familiar with the Qing, and trade was conducted with Qing merchants even during the Edo period (1603–1868). Among the biggest imports from China were books. Japan was at once heavily influenced by China under the Qing dynasty despite limited direct contact and, as a reaction, also motivated to develop its own distinctive culture and identity.

The Western world, meanwhile, featured an international order quite unique in world history consisting of sovereign states and their colonies. Sovereign states were, as a matter of formality, all on equal terms with one another and bore responsibility for everything within their own state and their colonies. Conversely, states could claim sovereignty only when they were capable of taking complete responsibility over that territory. A corollary to this was that all territories belonged to just one country. As a matter of principle, no land belonged to two or more countries or to none at all.

Such relations among countries are quite rare in the history of the world. In many civilizations, relations between countries have not been equal; there has usually been one dominant power, with other countries being positioned hierarchically in relation to that power. A state’s possession of territory was not absolute, moreover, so it was not unusual for a region to belong to several states or to none.

In East Asia, too, the international order was traditionally not among equals, as described above. While an East Asian tributary in a suzerainty relationship did not have the autonomy of a Western sovereign state, neither were they as subordinate as the colonies of those states. Japan and the Qing court laid competing

relationship in which China was placed in a position of cultural superiority, the different names do not indicate major discrepancies. For a detailed examination of the various features, refer to Nishizato Kiko’s *Shinmatsu Chu-Ryu-Nichi kankei no kenkyu* (A Study of China-Ryukyu-Japan Relations at the End of the Qing Dynasty) (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2005), 13–18.

² See Banno Masataka, *Kindai Chugoku seiji gaikoshi* (History of Politics and Diplomacy in Modern China) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1973), chap. 3. While the *Wanli Huidian* (1587) collection of statutes describes Japan as a “tributary state,” Japan is listed as a “mutually trading state” in the 1818 *Jiaqing Huidian*. *Ibid.*, 84–87.

³ The 1849 *Yinghuan zhilue* (A Short Account of the Maritime Circuit), whose 1866 reprint was brought to Japan, for example, simply quotes ancient documents in describing Japan as consisting of three main islands: Tsushima to the north, Nagasaki in the middle, and Satsuma to the south. See Sasaki Yo’s *Shinmatsu Chugoku ni okeru Nihonkan to Seiyokan* (Views of Japan and the West in the Late Qing Dynasty) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2000), iii–iv.

claims to the Ryukyu Kingdom, for instance, and there was only tenuous recognition of Hokkaido as being Japanese territory until Russia began making advances into East Asia.

In this context, the encounter with the West raised great difficulties for both Japan and China. China, in particular, was unable to adjust to the system of modern states that Western countries tried to impose on East Asia, and it consequently suffered great losses. By contrast, Japan, relatively speaking, was able to ride out the challenge from the West without making a major blunder.⁴

(2) China's Opening to the West

In 1661 the Qing emperor issued the Great Evacuation order, in effect sealing off the coast. This, along with the *haijin* ban on maritime activities, was rescinded in 1684, and four ports—including Macau and Ningbo—were reopened, and trade was conducted through customhouses there. Foreign trade was prohibited in 1757, though, except through the port of Guangzhou, and the city thrived from the late eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries, by which some 150 foreign ships made port calls every year. Trade under the so-called Canton System was most active with Britain, which was positioned by the Qing court as a tributary state. British traders were under stringent restrictions, being allowed to trade with only a limited number of Chinese merchants in the Thirteen Factories district of Guangzhou.

Britain began importing large volumes of tea from China from the end of the eighteenth century, resulting in a massive outflow of silver. To halt the drain, Britain began exporting opium, which quickly spread throughout China and resulted in a dramatic jump in the number of addicts. In 1839 Qing official Lin Zexu proclaimed a strict ban on opium and ordered its confiscation, citing the need to rebuild public finance and drive opium addiction out of the country. This served as the trigger for the First Opium War. Many in Britain strongly opposed the war as being morally unjustified, but by May 1840 both houses of Parliament had come to support the war and given its approval of war expenditures.

The Qing were no match for Britain. By 1842 it concluded the Treaty of Nanjing, which called for the opening of four more ports besides Guangzhou—Amoy, Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai—and the ceding of Hong Kong Island. Demands for a similar treaty were made by the United States in 1843, and on the principle of impartiality the Qing conferred most-favored-nation status to countries other than Britain as well.

These new terms of trade continued to be regarded by China as an expansion of the Canton System of relations with tributaries. The number of treaty ports was still quite limited and concentrated in the south, and for the most part they

⁴ By “blunder” I mean only from the viewpoint of dealing with the West and preserving the country's independence at that time. Generally speaking, the same conditions that lead to success in one area not infrequently cause failure in the next. This is a point that must not be forgotten in the context of East Asian history.

were provincial fishing ports. The ceding of such remote areas was meant simply to appease Western demands.

The Western powers, though, leased land surrounding the ports, built up infrastructure, created a system of local rule, and established territory unlike that of traditional China. Western-style buildings were constructed one after another, especially in Shanghai, and the landscape underwent a dramatic transformation. Christianity also moved into these settlements, which went on to trigger major changes in the country.

The influx of Christianity and the debilitation of the Qing dynasty sparked the Taiping Rebellion, causing great upheaval in China. The civil war continued from 1850 to 1864 and resulted in an estimated 20 million casualties. Leading the suppression was not the imperial Qing army proper but the Xiang and Huai militia forces led by Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, respectively, and the Ever-Victorious Army of Western mercenaries commanded by British officer Charles Gordon. The rebellion was of great historical significance in that it not only dealt a blow to the Qing dynasty but also exposed the powerlessness of the traditional political structure centered on Manchu leadership.

The Arrow War (Second Opium War) occurred in the midst of the rebellion, partly by accident. In October 1856 Qing officials boarded and inspected the *Arrow*, a Chinese-owned, allegedly British-registered ship, and arrested 12 Chinese crew members on suspicion of piracy. The British contended that Qing officials pulled down the British flag that the *Arrow* had been flying. In fact, the registration of the nationality of the *Arrow* had expired, in which case the Qing action was not unlawful. The British, though, seeking to expand its privileges by renegotiating the Treaty of Nanjing, invited France, Russia, and the United States to forge an alliance. France, which was embarking on an active foreign policy under Napoleon III, accepted the invitation. The joint British-French force that had conquered Guangzhou at the end of 1857 headed north to Tianjin, where the Qing army, exhausted from putting down the Taiping Rebellion, conceded the city. The Treaties of Tianjin were signed in June 1858.

Opposition to the treaties sprung up in Beijing after the British and French forces left, resulting in further clashes when Britain and France returned the following year to ratify the treaties. Full-scale fighting resumed, and in October 1860 British and French troops entered Beijing, destroying and thoroughly looting the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan) and Summer Palace (Yiheyuan).

Britain and France signed the Convention of Beijing in 1860 with the Qing, which confirmed the validity of the Treaties of Tianjin and which now was saddled with a heavier burden. Namely, the Qing was required to (1) provide 11 treaty ports, including Tianjin, Hankou, and Nanjing, and grant foreigners living in treaty port settlements the right to travel; (2) grant the right of Christians to evangelize and legalize the opium trade; (3) grant the right to establish diplomatic legations in Beijing and outlaw the use of the Chinese character for barbarian (夷) in referring to foreigners; and (4) cede the Kowloon Peninsula to Britain. In addition, Russia, which

mediated the treaty, won a concession for the full control of present-day Primorsky Krai, which had previously been jointly settled with China.

In sum, Britain and other Western countries had ambitions on Qing China and proceeded to satisfy them on the strength of their military and by inventing a host of excuses. The Qing, on the other hand, did not take adequate precautions against the military might and ambitions of the Western powers, and inadvertently wound up giving the Western powers excuses to make further encroachments. In many cases, the damage suffered could have been mitigated had Qing leaders been more vigilant.

(3) Japan's Opening to the West

By comparison, Japan's opening to the West was relatively free of turmoil. Commodore Matthew Perry sailed into Japan in July 1853 seeking diplomatic relations. He soon left the country but returned in February the following year, at which time the Treaty of Peace and Amity between the United States and the Empire of Japan was signed. The treaty called for the opening of two ports at Hakodate and Shimoda. These could be interpreted as being exceptions to the policy of national seclusion, though, rather than a full-fledged opening to the West. Following the US example, Britain, the Netherlands, Russia, and France also entered into similar agreements. When Townsend Harris arrived in Shimoda in 1856 as US consul general to Japan and pushed for a treaty of commerce and navigation, though, Japan could no longer put off a decision. The signing of the US-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1858 clearly showed that the isolationist policy had been abandoned, and the new treaty had far graver implications than the Treaty of Peace and Amity.

The shogunate was split between those arguing for the gradual opening of the country and those insisting on unbroken seclusion. The former camp hoped to import Western military technology and establish diplomatic organs, believing that the opening of the country was inevitable. It solicited the advice of daimyo lords and sought to win over public opinion, and it endorsed Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu (1837–1913), head of one of the Tokugawa clan's branch houses, as successor to the heirless shogun, Iesada. The conservatives, on the other hand, while recognizing the dangers of confrontation with the West, were reluctant to undertake military and diplomatic reforms or to seek the opinion of others, including regional daimyo. They supported Tokugawa Yoshitomi (1846–66)—later renamed Iemochi—for shogun despite his young age, as he belonged to the prestigious Kishu (Wakayama) line of the Tokugawa clan and thus considered a more fitting candidate in the shogunal line of descent.

The shogunate's leader following Perry's arrival was Senior Councillor (*roju*) Abe Masahiro, who was succeeded by Hotta Masayoshi when Abe died in 1857. Both men had an understanding of Western civilization and realized that Japan had no choice but to open up. The question was how. Instead of reaching a decision unilaterally, they sought the views of numerous daimyo, and they also hoped to sign the commercial treaty with the blessings of the imperial court. This issue of imperial

sanction became quite complicated when it became embroiled with that of shogunal succession, and the shogunate was unable to gain the emperor's consent. Hotta was forced to step aside, after which Ii Naosuke—a supporter of the Kishu line—took over as *tairo* (great elder), signed the treaty without imperial sanction, and declared that Yoshitomi had been chosen as the next shogun. Many who had opposed him were punished in the Ansei Purge, touching off a retaliation and leading to Ii's assassination in March 1860 in what is known as the Sakuradamongai Incident.

Antiforeign activities gained great momentum from around the time of Ii's purge and assassination. Save for isolated attacks on individual Westerners, military clashes with the West were limited, though, to the June 1863 firing of a Western ship by Choshu soldiers, the Kagoshima Bombardment in August that year by a British naval squadron, and the September 1864 bombardment of Shimonoseki Strait by a four-nation fleet. There was thus little military turbulence compared to the situation in China.

There were several reasons for this.

The first was that the Western powers were primarily interested in China. Japan, by comparison, was a small, peripheral country. The powers were preoccupied fighting the First and Second Opium Wars and unable to devote their full attention to Japan. This is also one explanation for the fact that it was the United States, rather than Britain or France, that led the push for Japan's opening. Similar circumstances were behind the relatively limited pressure exerted on Korea, as will be detailed below.

The second reason was that Japan had learned of the Qing dynasty's demise and had time to prepare for Western encroachment. That the Qing was subjected to an unjust conflict like the First Opium War was terribly shocking for Japan, alerting its leaders to the malevolent motives and awesome brute force of the West. Western ships had repeatedly appeared in Japan's coastal waters and been visiting the Ryukyu Islands, and the Netherlands had advised Japan to end its isolation. Japan's decision to open up was not made willingly, but the country was nonetheless better prepared to deal with the consequences than China.

The third key reason was that members of the ruling elite in Japan were of the military class and had an appreciation of military affairs. They thus immediately perceived that Japan did not have a chance of winning against the West. Kawaji Toshiakira, who played a prominent role in Japan's foreign affairs, such as by negotiating a treaty of friendship with Russian envoy Evfimii Putiatin, had great respect for Putiatin as a "truly heroic man" who had survived a long and difficult journey to reach Japan. Kawaji conceded that the samurai class, himself included, had become too accustomed to peaceful times and could not hope to match the stoutheartedness of such men.⁵

⁵ Sato Seizaburo, "Kawaji Toshiakira" in *Shi no choyaku o koete: Seiyō no shogeki to Nihon* (Beyond "Salto Mortale": Western Impact on Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Toshi Shuppan, 1992; reprint, Tokyo: Chikura Publishing, 2009), 106.

The chief value in Qing society, meanwhile, was scholarship rather than military accomplishments. There were outstanding officials like Lin Zexu, but for the most part their assessments never reached the leadership in Beijing, nor were they given much esteem.

Korea placed a similar emphasis on scholarship; in fact, following the fall of the Ming dynasty in China, it was Korea—under the Joseon dynasty—that laid claims to being the rightful heirs of orthodox Confucianism. It had greater access to information about the First Opium War than did Japan, and yet there was no strong reaction. The pervading view in Korea, as of 1845, was that the Qing court was “safe and sound.” Copies of Wei Yuan’s *Haiguo tuzhi* (Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms) had reached Korea at that time, but the book failed to convince Korean leaders of the need for coastal defense, as it did in Japan. They also failed to recognize the seriousness of the Taiping Rebellion, for they had little interest in developments south of the Yangtze River. Only when fighting during the Second Opium War spread to northern China did they grow alarmed.⁶

The same could be said of Japan’s imperial court in Kyoto, the country’s center of erudition and culture, where few people understood the gravity of the situation. Fewer still actually seriously considered the chances of victory against the Western powers.

The fourth reason that should be pointed out is that Japanese society had a highly integrated economy. Japan in the Edo period already had a unified, national market, with each domain using coastal routes to ship goods to and from Osaka. The appearance of Commodore Perry’s black ships, therefore, was immediately perceived as being not a local crisis but a national one.

By comparison, the crisis in the south of China was not readily seen as an emergency of national scale. On the Korean Peninsula, too, economic development and integration was not at a high level. Coastal routes were not very important for the country, so there was little appreciation of seaborne threats.

The fifth reason was that the spread of education and a sense of national unity were probably most pronounced in Japan. Owing to the long period of peace from the beginning of the seventeenth century, literacy rates rose, leading to a rediscovery of Japanese culture and nurturing a primordial form of nationalism. This led to greater popular regard for the emperor and an emphasis on a tradition of never having lost a war to a foreign power.

The sixth reason was that the Japanese, as a basic premise, were well aware of the existence of other, superior civilizations through their long contact with China. The Japanese worldview was not centered on their own country; even those ideas that appear ethnocentric were, in essence, an overreaching backlash against China’s perceived superiority. Thus, it was not difficult for the Japanese to admit that Western countries may be superior to Japan, at least in several fields.

⁶ Harada Tamaki, “19-seiki no Chosen ni okeru taigaiteki kiki ishiki” (Awareness of External Crisis in Nineteenth-Century Korea), *Chosenshi Kenkyukai Ronbunshu* 21 (March 1984).

A closely related point is the widespread knowledge of *Rangaku* (literally, Dutch learning, or Western scholarship and technology) during the Edo period. Fukuzawa Yukichi, during his visit to Europe in 1862, reports being stunned at learning from a Chinese student named Tang Xuejuan whom he met there that there were only 11 people in China who were familiar with Western languages.⁷ While this information may not be authoritative, and there are no indications that Fukuzawa actually believed him, it was nonetheless a startling revelation that a great power with long years of contact with the West like China had so few Western scholars. At that time, there were at least 500 people in Japan who were familiar with *Rangaku*.

This suggests that the vast majority of people in China had traditionally been unaware of any country more advanced than their own. The Sino-centric view was so deeply entrenched that people could not fathom any country being greater than their own even if this was pointed out to them.

2. The Meiji Restoration and the Call to “Leave Asia and Enter Europe”

(1) The Collapse of the Shogunate and the Formation of a New Government

The next issue for Japan to tackle after its decision to open the country was a search for a new system of government.

When Perry’s black ships arrived, there was no doubt in anyone’s mind that dealing with foreign entities was a task to be handled chiefly by the Tokugawa shogunate. Shogunal revenues (measured in terms of stipends of rice) were around 8 million *koku* (1 *koku* = approximately 180 liters)—over 4 million *koku* being earmarked for land administered directly by the shogun and over 3 million *koku* for his immediate vassals. This far exceeded the stipends of the other daimyo, the next highest being the Maeda clan of the Kaga domain (1.02 million *koku*) and the Shimazu clan of the Satsuma domain (770,000 *koku*).

Many domains were in financial straits, moreover, and did not have much to spare. And with several exceptions, notably Satsuma and Choshu, as will be detailed later, most had come to see themselves as the retainers of the Tokugawa clan, and the idea that they were the rulers of their own domains had largely dissipated.

The shogunate had its own share of weaknesses, though. The *koku*-based stipend system was predicated on an agrarian economy, and the government did not have a system of securing stable tax revenues from commercial activities, which had developed over the course of the Edo period. Agriculture failed to grow as a sector in the latter half of the Edo period, and the shogunate, too, found its finances growing tight.

Shogunal military forces had become obsolete from years of peaceful reign,

⁷ Ishikawa Mikiaki, *Fukuzawa Yukichi den* (Commentary on Fukuzawa Yukichi), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1932), 330–33.

and any new military technology had to be learned from scratch. Direct shogunal retainers, long accustomed to peace, were content to keep their special privileges as *hatamoto* or *gokenin* and were neither interested in nor amenable to undergoing the rigorous training needed to acquire new technology.

The legitimacy of the Tokugawa shogunate itself was quite tenuous, as the shogun's claim to national rule was ultimately based solely on his designation as *seii tai shogun*, or "barbarian-subduing generalissimo," by the imperial court. Inasmuch as the shogun was a retainer of the emperor, he was on the same footing as the other daimyo. The confusion surrounding the opening of the country noted above was sparked by the failure of the shogunate to gain imperial sanction for a commercial treaty with the United States. And the inability of the "barbarian-subduing generalissimo" to actually repel the "barbarians" at the country's doorsteps seriously undermined the claims to the legitimacy of his rule.

The Satsuma and Choshu domains, by contrast, long maintained their warrior temperament. They were the losers in the battle to unify the country at the turn of the seventeenth century; their estates were reduced, and they were forced to endure poverty and other hardships along with their large corps of retainers.

The leaders of the shogunal government were *fudai*, hereditary vassals of the Tokugawa clan with relatively small stipends. They ran the shogunate by excluding the *yuhan* (prominent "outside" domains) as well as the major *shinpan* Tokugawa branches. The prevailing opinion within the shogunate was that these powerful houses should also be enlisted in making a concerted, nationwide effort to address the threat from the West. But this was the point on which the Hitotsubashi and Kishu factions of the Tokugawa clan were split.

After the assassination of Ii Naosuke—an advocate of maintaining the traditional, shogunate-centered structure—in the Sakuradamongai Incident, attempts were made to achieve national unity in a variety of ways. It crystallized into a movement to forge a more unified leadership embracing the imperial court, the shogunate, and the *yuhan* domains outside the inner ruling circle. In 1862 Shogun Iemochi married the emperor's younger sister, Princess Kazu, and Satsuma leader Shimazu Hisamitsu arranged for Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu to be appointed as shogunal regent and Matsudaira Yoshinaga (daimyo of the Echizen domain) as shogunal prime minister. In February 1864 a council of daimyo-level leaders was established by the imperial court, attended by Yoshinobu, Yoshinaga, Date Munenari (daimyo of the Uwajima domain), Matsudaira Katamori (daimyo of the Aizu domain and military commissioner of Kyoto), Yamanouchi Toyoshige (daimyo of the Tosa domain), and Hisamitsu.⁸ The only *yuhan* domain to be left out of the meeting was Choshu, which had by this time taken an openly antforeign position.

⁸ Shimazu Hisamitsu was not a daimyo himself but held a lower *baishin* rank as the father of the daimyo (and thus his appointment to the council came two weeks later than the others). This goes to show that the council was a gathering of not titular leaders but representatives of the most powerful domains.

The council was marked by internal discord, however, and failed to play an effective role. Yoshinobu, on the one hand, sought to maintain the shogunate's monopoly on political power, while the *yuhan* representatives sought an end to such a monopoly. The shogunate also monopolized profits from trade, and the *yuhan*, particularly the Satsuma domain, were keen on acquiring a slice of the pie.

Upon assuming his post in April 1864, newly appointed French Minister Leon Roches approached Yoshinobu seeking closer ties as part of Napoleon III's expansionist foreign policy. This bred pro-French sentiments among shogunal bureaucrats and convinced them they could reestablish their authority without reaching out to the imperial court or the *yuhan* daimyo. At around the same time, Britain was courting Satsuma as being more favorably disposed to opening up trade and for appearing to be more flexible and resolute in making decisions.⁹

The shogunate's growing intimacy with France alarmed Satsuma, pushing it closer to Choshu, with whom it formed the Satsuma-Choshu Alliance in March 1866 in advance of the second of the Choshu Expeditions. With the help of Satsuma forces, Choshu this time repelled the shogunal army in a war that began in July. Satsuma supplied Choshu with arms and ammunition that it had smuggled from Shanghai. China had already opened to foreign trade by this time; that it was possible to conduct trade with the West via China would turn out to be a decisive factor in the direction of the Meiji Restoration.¹⁰

Amid the rise of hard-line absolutists in the shogunate and the increasingly entrenched antishogunal sentiments in the Satsuma and Choshu domains, there also emerged a more moderate position, namely, a revival of the attempt to politically unify the imperial court with the daimyo houses and also an advocacy of Taisei Hokan, under which the shogun would surrender to the emperor his right to rule; the latter was an outgrowth of an attempt to achieve unity between the shogunate and the *yuhan* daimyo. The proponents of this more moderate line were officials of the Tosa domain. The compromise plan called for the dismantling of the shogunate, with the shogun becoming just one daimyo among many, and state affairs would be deliberated by a council of daimyo. Tosa, under this plan, would gain a voice in the running of the country.

Had this materialized, a new polity centered on the Tokugawa clan would no doubt have been established. The house had a capable leader in Yoshinobu (who became shogun in September 1866 and took on the Tokugawa surname), was

⁹ Not only did Satsuma soldiers fight well against the British in the Kagoshima Bombardment of August 1863 but Satsuma negotiators, during the ensuing peace talks, also made inquiries into the possibility of purchasing arms from and sending students to Britain. Such flexibility made a strong impression on the British.

¹⁰ The shogunate dispatched the *Senzai maru* to Shanghai in 1862 seeking trade, as detailed by Sato Saburo in *Kindai Nit-Chu koshoshi no kenkyu* (Study of the Modern History of Japanese-Sino Negotiations) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1984). This was followed in 1863 by the visit to Shanghai by the *Kenjun maru*, sent by the Hakodate commissioner — the shogunate's office on the northern island of Hokkaido.

experienced in dealing with foreign countries, had bureaucrats with practical skills, and received support from France. The decision by Yoshinobu to return political rule to the emperor under the Taisei Hokan on November 9, 1867, and step down as shogun to become a daimyo was motivated in part by his confidence that the Tokugawas would remain a dominant house in the new government. The Tosa domain, too, was slated to gain a favorable position.

This was unacceptable to Satsuma and Choshu, however. Even if the Tokugawas were permitted to stay in power, they wanted to first deal a heavy military blow to the clan. They were looking to punish the Tokugawa family, and achieved their aim with the coup d'état of January 3, 1868, known as Osei Fukko (Restoration of Imperial Rule).

Resistance by Tokugawa troops led to the Boshin Civil War with Satsuma and Choshu on January 27. Satsuma-Choshu-led forces made quick gains on the first day of the Battle of Toba-Fushimi, prompting Yoshinobu to withdraw his soldiers and return to Edo (now Tokyo), despite the fact that the outcome was as yet far from certain. Yoshinobu refrained from any further fighting, and the war was effectively over within a day. While the formal end of the Boshin Civil War is set at June 1869, when the last pro-shogunal stronghold of Goryokaku in Hakodate surrendered, organized warfare under a centralized Tokugawa command never existed.

This is not to say that the Tokugawa forces were doomed from the outset. But the Japanese people, long accustomed to peace, was averse to a protracted war. Tokugawa leaders did not wish to put up dogged resistance because they feared this would split the country in two and make it more vulnerable to colonization. Being generous with surrendering forces, meanwhile, was part of Japan's cultural tradition, and this point was understood by Satsuma and Choshu.

One important factor behind this turn of events was intervention by Britain, which was chiefly interested in profits to be made from trade and thus desired a stable social order. While the "bloodless" surrender of Edo Castle was negotiated by Katsu Kaishu and Saigo Takamori, the agreement owes much to pressure from British Minister Harry Parkes.

The crumbling of the Tokugawa shogunate that had ruled Japan for 260 years at the hands of Satsuma and Choshu soldiers was nonetheless quite astonishing. Perhaps the biggest difference between the two sides was that lower-ranking samurai, who were not bound by tradition, stepped up to play pivotal roles in the two domains, while this was not the case within the shogunate. This difference had a large bearing on the course the new Meiji government would subsequently take.

(2) Opening to the West

Many believed that the new government under Satsuma and Choshu leadership would, in keeping with the *sonno joi* (revere the emperor, expel the barbarians) slogan, seek to turn back Western encroachment. Fukuzawa Yukichi and others expressed dread at such a prospect. But instead of reverting to national seclusion,

the new government steered the country clearly in the direction of greater openness.

On February 10, 1868, it announced a policy of peace and amity with foreign countries. The Boshin Civil War was still raging, and numerous assaults on foreign nationals were reported. Satsuma and Choshu officials recognized that “expelling the barbarians” was not feasible, and took steps to warn against attacking foreigners. The announcement took many by surprise, as they had believed the new government would seek to drive the foreigners out.¹¹

On April 6 Emperor Meiji issued the five-point Charter Oath, the fourth article being, “Evil practices of the past shall be abandoned, and actions shall be based on universal justice.” While the passage can be interpreted in many ways, it essentially rejects national seclusion and other “evil practices of the past” and calls for the opening of the country.

The new government also reformed the system under which each domain ran the affairs of its own territory, instead seeking a more centralized form of governance. In July 1869, less than a month following the end of the Boshin Civil War with the surrender of Goryokaku, it ordered the formal return of the right to administer each domain to Emperor Meiji under the Hanseki Hokan. Since the domainal chiefs were, as a rule, reappointed governors of those domains, there did not appear to be much change outwardly. But in August 1871 the feudal domains were completely abolished and replaced with a system of prefectures; this time, the central government appointed new governors to administer the prefectures, and the former feudal lords were ordered to reside in Tokyo. This, to Western eyes, seemed revolutionary and nothing short of a miracle.

These measures could be pushed through because many domains were nearly bankrupt and were powerless to resist. For many daimyo, ties with their own estates had become tenuous under many years of shogunal rule. Many also recognized that a more centralized form of authority was needed to deal effectively with foreign powers. Be that as it may, the government’s policies were quite unexpected. Fukuzawa Yukichi recalls exclaiming with friends then that they would have no regrets dying now, after having been witness to this grand feat.¹² Needless to say, many were just as angered by these steps; Shimazu Hisamitsu, the de facto ruler of the Satsuma domain, for one, was enraged by the establishment of the prefectural system and never forgave Saigo Takamori and Okubo Toshimichi for their decision.

The Iwakura Mission, led by Iwakura Tomomi, was dispatched in December 1871. About half of the new government’s top leaders were part of this large

¹¹ Oka Yoshitake, “Ishin chokugo ni okeru sonjo undo no yoen” (The Lingering Flames of the *Sonno Joi* Movement in the Immediate Aftermath of the Restoration), in *Oka Yoshitake Chosakushu* (Collected Works of Oka Yoshitake), vol. 6 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993).

¹² Fukuzawa Yukichi, “Fukuo hyaku yo wa” (One Hundred-Plus Essays of Fukuzawa Yukichi), in Keio Gijuku, ed., *Fukuzawa Yukichi Zenshu* (Collected Works of Fukuzawa Yukichi), vol. 6 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959), 419.

diplomatic expedition, including Iwakura, Okubo, and Kido Takayoshi, and they traveled to the United States and Europe over a period of a year and a half. That so many key members of a new government left the country for so long immediately after a revolution was utterly unthinkable. They were that keen to visit and see the West.

They were able to see firsthand the huge gap between Japan and Western civilization, and they resolved to devote their full energies to narrowing this gap. For this, they realized that it was more important to enrich the country than to strengthen the military.

One noteworthy domestic reform the government instigated was the enactment of the Conscription Ordinance of 1873. They issued an official notice in December 1872 and instituted the ordinance in January the following year to create a military force comprising primarily of ordinary citizens.

This decision was made despite the fact that the new government's leaders were mainly from the samurai class and that there was no pressing need for a large army. The policy was the brainchild of Omura Masujiro of the Choshu domain and carried forward by Choshu's Yamagata Aritomo after Omura was assassinated in late 1869. Omura was a village doctor, while Yamagata was a low-ranking samurai. Both had fought in Choshu's Kiheitai volunteer militia and knew firsthand that the samurai were not as effective on the battlefield as highly motivated commoners.

The Meiji government proceeded to abolish the samurai class, whose stipends had become a heavy fiscal burden. First, in 1873, it encouraged the members of the samurai class to return their *chitsuroku* stipends (both hereditary and those awarded for distinguished service) in exchange for cash and government bonds. And in August 1876 it abolished the system altogether, decreeing that stipends be converted into *kinroku kosai* public bonds. In March of that year, the *haitorei* edict had been issued prohibiting the wearing of swords.

These were momentous decisions that stripped the warrior class of both their status and economic privileges. The early days of the Meiji era were marked by a number of uprisings among disgruntled samurai, but such is only to be expected given the highly progressive nature of the measures. It is a wonder, indeed, how the new government managed to keep itself steady.

Thus the Edo-period system, under which the shogunate stood at the top of a pyramid of feudal lords, who each held sway over their respective territories, was fundamentally reformed. The Satsuma and Choshu domains first toppled the shogunate; the lower-ranking samurai of those domains who became the bureaucrats in the new government then abolished the domains, including their own, and went on to abolish even the warrior class. These reforms were undertaken in the name of the emperor. The Satsuma-Choshu bureaucrats relied less on the power of their own domains and more on the symbolic authority of the imperial institution.¹³

¹³ Traditionally speaking, the emperor was a civilian symbol but was cast as a military leader by Satsuma-Choshu bureaucrats. Later, he would be placed in the position of commander-in-chief

The *sonno joi* movement thus underwent great change once its leaders formed a new government; as officials, they did not necessarily “revere” the opinions of the emperor, and far from “expelling” foreigners they opened the country to trade. In a sense, though, the spirit of the movement lived on if the “revere the emperor, expel the barbarians” slogan is not read literally but interpreted to mean the centralization of authority and the creation of a state that can hold its own against other countries.¹⁴ These two strains, in fact, represent the internal and external inclinations of modern states. In that sense, the Meiji Restoration was, first and foremost, a revolution in nationalism.¹⁵

The Qing dynasty in China, too, underwent great change following the signing of the Convention of Beijing in 1860. In March 1861 the *Zongli Geguo Shiwu Yamen* was set up as a government organ to oversee foreign relations, which had been handled separately by various departments. Relations with foreign countries had been described as *yiwu* (affairs concerning barbarians) but was now called *yangwu* (maritime affairs).

The Tongzhi Emperor ascended to the throne in November 1861, with real power being wielded by his mother, Empress Dowager Cixi, and uncle, Prince Gong. This marked the start of various reform efforts, including the Tongzhi Restoration and the Self-Strengthening Movement.¹⁶

The Tongzhi Restoration was characterized by *zhongti xiyong* (Chinese essence, Western technology), an attempt to absorb modern, particularly military, technology from the West while maintaining an emphasis on enlightened Confucianism. As the Taiping Rebellion subsided, Zeng Guofan, Li Hongzhang, and other officials who had distinguished themselves in quelling the uprising initiated efforts to import Western technology. Arsenal and shipyards were established in various parts of the country, notably the Jiangnan Arsenal in Shanghai, to enable the domestic mechanization of armed forces, as were also telegraph offices, paper mills, ironworks, shipping offices, army and naval academies, and departments to translate Western books.

The *zhongti xiyong* slogan expresses an attempt to grow Western, industrial branches on a trunk of traditional Chinese culture and institutions. China boasted

holding the prerogative of supreme command. The use of the symbolic authority of the emperor was clearly successful at this stage, but when prudent elder statesmen and politicians were no longer at the emperor’s side, the symbol was abused by military leaders to very problematic ends.

¹⁴ Kitaoka Shin’ichi, *Nihon seijishi: Gaiko to kenryoku* (History of Japanese Politics: Diplomacy and Power) (Tokyo: Society for the Promotion of the Open University of Japan, 1989), 32.

¹⁵ This was first pointed out by Oka Yoshitake in “Meiji Ishin to sekai josei” (The Meiji Restoration and World Affairs), in *Oka Yoshitake Chosakushu* (Collected Works of Oka Yoshitake), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992). The essay was originally published in 1946.

¹⁶ In Japan, one of the most detailed studies of the Self-Strengthening Movement is Suzuki Tomoo’s *Yomu Undo no kenkyu* (Study of the Westernization Movement in China) (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 1992).

national strength far surpassing that of Japan, so the reforms undertaken were also on a grand scale. These efforts also predated Japan's Meiji Restoration. Prior to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, China's Beiyang Fleet was considered the largest in Asia, eclipsing the Imperial Japanese Navy in both scale and quality.

In spite of these initiatives, the Self-Strengthening Movement failed to achieve the desired results.

One reason for this was that it was spearheaded not by the government in Beijing but by provincial administrators who had distinguished themselves in subduing the Taiping Rebellion, notably Li Hongzhang and Zuo Zongtang. It was thus not a nationally unified movement. Many of the enterprises established were semi-private *guandu shangban* firms, and the initial idea was that the government would provide minimal supervision while the merchants who provided capital would manage the companies. There were no banks stable enough to support such ventures, though, and after several financial panics, government officials began acquiring a stronger voice, gradually turning the companies into a means to satisfy their own personal ends. They subsequently failed to attract any private capital.

Another reason was the insistence that the reforms retain a Chinese essence. Upon being dispatched to Britain, China's first diplomat, Liu Xihong, marveled at the richness of Western civilization. But upon his return to China, he opposed the construction of a railroad line along a cemetery for *feng shui* reasons.¹⁷ Confucianism, in a sense, was a major obstacle to China's modernization.

Liu's reaction is in great contrast to that of Fukuzawa Yukichi. At least through the early years of the Meiji era, Fukuzawa vehemently denounced Confucianism, as he realized that it would be a big impediment to the importation of Western civilization.¹⁸

3. Conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1871

The opening of Qing China to the West prompted Japan to seek trade and diplomatic ties with the country as well. In 1862 the shogunate dispatched the *Senzai maru* to Shanghai seeking the start of bilateral trade, as noted above. It is a well-known fact

¹⁷ Kikuchi Hideaki, "Rasuto enpera to kindai Chugoku" (The Last Emperor and Modern China) in *Chugoku no rekishi* (Chinese History) series, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Kodansha Ltd., 2005), 68–69.

¹⁸ Fukuzawa was not, however, fundamentally opposed to Confucianism. From around the time he wrote *Bunmeiron no gairyaku* (*An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*), he always maintained respect for Confucian scholars, and from around Meiji 10 (1877) he began to emphasize the samurai ethic, which had much in common with Confucian thinking. He was not, therefore, single-mindedly bent on utilitarianism. Maruyama Masao, "Fukuzawa Yukichi no jukyo hihan" (Fukuzawa Yukichi's Criticism of Confucianism), in *Fukuzawa Yukichi no tetsugaku* (The Philosophy of Fukuzawa Yukichi) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001). See also Kitaoka Shin'ichi, *Dokuritsu jison: Fukuzawa Yukichi no chosen* (The Spirit of Independence and Self-Respect: Fukuzawa Yukichi's Challenge) (Tokyo: Kodansha Ltd., 2002)

that among those who traveled to Shanghai aboard this ship was Choshu's Takasugi Shinsaku.

Maritime travel from China to Japan was more common. Chinese vessels, in fact, had been calling on the port of Nagasaki during the period of Japan's isolation. When Japan's ports were opened to Western ships, it was Chinese merchants who acted as go-betweens. There was a need to maintain surveillance over them since some smoked opium, but there was no question that Japan desired an expansion of trade with the Qing.

In August 1870 the Japanese government sent Foreign Ministry official Yanagiwara Sakimitsu to the Qing government to conduct trade negotiations and also to explore the possibility to establishing diplomatic relations. This was a time of relative calm in China, as the Taiping Rebellion had been put down and the Tongzhi Restoration was in progress. The Qing court was beginning to deal with foreign countries in nontraditional ways, particularly in the field of diplomatic relations, such as by setting up the Foreign Office.

Yanagiwara was not permitted to enter Beijing, however, and met with Li Hongzhang in Tianjin in September, presenting him with a letter from the minister for foreign affairs to the Qing Office of Foreign Relations. The letter noted with regret the lack of diplomatic ties between neighboring countries and proposed that trade negotiations be launched as a preliminary step toward an early start of diplomatic talks.

The Foreign Office replied that a diplomatic treaty was unnecessary, quoting a Confucian concept that where there is true trust, promises are not needed. Yanagiwara persisted, however, and Li, believing that China should respond in good faith, advised the court to that effect. This time the Foreign Office agreed, reasoning that rejecting Japan's overtures while associating only with Western powers was contrary to the traditional Chinese principle of equality without discrimination.¹⁹

Some remained opposed, however, including Anhui Director of Civil Affairs Ying Han, who argued that new requests for commercial ties from foreign countries should be rejected. He contended that foreigners were, by nature, no better than dogs and sheep and were motivated by greed, cowered before authority, looked for China's weaknesses, and exploited them whenever they were found. Japan, he noted, was a vassal state and a tributary and therefore in a different class from the other countries with which China concluded trade treaties. Should China sign a treaty with Japan, other vassal states would no doubt seek similar treatment. Japan was a barbaric state to the east known as Wa in ancient times whose pirates during the Ming dynasty were as big a nuisance as Britain and France were today. There was no need, Ying Han contended, to create any new nuisances. This description contained many factual errors and was anachronistic—compared to the arguments advanced by Li Hongzhang cited below—but it was not an uncommon view in China at the

¹⁹ Banno Masataka, *Kindai Chugoku gaikoshi kenkyu* (Study of the History of Diplomacy in Modern China) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970), 243–44.

time.²⁰

Li dismissed such opinions, noting that Japan had not offered tributes since the Yuan dynasty nor was it a vassal state, and the two countries enjoyed peaceful relations during the Qing dynasty. He supported a treaty with Japan by pointing out that Japan is making self-strengthening efforts through agreements with Western countries. If deftly handled, the treaty could have benefits for China, too, he argued, while rejecting it would no doubt have adverse consequences. He further proposed that Chinese officials be stationed in Japan—a neighboring country with whom there was frequent contact—in either Tokyo or Nagasaki, following the conclusion of a treaty in order to oversee the activities of Chinese nationals in Japan and to monitor developments there.²¹²²

In September the following year, the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1871 was concluded. It was an “equal treaty” forged between two countries that had been forced into signing unequal compacts with the West. It was marked by reciprocity, calling for the stationing of diplomatic envoys and consuls in each other’s country and the mutual recognition of limited consular jurisdiction.

One point that bears noting is that it did not contain a most-favored-nation clause, which Qing negotiators were careful not to include. Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang both supported a treaty with Japan, but they strongly opposed the inclusion of such a clause. Li believed that enabling foreigners to trade inland was most harmful, and allowing the Japanese to do so would further exacerbate the damage, since the Japanese were poor, greedy, and deceitful, lived close enough to make frequent visits to China, and had the same facial features and system of writing. A most-favored-nation clause must absolutely be omitted, he argued, to prevent Japanese merchants from making inroads into the interior.²³

One noteworthy clause of the treaty was Article 2, which stated that amicable ties between the two countries dictate that each treat the other with courtesy. Whenever either party meets with injustice or contempt from a third country and notifies the other of this fact, the other party shall come to the other’s assistance or mediate in a fitting manner so as to deepen the friendship. While the two countries may not have had a full understanding of the implications of such a clause, it left open the possibility that Japan and China would form an alliance to counter threats from a third country. It had the potential of inviting scrutiny of the Western powers, and indeed, Britain and Germany expressed strong doubts.

Not a few in Japan, in fact, believed that an alliance with China was

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Li was among those most familiar with Japan’s “self-strengthening” efforts. He is reported to have learned about the Richardson Affair and how it escalated into the Kagoshima Bombardment and also about the damage the British naval squadron suffered at the hands of Satsuma forces from the English-language *North China Herald*. Sasaki, op. cit., 12.

²³ Banno, op. cit., 246–47.

necessary to thwart Western encroachment. In his February 1875 statement to the emperor, Minister of the Right Iwakura Tomomi stated that the foreign country requiring the greatest vigilance was Russia; were it to annex China, Japan's independence would also be threatened, so it behooved Japan to foster goodwill with the Qing government, offer mutual support, and establish ties of mutual benefit. When Japan-Qing relations grew tense during the Imo Mutiny of 1882, it was Iwakura who wrote to Minister for Foreign Affairs Inoue Kaoru pointing out that only Japan and the Qing remained free among Asian countries and that unless the two countries worked closely together, the West could not be prevented from slicing up the East. Iwakura's sentiments were widely shared among the public.²⁴

As noted earlier, when Japan first proposed the treaty, Li Hongzhang observed that since Japan is unable to defend itself against the Western powers on its own, the Qing should come to Japan's aid so that it is not taken over by the West. Both Japan and China, therefore, felt the need for cooperation to deal with the Western threat.

The treaty led to the mutual exchange and stationing of envoys. According to Wang Yunsheng, there were 2,000 Chinese merchants living in Yokohama at the time, several hundred more in Kobe, and over a thousand in Nagasaki.²⁵ In February 1876 Li warned the Qing court that dealing with Japan required great caution and that an envoy should be stationed in the country to collect information on conditions there.

Hanlin Academy scholar He Ruzhang was appointed minister to Japan in January 1877, with Zhang Sigui being named associate minister and Huang Zunxian secretary. Their arrival in Japan was delayed until December, however, as the Satsuma Rebellion had broken out in Japan.²⁶

This was expected to become a major milestone in bilateral relations. He Ruzhang was a renowned scholar, and many Japanese scholars of the Chinese classics warmed to the prospect of friendlier relations, engendering a quiet fad in Chinese studies.

Huang Zunxian, moreover, authored the 40-volume *Riben guozhi* (History of Japan) in 1880 in which he praised the rapid progress made in Japan and strongly criticized the lack of understanding about the country in China. He was also instructed by his minister, He Ruzhang, to write the celebrated *Chaoxian celue* (Korean Strategy), which was presented on August 2, 1880, to Korean envoy Kim Hong-jip during the latter's stay in Japan. The document provided an outstanding

²⁴ Oka Yoshitake, "Kokuminteki dokuritsu to kokka risei" (National Independence and State Rationalism), in *Oka Yoshitake Chosakushu* (Collected Works of Oka Yoshitake), vol. 6, 248–50.

²⁵ Wang Yunsheng, *Nit-Chu gaiko 60-nenshi* (Sixty Years of Japanese-Sino Diplomacy), trans. and ed. Hatano Ken'ichi and Nagano Isao (Kensetsusha, 1933; reprint, Tokyo: Ryuukeishosha Publish, 1987), vol. 1, 168.

²⁶ Zhang Weixiong, *Bunjin gaikokan no Meiji Nihon: Chugoku shodai chu-Nichi koshidan no ib unka taiken* (Meiji Japan in the Eyes of a Scholar-Diplomat: Cross-Cultural Experiences of the First Chinese Legation in Japan) (Tokyo: Kashiwashobo, 1999).

analysis of the international situation at that time.

The Qing envoys, however, were not favorably disposed toward Japan from the outset. He Ruzhang would eventually gain an accurate understanding of Japan's development, but at first he held Japan in contempt and had an inflated estimation of his own country. Seeing Japan outside the Confucian and Chinese cognitive paradigm was not easy, and before they could do so, one problem after another emerged in Japan-Sino relations.

4. Taiwan Expedition of 1874 and the Ryukyu Question

(1) Competing Claims over the Ryukyu Islands

Japan and Qing China became entangled in sharp territorial disputes immediately following the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1871.

One of them was over the Okinawa/Ryukyu territorial question. Okinawa, or the Ryukyus, could be said to have been a tributary of both Japan and the Qing, as suggested by its very name. Okinawa, or Uchina, was what local residents called themselves to distinguish themselves from the Yamato people of mainland Japan, with whom they shared—broadly speaking—the spoken language and written *kana* culture. Ryukyu, on the other hand, was the name the Ming dynasty—hoping to control *wako* pirates—conferred to the king of the Chuzan Kingdom in the fourteenth century in return for tributes.²⁷

It was Satsuma, though, that had held *de facto* control of the Ryukyu Kingdom since the seventeenth century. Following the invasion by Shimazu Iehisa in 1609, the Shimazu clan effectively controlled the Ryukyus. But because the offering of tributes to the Qing court resulted in favorable trading terms, Shimazu rulers sustained this practice. They also refrained from forcing local residents to adopt Japanese customs, allowing them to keep their own, distinctive culture. The Qing court was aware that the Ryukyus were effectively under Satsuma control, resulting in a rather complex web of international relations.

Such a state of “double affiliation” was unthinkable among the modern states of the West, which assumed that Okinawa/Ryukyu should either identify itself as being part of the Qing, part of Japan, or fully independent. Were it to proclaim its independence, there was every likelihood of it being invaded by the Western powers. Indeed, before Perry sailed into Edo Bay, he stopped off in Okinawa, and Britain and France had also sought trade with the Ryukyu Kingdom even before Perry's arrival, hoping to launch their advances into East Asia from this base. Japan's policy, therefore, was to make clear its sovereignty over Okinawa and eliminate any confusion.

When the Meiji government declared the establishment of the prefectural

²⁷ Hirano Satoshi, *Dai-Shin teikoku to Chuka no konmei*, (The Great Qing Empire and the Crisis in Sinocentrism) (Tokyo: Kodansha Ltd., 2007), 287.

system in August 1871, it assigned jurisdiction over the Ryukyus to the Satsuma domain, which was now renamed Kagoshima Prefecture. In January the following year, the government dispatched Kagoshima official Narahara Shigeru to Okinawa to explain the political reforms being undertaken on the mainland and how this would affect the way the islands would be ruled.

In November 1871, 54 of the 69 fishermen from Miyako and Yaeyama Islands shipwrecked on Taiwan were murdered. When Kagoshima officials learned of this incident upon the return of the 12 survivors in June 1872 (three were killed in the accident), they proposed the dispatch of a penal expedition.

The Meiji government considered its response cautiously, compiling facts that would positively establish Japan's sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands. In October, Ryukyu King Sho Tai was appointed lord of the newly created Ryukyu domain and incorporated into the country's peerage system. He was, in effect, treated in the same way as a former feudal daimyo. The right to carry on diplomatic relations was requisitioned, and the treaties formed to date with foreign countries (such as the 1854 compact with the United States) and the conduct of external affairs were placed under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A branch office of the ministry was established in Naha. Tributes continued to be made to the Qing court every other year, however, which made no protests over Japan's policy.

But when four sailors from Oda Prefecture (now part of Okayama Prefecture) were robbed after being shipwrecked on Taiwan again in March 1873, Japan sent Foreign Minister Soejima Taneomi as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary seeking reparations from the Qing government. Qing officials refused to take responsibility, claiming that the perpetrators belonged to a people living in a barbarian land falling outside of Qing jurisdiction.

The Japanese government decided on February 6, 1874, to send an expeditionary force to Taiwan, effectively led by Lieutenant General Saigo Tsugumichi (who was director of Taiwanese affairs). The Western powers were critical of this decision, prompting the government at one time to back down. But when Saigo indicated his intention to set sail even without the government's blessing, the government did an about-face again. Saigo's contingent left Nagasaki in May, and succeeded in suppressing the aborigines.

The primary reason that Home Minister Okubo Toshimichi relented and agreed to the expedition, despite his strong opposition to the dispatch of a special envoy to Korea—which could have precipitated a war—in October the previous year, was his fear of an uprising in Satsuma. Former Councillor Eto Shinpei had led the unsuccessful Saga Rebellion on February 1; should such an insurgency spread to Satsuma, Okubo felt that the new government could very well collapse. With the expedition to Taiwan, he hoped that the seething discontent among former Satsuma samurai would be redirected toward external targets. Indeed, most of the soldiers taking part in the expedition were from Satsuma, and they were under the command of Saigo Tsugumichi, the younger brother of Meiji Restoration hero Takamori. The

other prominent opponent of dispatching an envoy to Korea, Kido Takayoshi, though, also argued against the Taiwan Expedition and resigned as councillor.

The second reason for Okubo's decision was that an expedition to Taiwan was believed to entail fewer military risks than a potential conflict with Korea. And the third reason was his belief that an expedition to Taiwan would help legitimize Japan's sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands. Because the Qing government denied responsibility for actions in "barbarian-held lands" of Taiwan, some saw this as an opportunity to claim Japanese sovereignty over this territory as well. Such was the view of US Consul Charles LeGendre, who played a key role in the expedition's dispatch.²⁸ Okubo, though, restrained such voices.

Okubo travelled to Beijing in October 1874 to negotiate a settlement. Through the mediation of Thomas Wade, British minister to the Qing court, China acknowledged that Japan's expedition had been justified as a means of protecting its subjects and agreed to pay 500,000 taels (670,000 yen) as "consolation." The agreement essentially recognized that the Ryukyus belonged to Japan. Western countries initially believed that Japanese claims were unreasonable, so they regarded the resulting agreement as a diplomatic coup for Japan and expressed praise for Japan's negotiating skills.²⁹ Okubo recounts that the primary aim of his negotiating efforts was to win Qing recognition of the legitimacy of the expedition and that he planned to return the indemnity at a later date.³⁰

In December, following his return from Beijing, Okubo argued for the need to fully incorporate the Ryukyu Islands as Japanese territory. In March 1875 Gustave Boissonade, French legal advisor to the Meiji government, suggested that to fully establish Japanese sovereignty, the Ryukyu government should be made to break off ties with the Qing court. Thus when he visited the Ryukyus in July, Home Ministry official Matsuda Michiyuki instructed Ryukyu leaders to end the practice of offering tributes in alternate years, stop sending representatives on ceremonious occasions, and close down the Ryukyu mission in Fuzhou. Ryukyu officials insisted on continuing with the tributes, but the Japanese government rejected the entreaty, prompting Ryukyu leaders to make a direct appeal to the Qing.

A Ryukyu emissary arrived secretly in Fuzhou in February 1877. Viceroy of Min-Zhe He Jing and Fujian Director of Civil Affairs Ding Richang argued that the status of Ryukyu Kingdom should be protected, and in September Li Hongzhang summoned Japanese Minister Mori Arinori and questioned him about the discontinuation of tributes from the islands. This was the first important matter that China's first minister to Japan, He Ruzhang, addressed upon assuming his new

²⁸ William L. Newman, *America Encounters Japan: From Perry to MacArthur* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1963), chap. 9.

²⁹ Kiyosawa Kiyoshi, *Gaiseika to shite no Okubo Toshimichi* (Okubo Toshimichi as a Diplomat-Politician) (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1942; reprint, Tokyo: Chuko Bunko, 1993).

³⁰ Katsuta Masaharu, *Seijika: Okubo Toshimichi* (Okubo Toshimichi, the Politician) (Tokyo: Kodansha Ltd., 2003), 182-3.

office in December 1877.

In May 1878 he offered three options to deal with the issue in a report to his superiors. The first was to continue negotiating with the Japanese government while sending a warship to the Ryukyu Islands to pursue the matter with Ryukyu leaders. He believed that taking a hard-line stance would prompt Japan to back down. He considered this to be the best option. The second-best plan, he noted, was to reason with Japanese officials to win concessions; if Japan refused to compromise, the Qing government should promise aid to the Ryukyu leadership and encourage resistance against Japanese efforts to annex the islands. Should Japan resort to military action, the Qing would also send troops and attack the Japanese contingent from both sides. The Qing would naturally emerge victorious, and peace would be restored. The third option was to persist with diplomatic negotiations with Japan, appealing to international law and inviting the intervention of Western envoys. Japan would realize that its aims were misplaced, and this would enable the Ryukyu Kingdom to maintain its autonomy.³¹

He Ruzhang's estimation of Japan at this point was still quite low; he regarded politics in Japan to be unstable, its economy to be feeble, and its military buildup efforts to be as yet unsuccessful. He believed that Japan's warships were not iron-armored, as the Japanese claimed, but were merely iron-plated. Li Hongzhang disagreed with this assessment, however, noting that the Japanese fleet was not to be underestimated, as the iron plates of its warships measured more than 12 centimeters thick. Later, after visiting both Japan and China, former US President Ulysses Grant commented that China's military capacity was no match for Japan's. This seems to corroborate Li's evaluation. Li was in a position of responsibility should war break out against Japan, so he was understandably careful about gauging Japan's military capacity.

The Japanese government seized Shuri Castle, abolished the Ryukyu domain, and established Okinawa Prefecture in March 1879 and made a national announcement to that effect the following month. The king and his family were ordered to leave Okinawa and move to Tokyo in June.

By this time, He Ruzhang's views of Japan had undergone a transformation. In a statement made in late 1879, he noted that Japan was pursuing an independent foreign policy and that both the army and navy were making progress in training their soldiers, adding that were the Qing to send an expedition to the Ryukyus now, prospects of success were quite low. While Ryukyu leaders continued to covertly send emissaries to the Qing court seeking support, Qing officials expressed little interest in meeting such requests.

Grant arrived in Japan in July 1879 during his journey around the world after stopping over in China. He had been asked by Qing dignitaries to mediate a solution to the Ryukyu territorial question, and he proposed that both sides make mutual concessions and reach a compromise.

³¹ Zhang, *op. cit.*, 96.

One proposal made by the Japanese side in 1880 was to cede part of the Ryukyu Islands, namely Miyako and Yaeyama, to the Qing in exchange for a revision of or addition to the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1871 during the trial period to give Japan the same trading rights in China's interior as the Western powers. This was flatly refused by the Qing side, and the plan never materialized.

Japan pursued the Ryukyu territorial question deliberately and assiduously. While Ryukyu leaders resisted these initiatives, most residents felt that their incorporation into Japan as Okinawa Prefecture was a change for the better over the feudalistic rule of the Satsuma domain.³² The Qing government, on the other hand, failed to respond in a timely manner and was gradually forced into accepting Japan's claims. It would take the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, though, to fully resolve the territorial issue.

The Self-Strengthening Movement was underway in China at the time, and there was growing recognition that maintaining independence required becoming a stronger state.

5. Seeds of Conflict over Korea³³

A second major point of contention was over Korea. Relations between Japan and Korea were severed following the two Japanese invasions of Korea launched in 1592 and 1597. Tokugawa Ieyasu sought to restore the relationship, and Korea, in response to these overtures, sent 12 diplomatic missions to Japan between 1607 and 1811. They toured the country and traveled to Edo (now Tokyo), conducting exchange with scholars and members of the literary elite.

But in terms of foreign relations, a range of difficult problems persisted between the two countries. Although Korea's relationship with China was that of a tributary state, Japan held itself to be China's equal. Accordingly, the position of the Korean government corresponded to that of the Tokugawa shogunate, with there

³² There are two schools of thought regarding the decision to turn the Ryukyus into Okinawa Prefecture. One (espoused by Inoue Kiyoshi, for example) sees it as invasive unification, while the other (embraced by Shimomura Fujio and others) regards the unification as part of Japan's modernization. The pioneer of full-fledged research into Ryukyu-Okinawa issues, Iha Fuyu, regarded the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture as a process of liberation, noting "While the move led to the demise of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Ryukyuan, as a people, were resurrected as a result of joining the Japanese Empire." See Gabe Masao, *Meiji kokka to Okinawa* (The Meiji State and Okinawa) (Tokyo: San-ichi Publishing, 1979), chap. 1. It should be noted that there was no opposition involving popular uprisings to becoming Okinawa Prefecture nor were there any crackdowns involving the shedding of blood.

³³ With respect to Japan-Korean relations, Tabohashi Kiyoshi's *Kindai Nis-Sen kankei no kenkyu* (A Study of Modern Japanese-Korean Relations) (Seoul: Privy Council, Government-General of Korea, 1940) remains vital as fundamental research. Another key reference is Ho Takushu (Peng Zezhou), *Meiji shoki Nik-Kan-Shin kankei no kenkyu* (A Study of Japan-Korea-Qing Relations in the Early Meiji Period) (Tokyo: Hanawashobo, 1969).

being parity between the emperors of China and Japan. This placed Korea in an inferior position vis-a-vis Japan, an arrangement that Korea could not accept.

Such tricky diplomatic relations were handled by the So clan of the Tsushima domain, which had long played a key role in maintaining smooth ties between Japan and Korea—sometimes by altering the content of letters sent to the rulers of one country to the other. The clan also controlled a special Japanese settlement in Busan called the Choryang Waegwan—the Korean equivalent of Nagasaki's Dejima (the island that served as a Dutch trading post during Japan's period of national seclusion).

King Gojong ascended to the throne in January 1864, a time when the Tokugawa shogunate was approaching its end in Japan. But it was the king's father, Heungseon Daewongun, who maintained the reins of power as regent. Put simply, the Daewongun's government was an attempt at reform to restore Korea to its former glory.³⁴ One example of this is the reconstruction of Korea's royal palace, known as Gyeongbokgung, which was destroyed by fire during the sixteenth-century Japanese invasions of Korea. Gyeongbokgung had been left in ruins for 250 years; believing that the country's official palace should not be left in such a state, reconstruction efforts were undertaken in 1865.

In terms of foreign policy, there was an intensification of antiforeign sentiment. This is exemplified by Korea's rebuff of Russian appeals for trade. As a result of its acquisition of Primorsky Krai, Russia and Korea now had a common border. Russian officials visited Kyonghung (now Undok), a county lying on the border, twice seeking trade—once in 1864 and once in 1865—but they were spurned on both occasions.

In 1866 the Daewongun launched his oppression of Christians, persecuting several thousand adherents and executing nine foreign missionaries. The head of the mission in Korea was French, prompting France to dispatch a naval fleet to Ganghwa Island in October 1866 that succeeded in landing at the island and forcing the surrender of the local government. Insufficient troop strength and supplies, however, compelled the fleet to retreat the following month. This is known as the French campaign against Korea of 1866, which resulted in a victory for Korea.

Prior to this, in 1866, an incident occurred involving the US vessel *General Sherman*. The ship had been trying to reach Pyongyang seeking trade when it ran aground on the Taedong River and was set afire. Demanding an explanation, the United States sent troops in May 1871 to Ganghwa Island. Though they managed to land their forces, the island's strengthened defenses compelled them to retreat. This is known as the United States expedition to Korea.

Thus while China and Japan were taking steps to open themselves up to the outside world, Korea maintained its policy of exclusion. This proved successful in the short term, but Korea's victory required enormous outlays and could not be expected to last very long. The possibility was high that at some point the Korean

³⁴ Kimura Kan, *Koso, Minpi* (King Gojong and Queen Min) (Kyoto: Minerva Shobo, 2007), 48.

resistance would invite a large-scale Western intervention.

In January 1869 the Meiji government instructed Tsushima lord So Yoshiakira to notify the Korean government of the restoration of imperial rule in Japan; Korea refused to accept the notification, however, as it contained words like *ko* (皇) and *choku* (勅) that the Koreans used only in respect to the Chinese emperor.

The Meiji government continued to negotiate, this time under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in 1870 Sada Motoichiro and Moriyama Shigeru were dispatched to gain a better idea of the situation. In October that same year, a group that included Moriyama and Yoshioka Koki was dispatched to Korea to deliver a letter, this time from the Japanese minister for foreign affairs, but again the Koreans refused to receive it.

The So clan was no longer the rulers of Tsushima in accordance with the abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of prefectures. Therefore, in an attempt to establish new diplomatic relations with Korea, the Japanese government tried to station Foreign Ministry officials at the Choryang Waegwan settlement in Busan.

In September 1872 Foreign Ministry official Hanabusa Yoshimoto led the *Kasuga* and other naval ships to Korea and took control of the settlement. Korea responded by cutting off the outpost's food supplies. In front of the compound a sign was posted contemptuously branding Japan a "lawless country."

News of such a reception fueled the so-called Seikanron debate over whether Japan should take retaliatory action against Korea. There were several variants of this argument, ranging from a dispatch of troops to punish Korea's disrespect to sending a special envoy and negotiating forcefully, even at the risk of conflict. Most agreed that an envoy should be sent in any case, and in August 1873 the government settled on this course of action. As it was an important matter, an official decision was not made until Ambassador Iwakura Tomomi and others had returned from their mission abroad. The Seikanron debate was taken up in cabinet meetings on October 14 and 15, and the issue weighed so heavily on the mind of Sanjo Sanetomi, the head of government as chancellor of the realm, that he became suddenly ill, and Iwakura acted in his stead. The debate was reopened and the decision was made not to send an envoy, despite the fact that a majority of councillors had supported such a move.

An important backdrop to the Seikanron debate was Japan's domestic instability. Considerable discontent had built up as the government shifted from a policy of exclusion to opening up to the West, abolished the domain system, and implemented numerous other reforms. The situation was an explosive one, and it was thought that a foreign expedition could temporarily divert attention away from these problems.

The Ganghwa Incident and the Japan-Korea Amity Treaty

Two months after the decision not to dispatch an envoy to Korea, the Daewongun's regency was suspended based on a decision made in the name of King Gojong, and

Queen Min's family seized control of government. The Daewongun's policy of repulsing foreign encroachment was a tremendous financial burden and had shaken the stability of the state. The new government at last sought to reverse the country's narrow-minded policies toward foreign nations.

In May 1874 Okubo Toshimichi dispatched troops to Taiwan, and in August the Qing government sent a special envoy to Keijo [now Seoul] to warn Korea that it was in danger of being next in line. The Korean government thus viewed the situation quite seriously; it dismissed the officials responsible for Japan affairs and prepared to implement a shift in policy.

In September 1874 the Koreans made contact with Moriyama Shigeru, the Foreign Ministry official who had been staying in the Choryang Waegwan settlement since June, and initiated negotiations for a resumption of diplomatic relations. This was the first-ever contact between an official of the new Meiji government and the Korean government.

Negotiations became bogged down, however, and Moriyama advised his government to send warships, ostensibly on a surveying mission but really as an intimidation ploy. In 1875 the *Un'yo* and other naval vessels were sent to survey Korea's eastern and then its western coast. In September that year they approached Ganghwa Island the ships drew artillery fire from coastal Korean forces, and the Japanese answered with a counter-barrage.

Around this time Gustav Boissonade expressed his opinion that Korea was neither a complete vassal of China nor was it entirely independent, but was positioned somewhere in between. He advised Meiji leaders on a policy of sending an envoy to point out Korea's culpability and, before then, of also dispatching an envoy to China demonstrating to the extent that they could that Japan regarded Korea as an independent country.

In November of that year, Mori Arinori departed for Beijing to serve as Japan's minister to China. The day after his arrival on December 9 he paid a visit to Prince Gong at the Foreign Office for negotiations. The Chinese side stated that while Korea is subordinate to China, it has traditionally been free to conduct its own policies and issue its own laws, and China has never interfered in its internal affairs; should Japan seek a treaty of amity with Korea, this is a matter for Korea to decide on its own. This, Japan regarded, was recognition by the Qing of Korea's independence, and it assumed that negotiations could be conducted bilaterally with Korea without having to consult the Qing court. Later realizing its blunder, the Qing stated that it is widely known that Korea was in fact a part of China.³⁵ Wang Yunsheng criticizes the statement, identifying it as the source of all subsequent complications over the Korean question. He adds that this should serve as a lesson on how a single careless remark can engender a hornet's nest of trouble.

In December 1875 Kuroda Kiyotaka was sent to Korea as minister extraordinary and plenipotentiary. Negotiations became bogged down, and at one

³⁵ Wang, *op. cit.*, 128.

point there were heightened calls for war in Japan; but on February 27, 1876, the Japan-Korea Amity Treaty (also known as the Ganghwa Treaty) was concluded. Article 1 of the treaty states that Korea, as an autonomous country, possesses rights equal to those of Japan. Further on, however, there are articles typical of unequal treaties, including Korea's consent to consular jurisdiction over Japanese nationals in Korea and a denial of Korea's customs autonomy. The aim of these provisions was to sever Korea's vassal relationship with the Qing.

The terms were not entirely at odds with Qing interests. The Qing government had been counseling Korea to adopt a flexible attitude lest Japan-Korea relations deteriorate into warfare. At least it was a treaty that Japan, Korea, and the Qing could all somehow minimally accept.³⁶

The Imo Mutiny

This delicate balance would shortly begin to disintegrate. The turning point was no doubt the March 1879 conversion of Okinawa into a prefecture.

In July 1879 Li Hongzhang sent a letter to Yi Yu-won, a senior official in the Korean government, recommending that Korea open up to the West as a means of restraining Japan and increase its reliance on the Qing. In September that same year, minister to Japan He Ruzhang passed the *Chaoxian celue* (Korean Strategy), which he had instructed Huang Zunxian to write, to Kim Hong-jip during the latter's visit to Japan. This treatise identified Russia as the largest threat and advised "intimacy" with China, "affinity" with Japan, and "association" with the United States—the friendliest of the Western powers. There were some very interesting similarities and disparities in these two opinions, the most significant difference being the perception of Japan.

In February 1881 the Qing government transferred jurisdiction over Korean affairs from the Ministry of Rites, which until then had dealt with issues involving vassal states, to the minister of northern China (Beiyang) and the minister to Japan, setting down that they each negotiate directly with Korea. In accordance with Beiyang Minister Li Hongzhang's advice to conclude treaties with Western powers, an agreement was first reached with the United States. Negotiations began in April 1882 in Tianjin under Qing guidance, with the Americans being represented by Commodore Robert Shufeldt and Chester Holcombe, acting minister of the US legation in China. This arrangement in itself contradicted the idea of Korea's independence. In the draft of the treaty, moreover, an article was inserted in which Korea was referred to as China's vassal state. The United States did not accept the clause; instead, reference to it was included in the letter addressed to the US president. China's intentions were quite clear.

In September 1882 the Regulations for Maritime and Overland Trade

³⁶ Okamoto Takashi, *Zokoku to jishu no aida: Kindai Shin-Kan kankei to Higashi Ajia no meibun* (Between a Tributary and an Autonomous State: Modern Qing-Korea Relations and the Fate of East Asia) (Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press, 2004), 33.

between Chinese and Korean Subjects were concluded, whose terms heavily favored Qing traders. Although the accord was agreed upon after the Imo Mutiny, negotiations began prior to this event. It stipulated that Korea was not to confer most-favored-nation status to any other country – which was another way of saying that the Qing was the suzerain that stood above others and Korea, accordingly, was the subordinate. Any revisions were to be negotiated between China’s minister of Beiyang and the Korean monarch, and permission of the Qing emperor was required for implementation. Since Li was the Beiyang minister, the agreement made him an equal of the Korean monarch. He thereupon sent his confidant, Yuan Shikai, to Korea.

The Qing’s aim was to substantiate its authority over Korea. But during negotiations, Li’s subordinate, Ma Jianzhong, found that Korea had become more independent and was not subservient to the Qing court.³⁷ Japan’s influence also continued to expand.

In 1877 Hanabusa Yoshimoto assumed the post of Japanese minister to Korea and encouraged his hosts to strengthen its relations with Japan. In 1881 King Gojong sent students to both China and Japan, and Kim Hong-jip was again dispatched as a special envoy to Japan. That same year in May, the Korean monarchy decided to commission Horimoto Reizo, the military attache at the Japanese legation, to train a separate new army of 80 young members of the *yangban* aristocracy.

On July 23, 1882, troops from the old Korean army turned against the government, causing a large-scale insurrection known alternatively as the Imo Mutiny or the Imo Incident. The direct cause of the incident was frustration within the ranks of the military. Compared with the new army with modern equipment, the older troops had been treated poorly, having gone without pay for 13 months.

The Daewongun, who had been forced out of power by the government in the hands of Queen Min’s family, saw this as the perfect opportunity to return to power. Taking advantage of the revolt, he was able to wrest back control of the government.

During the revolt soldiers killed Japanese instructors and attacked the Japanese legation. Hanabusa managed to narrowly escape from Keijo to Incheon and was rescued on July 26 by a British vessel, after which he returned to Japan. The incident had the potential to severely jolt Japanese-Korean relations.

The Qing intervened quickly. It sent three warships on August 4, and on August 13 it also decided to send ground forces numbering nearing several thousand troops. On August 26 Qing forces arrested the Daewongun, the figure at the center of the incident, and took him to Tianjin.

Such actions were clearly a major departure from what the Qing had taken in the suzerain-vassal relationship until then. They represented a shift to a more direct control over Korea.

The situation confounded leaders in Japan, who hoped to strengthen its

³⁷ Ibid., 69.

influence over an independent Korea, while the Qing also wished to strengthen its position by substantiating its suzerainty. Under such conflict of interests, the Qing managed to exert a more forceful presence in Korea.

The mutiny resulted in the Treaty of Chemulpo, under which Japan gained the right to station troops in Keijo. The Qing also placed troops in the city, and Keijo became the site of a standoff between the two countries.

The Gapsin Political Coup

The Imo Mutiny led to the removal of the Daewongun, who had led the anti-Japanese movement in Korea, but it also enhanced the influence of the Qing within the country. There was tension, moreover, between the Sugup'a, a conservative political force that emphasized relations with the Qing, and the Gaehwapa, a party that had joined with Japan to work toward the country's modernization.

One Japanese scholar who was deeply involved in Korean affairs was Fukuzawa Yukichi. Since 1881 Korean students, one of whom was Kim Ok-gyun, had been enrolled and was studying at his school, Keio Gijuku (now Keio University). Working to break the shell of their country's seclusion, the students reminded Fukuzawa of himself 20 years earlier. Through their acquaintance, Fukuzawa came to have a profound interest in Korean affairs, and he lent support to their efforts at modernization that went beyond his government's policies. Coming face to face with the Imo Mutiny in 1882, Fukuzawa admitted his earlier mistake and criticized himself for not having advocated a military buildup more forcefully. He thereafter became a staunch advocate of such a buildup in Japan.

The Gapsin incident was a coup d'état instigated by the Gaehwapa in its anticipation of assistance from Japan. Kim Ok-gyun, Pak Yong-hyo, Hong Yong-sik, and other members saw that the Qing's war with the French had sapped its strength. With the support of Japanese Minister Takezoe Shin'ichiro, they launched their insurrection on December 4, 1884.

At one point the party's actions won the consent of King Gojong, and it appeared that the coup had been successful. But the Sugup'a wasted no time in appealing to Qing troops for support and launched a counterattack. The smaller Gaehwapa and Japanese forces were defeated, and Kim, Park, and other party leaders fled to Japan. At the time, the strength of the Qing's Beiyang Fleet overwhelmed that of Japan's, and with 3,000 soldiers, Qing land troops outnumbered Japan 10 to 1.

The Treaty of Seoul was signed on January 9, 1885. Under this agreement, responsibility for the incident was overlooked, and Korea agreed to pay ¥110,000 in compensation to Japanese victims and ¥20,000 to rebuild the Japanese legation, which had been burned down. Japan was able to obtain a favorable resolution despite its involvement in the incident because the affair was regarded as a domestic

issue for Korea.³⁸

This was followed by the conclusion of the Tianjin Convention to redress the firing on the Japanese legation by Qing troops and the killing and wounding of Japanese nationals in the midst of the coup. Negotiations were difficult, but through the mediation of British diplomat Harry Parkes, discussions between Ito Hirobumi and Li Hongzhang in Tianjin resulted in an agreement on April 18. The terms of the treaty provided for both Japan and China to withdraw their forces from Korea within four months, refrain from sending military advisers to the country, and notify one another (行文知照) in the event of any future troop dispatches to Korea. It also acknowledged carelessness on the part of Qing troops. The provisions of this treaty, too, turned out to be more favorable than Japan had anticipated. Embroiled in a conflict with France, Li Hongzhang was forced to compromise; Japan, too, was uninterested in any further conflicts with the Qing as long as its grievances were addressed.

The Gapsin Political Coup, though, was clearly a defeat for the Gaehwapa and other pro-Japanese factions. Fukuzawa's "Datsu-A ron" (Argument to Leave Asia) was written in March 1885, after the Gapsin incident had drawn to a close and before negotiations for the Convention of Tianjin had begun. In his article Fukuzawa called for the cutting of ties with "bad companions in Asia," arguing that neighboring countries should not be given special consideration simply on the basis of geographical proximity but rather associated with like any other country. This was a short essay whose only reference to "leaving Asia" was in the title, and at the time it failed to draw much attention. The real purport of the article was for Fukuzawa, who had looked after many Korean students, to concede defeat of the pro-Japanese reformists in Korea. It was not a statement of a hard-line foreign policy toward other Asian countries.

To be sure, though, calls for closer affiliations with Korea and the Qing became less prominent thereafter. The underlying premise behind the calls in the early Meiji years for closer Japan-Qing or Japan-Qing-Korea cooperation was the presence of like-minded forces in Japan's neighbors; that such feelings were absent became clear, as Japan and the Qing became increasingly entangled over Korea.

This is not to say that Japan and Qing were irretrievably locked into a course that would lead to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. There were forces in Korea that did not welcome the Qing's incursions, and King Gojong attempted to curb the Qing's influence by forging an alliance with Russia. Alarmed by Russia's advances, in March 1885 Britain occupied Geomun-do (Port Hamilton), a group of small islands off Korea's southern coast. Russia voiced its intention to counter this move with steps of its own, prompting Li Hongzhang to desperately hammer out a compromise in which both countries promised not to occupy Korea, and Britain withdrew its forces in 1887. International relations surrounding Korea were complex, and Japan had to prepare for a possible confrontation with Russia; retaliation or

³⁸ Kimura, *op. cit.*, 175.

confrontation with the Qing was not a primary concern on Japan's foreign policy agenda.³⁹

Nor did Japan's military buildup necessarily proceed with great speed. Military expansion was certainly an important concern for the country in the 1880s, especially in the light of the growing international tension surrounding Korea; military spending that had accounted for less than 20% of Japan's fiscal budget until 1882 began exceeding this threshold from 1883. Most of such spending went toward building up the navy, since creating a force capable of countering the Qing's Beiyang Fleet was regarded as an urgent priority. The state of Japan's finances did not allow such a buildup to continue, however. Despite its defeat in the Gapsin coup and the Qing's addition of two new state-of-the-art warships to the Beiyang Fleet (*Dingyuan* and *Zhenyuan*), Japan put its military expansion on hold in 1885.⁴⁰ Rules governing the organization of the army were revised in 1885, and the headquarters for local army commands were abolished in 1888 in favor of divisions. At the time, though, the Japanese army did not have the capacity to engage in operations on the Asian continent. Military training was focused on repelling foreign maritime invasions.⁴¹

When Japan established its cabinet system in 1885, the government leaned toward a policy of ensuring Korean neutrality through coordination with the Qing and the British. Accordingly, its military buildup was quite moderate. There were voices insisting on rapid military expansion and advocating conflict with the Qing, but they were not heard in the government's inner circle.⁴²

Conclusion

Nakae Chomin's 1887 *Sansuijin keirin mondo* (trans. *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government*) is widely held as a classic text on modern Japanese politics and foreign policy. It features three characters: the Gentleman of Western Learning, the Champion of the East, and Master Nankai. The Gentleman of Western Learning advocates enthusiastic acceptance of democracy. With respect to foreign policy, he argues that no matter how hard it tries Japan will never catch up to Western powers, and that it should instead place its trust in world opinion and adopt a policy of demilitarization. The Champion of the East counters that the world tends toward survival of the fittest. If Japan continues on its present course, it will fall prey to the Western powers. As it cannot oppose Western countries on its own, he says, Japan should seize the territory of its great and ancient neighbor.

³⁹ Takahashi Hidenao, *Nis-Shin Senso e no michi* (The Path to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95) (Tokyo: Tokyo Sogensha, 1995), 186–200.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 208–212.

⁴¹ Tobe Ryoichi, *Gyakusetsu no guntai* (Paradoxical Military), *Nihon no Kindai* (Japan's Modernization) series, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1998), 107–114.

⁴² Refer to Osawa Hiroaki's *Kindai Nihon no Higashi Ajia seisaku to gunji* (Modern Japan's East Asia Policy and Military Affairs) (Tokyo: Seibundo Publishing, 2001) for Japan's various policies on Korea and military readiness, including plans for Korean neutrality.

Master Nankai is the last to speak. His companions both suffer from preconceived delusions, he says. The world is not developing as idealistically as the Gentleman maintains; nor is it as power-centric as the Champion believes. Japan, moreover, is not as powerless as either assumes. What is needed, he argues, is for Japan to gradually and steadily promote democratization and, in terms of foreign relations, to deepen its friendships with surrounding countries. It would also be desirable to have sufficient military forces as to prevent it from being easily invaded.

Each of the three characters can be regarded as being Chomin's own alter egos. Like the Gentleman, the author was a proponent of democratization, and he, too, believed that the course advocated by the Champion was possible. In the end, however, he knew that the only realistic path was that set forth by Master Nankai, a sentiment more or less shared by many members of the Japanese public in 1887. The late nineteenth century was not ripe for the kind of policies advocated by the Gentleman, so the only options left were those presented by the other two characters. Put another way, the path Japan would take and the future of Sino-Japanese relations were not yet clear at this point; it would subsequently emerge out of the policies that Japan and China adopted and those taken by Western countries. This, then, was the position Japan found itself in 1887, after its defeat on the Korean Peninsula, as it moved toward the establishment of a national assembly.

CHAPTER 2
CONFRONTATION AND ACCORD:
JAPAN AND CHINA PURSUE DIFFERENT COURSES

Kawashima Shin

• The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 and the Treaty of Shimonoseki • Return of the Liaodong Peninsula following the Tripartite Intervention • Enthusiasm for studying in Japan and the influence of modernizing Japan on China • The Boxer Rebellion and the Eight-Nation Alliance • The Russo-Japanese War • The Xinhai Revolution

In the period from the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 to the Xinhai Revolution, Sino-Japanese relations became very closely intertwined. The two countries shared many of the same experiences, and both experienced great changes, although there were few during this turning point that immediately portended the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–45. Rather, it was an era that held out a wide range of possibilities.

First, I wish to elaborate on the closely entwined relationship that Japan and China developed in the areas of politics, economy, and culture during this period. Direct contact increased dramatically, with members of the monarchy, high-ranking government officials, and young intellectuals from China visiting Japan in large numbers. Tokyo also emerged as a venue for Chinese political activities, including revolutionary and constitutional movements that could not be carried out on Chinese soil. The two countries shared the experience of building themselves into modern nations; China launched its efforts to build a modern state in earnest and undertook reform of various national systems with a cognizance of Japan's Meiji Restoration. Both countries participated in the Peace Conferences at The Hague and pursued other means of building external relations as sovereign members of the international community. Contact between Japan and China increased during the process of modernization, with the two countries sharing such experiences as the incorporation of Western civilization, state building, the emergence of nationalism, and the shaping of their identities. They also cultivated mutual ties in a variety of areas.

Next, I would like to describe the "turning points" in modern Sino-Japanese relations. Firstly, as a result of the countries going to war with one another, the bilateral relationship that had been between equals, based on the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1871, shifted to an unequal one favoring Japan with the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Secondly, Japan joined the ranks of the powers in the context of international relations concerning China—entering the stage as a belated player. There were three basic frameworks defining China's international political

relations, namely, the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin, the 1901 Boxer Protocol, and the 1921 Nine-Power Treaty. Japan was a signatory from the latter two of these frameworks. Thirdly, Japan became a colonial empire as a result of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, as China ceded Taiwan to Japan and recognized Korea's independence, leading to the 1910 annexation of Korea by Japan. Significantly, this gave rise to a multifaceted relationship between Japan and China. No longer were bilateral relations limited to ties between Tokyo and Beijing but also encompassed ties between Taiwan and China, between Korea and China, and between China and the various Japanese settlements and leased territories, such as Port Arthur and Dalian, where Japan's Kwantung Army (Kanto Gun) was stationed.

The period addressed in this chapter—from the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 through the Xinhai Revolution—was one in which Japan-China relations became multifaceted and closely intertwined. At the same time, political and foreign relations came to be marked not just by diversification but also, in a sense, by greater antagonism. The hostility was by no means irreversible at this point, though; it must not be overlooked that a variety of options were still available to both Japan and China in charting their respective futures and in developing Sino-Japanese relations.¹

1. Conflict over the Korean Peninsula and the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95

(1) Conflict over the Korean Peninsula

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Japan and China sought to demarcate their national borders as part of the process of modernization. Japan attempted to expand its borders beyond those it maintained under the *bakuhau* system (of the Tokugawa shogunate) by incorporating Okinawa and Hokkaido as prefectures. China, on the other hand, did not seek to expand so much as to clearly demarcate its existing territory by, for example, establishing provinces in such peripheral areas as Xinjiang and Taiwan.² The relationship between Japan and China changed from one mediated by the Ryukyu Kingdom and linked commercially by trade via Nagasaki to a diplomatic relationship between two states, as prescribed by the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1871. With East Asia making the transition to relations between sovereign states, Japan denied the Ryukyu Kingdom the right to conduct diplomatic negotiations, and Ryukyu-Chinese tribute ties became incorporated into the Sino-Japanese relationship.

In this context, China continued to maintain relations based on *sakuho* titles and

¹ Kawashima Shin, "Kankei kinmitsuka to tairitsu no genkei: Nis-Shin Sensogo kara Niju-Ikkajo Yokyu made" (Prototype of Closer Ties and Conflict: from the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 to the Twenty-One Demands), in Liu Jie, Mitani Hiroshi, and Yang Daqing, eds., *Kokkyo o koeru rekishi ninshiki* (Cross-Border Historical Recognition) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2006).

² Motegi Toshio, *Hen'yo suru kindai Higashi Ajia no kokusai chitsujo* (Changes in Modern East Asian International Order) (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1997).

shinko tributes with surrounding countries, while making adjustments and modifications in the relationships it had with various Western countries and with Japan. While the Ryukyu Kingdom and other surrounding countries ended their *sakuhō-shinko* tribute relationship with China, such relations persisted between China and Korea. Korea emerged as the largest focal point of both East Asian international politics and Sino-Japanese relations. Although the 1876 unequal Japan-Korea Amity Treaty (also known as the Ganghwa Treaty, or Kokato Treaty) led to the opening of Korea, this did not result in an immediate change in Sino-Korean relations. Nor did China oppose the opening of Korea, as corroborated in the 1880 *Chaoxian celue* (Korean Strategy) written by Huang Zunxian, a Chinese diplomat serving in Tokyo, which advocates “intimacy” with China, “diplomatic ties” with Japan, and “association” with the United States.”³ China maintained a double standard in its basic stance toward Korea, asserting that “while it is a tributary, it is also autonomous.” Although a suzerain-tributary relationship was maintained between the two countries, Korea was able to establish diplomatic ties with other countries as an “independent” state.⁴ While this relationship was not always frowned upon by countries like Britain, it was criticized by Japan, which called for Korea’s “real independence” and worked to foster pro-Japanese factions within Korea.

The family of King Gojong’s consort, Queen Min, drew closer to Japan. Forces in support of the Daewongun, who opposed this development, caused an uprising in 1882 (the Imo Mutiny, Jingo Gunran) that, although it ended in failure, had the effect of advancing cooperation between Queen Min’s forces and China. In that same year, trade between China and Korea was institutionalized with the conclusion of the Regulations for Maritime and Overland Trade between Chinese and Korean Subjects. Thereafter, China established concessions (*Zujie*) on the Korean Peninsula. In 1884, Kim Ok-gyun’s Gaehwapa party sought Japanese assistance and engineered the Gapsin Political Coup, but this was suppressed with assistance from Chinese forces commanded by Yuan Shikai. In 1885 Japan and China signed the Convention of Tianjin and withdrew their forces from Korea, agreeing that henceforth they would notify one another before sending troops into that country. China became the dominant influence over Korea. Yuan Shikai brought the Daewongun—who had been placed in confinement in China after the Imo Mutiny—and was appointed imperial resident of Seoul, whereupon he came to have even greater influence in Korea’s domestic and international politics.⁵

³ The perception of Russia as an external threat and Chinese envoy to Japan He Ruzhang’s hard-line stance toward Japan over the Ryukyu issue both influenced discussions in *Chaoxian celue*. With respect to the strategy’s contents, see Hirano Ken’ichiro’s “Ko Junken ‘Chosen sakuryaku’ ihon kyogo” (Collating Different Versions of Huang Zunxian’s ‘Korean Strategy’), *Kokusai seiji* 129 (2002).

⁴ Okamoto Takashi, *Zokkoku to jishu no aida: Kindai Shin-Kan kankei to Higashi Ajia no meiun* (Between a Tributary and an ‘Independent’ State: Modern Qing-Korean Relations and the Fate of East Asia) (Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press, 2004).

⁵ Tabohashi Kiyoshi, *Kindai Nis-Shi-Sen kankei no kenkyu: Tenshin Joyaku yori Nis-Shi kaisen ni itaru*

In later years, the “Datsu-A ron” [Argument to Leave Asia] editorial by Fukuzawa Yukichi gained prominence as an explanation for the context surrounding Japanese incursions into Asia. It appeared in 1885 in the *Jiji shinpo*, a newspaper with a relatively hard-line position on Korean policy. Recently, however, it has been shown that Fukuzawa’s essay did not receive much attention at the time.⁶ China became the most militarily powerful country in the Japan-China-Korea relationship, and developments like the Nagasaki Shinkoku Suihei Incident (a brawl between locals and Chinese sailors in Nagasaki that resulted in several fatalities) in 1886 brought home to people in Japan the size of China’s naval power. This did not, however, immediately provoke confrontation between the two countries. Mutual port visits by the two countries’ navies and other forms of cooperation took place, and direct conflict was avoided.⁷

(2) The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95

The Donghak Rebellion occurred on the Korean Peninsula in 1894, led mainly by farmers. China sent troops to Korea at the latter’s request. China notified Japan of its actions in accordance with the terms of the Convention of Tianjin, whereupon Japan sent its own troops to the peninsula. After the two countries had dispatched their forces, the Korean government was able to reach an accord with the rebels, thus rendering their presence unnecessary. The Korean government asked each country to withdraw its forces. Japan, however, proposed political reforms in Korea; China and Korea reacted strongly against this. Confrontation between China and Japan intensified as a result of Japanese moves that included setting up a pro-Japanese Korean government. The Battle of Pungdo on July 25, among other events, led to a de facto state of war by the month’s end, with both countries formally declaring war on August 1. Before the outbreak of the Battle of Pungdo, Japan concluded the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1894 on July 16 and succeeded in getting Britain to rescind its consular jurisdiction (to take effect in 1899). Japan was also able

(Research into Modern Japanese-Chinese-Korean Relations: From the Convention of Tianjin to the Outbreak of War between Japan and China) (Seoul: Keijo Teikoku Daigaku, 1930); Lin Mingde, *Yuan Shikai yu Chaoxian* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1970).

⁶ Toyama Shigeki, “Nis-Shin Senso to Fukuzawa Yukichi” (Fukuzawa Yukichi and the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95), *Fukuzawa kenkyu* 6 (November 1951); Hirayama Yo, *Fukuzawa Yukichi no shinjitsu* (The Truth about Fukuzawa Yukichi) (Tokyo: Bungeishunju, 2004); Sakai Tetsuya, *Kindai Nihon no kokusai chitsujoron* (Modern Japan’s View of the International Order) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007).

⁷ During mutual port visits in 1891, both sides worked to prevent disturbances by taking such steps as not allowing crew members to go ashore. “Zaikyo Shinkoku zenken koshi Ri Keiho teiyu kikoku ni tsuki O Hoso rinji dairi koshi ninmei narabini Shinkoku Hokuyo Suishi ni oite wagakuni kantai o yutai sen to suru kyo aru ken” (Matters regarding the Return Home of Qing Minister Plenipotentiary Li Jingfang Due to a Death in the Family and the Designation of Wang Fengzao as Charge d’Affaires Ad Interim and the Invitation Extended to the Japanese Fleet by the Beiyang Fleet), *Kobun ruisan*, vol. 9, Meiji 24 (1891).

to obtain practical support from Britain for the Japanese forces in Korea.⁸

After the outbreak of war, the Japanese Diet approved a war-related budget and legislation, injecting the equivalent of over twice the state's annual revenues into the conflict. The tide of the war turned in Japan's favor: it expelled Chinese troops from the Korean Peninsula and occupied the Liaodong Peninsula and Weihaiwei, where China's Beiyang Fleet was based. Japanese forces were also dispatched to Taiwan, a development that was not originally planned but decided upon in the light of the initial success, and took place after the start of peace negotiations. On March 26, 1895, Japanese troops occupied the Penghu Islands, and Japan demanded that China cede Taiwan and the islands as a condition for peace.

Given full powers by their respective governments to negotiate peace, Ito Hirobumi and Mutsu Munemitsu of Japan and China's Li Hongzhang in April 1895 signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki. The treaty resulted in China recognizing Korea's independence; the ceding of the Liaodong Peninsula, Taiwan, and the Penghu Islands to Japan; and reparations of 200 million taels to Japan. China furthermore promised to open four of its ports to Japan, including Suzhou and Hangzhou. According to Article 6, Paragraph 4 of the treaty, China approved the operation of factories in treaty ports by foreign companies, something that had already been taking place in open ports and markets. As a result, foreign companies (initially, mostly British cotton spinning firms) began to invest energetically in China. Japan obtained the same rights as other world powers with respect to China, and Sino-Japanese relations came to be based on an unequal treaty.

Though victorious, Japan did not automatically enjoy the fruits of its military achievements. Li Hongzhang signed the treaty after having obtained information from Maximilian von Brandt, who had previously served as Germany's minister to China, that the possibility of outside intervention would be high, particularly with respect to the Liaodong Peninsula.⁹ High-ranking officials (generals and viceroys) of provincial areas also pressed for the return of the peninsula. The Liaodong Peninsula cannot be abandoned, they argued, for without the peninsula, the Three Northeastern Provinces are lost, and without the Three Northeastern Provinces, there is no Qing court. The Chinese minister to Russia, Xu Jingcheng, was lobbying aggressively to gain that country's support,¹⁰ and the Tripartite Intervention by

⁸ US diplomat Charles Denby later expressed his doubts about the inevitability of the war: "The war between Japan and China did not come about by any reason of fixed determination on the part of Japan to begin hostilities. Of course, on the part of China, war was never dreamt of. She sat shrouded in self-conceit. She did not dream that the 'wojuns' (dwarfs), as she called the Japanese, would ever have the audacity to attack her." Charles Denby, *China and her People: Being the Observations, Reminiscences, and Conclusions of an American Diplomat*, vol. 1 (Boston: L.C. Page & Co., 1906), 122–126.

⁹ Banno Masataka, *Kindai Chugoku seiji gaikoshi* (History of Politics and Diplomacy in Modern China) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1973), 414.

¹⁰ See "Jiangdu Liu Kunyi zouqing chi mishang E'guo cu Ri huan Liao yuyi Xinjiang shu cheng wei xie pian" (16th Day of 5th Leap Month, 21st Year of Guangxu) in *Qing ji waijiao shiliao*,

Russia, Germany, and France was carried out on April 23, 1895. Japan accepted the intervention on May 8; in exchange for returning the peninsula, Japan received an additional indemnity of 30 million taels from China.

Including war reparations, Japan received a total of 230 million taels (¥356 million at the time). It used these funds as a special indemnity account to pay for its military expansion and other expenses; they also served as a foundation for adopting the gold standard and developing industry. In addition to the Tripartite Intervention, negotiations by Huang Zunxian and others on the Chinese side resulted in placing Japanese concessions/settlements—which were established in tandem with the opening of Suzhou, Hangzhou, and other ports—in remote areas, where they failed to become centers of commercial activity for Japan.¹¹

On the other hand, China forfeited Korea, its principle tributary state, thereby losing one of the benchmarks of its foreign relations—the double standard of the “tributary and/or autonomy.” China’s economic situation was later made difficult by the many loans it borrowed from foreign powers to finance the war and pay for indemnities. Chinese influence over the Korean Peninsula weakened, and in 1897 Daehan Jeguk, or the Great Han Empire, was established in Korea. In 1899 China and Korea signed an (in principle) equal treaty of amity and commerce, giving Japan, which had concluded an unequal treaty with Korea, an advantage in terms of foreign relations in East Asia. (China was able to maintain its concession and other interests in Korea.)

(3) Debate on Interpretation of the Sino-Japanese War

Even among Japanese scholars, opinion is divided as to how to interpret Japan’s involvement in Korea and the process that led to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95.¹² The commonly accepted theory is that in the time leading up to the war there were but two paths available to Japan—becoming an imperial power or becoming a colony itself—and that as a result it was left with no choice but to pursue imperialism. This view also holds that imperialism was a consistent goal throughout Japan’s invasion of Korea and the war with China. Recently, Saito Seiji’s *Nis-Shin Senso no gunji senryaku* (Military Strategy in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95) (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo Shuppan, 2003) has reinforced this theory. Takahashi Hidenao’s *Nis-Shin Senso e no michi* (The Path to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95) (Tokyo: Tokyo Sogensha, 1995), on the other hand, argues that the Meiji government pursued a course of “small government” from the Matsukata Deflation period through the

Vol.115, 21. For Xu’s activities, refer to Xu Tongxin, *Xu Wensu gong (Jingcheng) yi ji (Minguo qinian qianyanban)*.

¹¹ Osato Hiroaki and Son Ansuk, eds., *Chugoku ni okeru Nihon sokai: Jukei, Kanko, Koshu, Shanhai* (Japanese Settlements in China: Chongqing, Hankou, Hangzhou, and Shanghai) (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 2006).

¹² See Sasaki Yo, “Saikin 10 nenkan no Chugoku ni okeru Nis-Shin Sensoshi kenkyu” (The Past Decade of Chinese Research on the History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95), *Higashi Ajia kindaiishi* 11 (March 2008).

early session of the Imperial Diet, and that there was in fact a lack of firm policy on Korea. This argument suggests that it was possible for Japan to take a third path, and that this orientation was tempering Japanese policy toward Korea (on the financial front and in terms of military unpreparedness).¹³ Another work that is critical of the commonly accepted theory is Osawa Hiroaki's *Kindai Nippon no Higashi Ajia seisaku to gunji* (Modern Japan's East Asia Policy and Military Affairs) (Tokyo: Seibundo Publishing, 2001).

In China, many historians regard all Japanese incursions since the Meiji era to be in contravention of international law and cast the words and actions of Mutsu Munemitsu in a critical light. With respect to the start of the war, in addition to the Battle of Pungdo on July 25, 1894, many also concur with Nakatsuka Akira's view that the conflict began with the Japanese occupation of the Korean royal palace on July 23. Nakatsuka supported his theory using a draft of *Nis-Shin Sensoshi* (History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95), which was compiled by the Army General Staff Office. The work is held in the Sato archives of the Fukushima Prefectural Library and has been translated into Chinese; the translation has spawned various studies, including some recent works citing it as evidence of Japan's intentions to invade China since the Meiji era. Moreover, with respect to war reparations, some are of the opinion that compensation went beyond the 200 million taels in war indemnities, 30 million taels for the return of the Liaodong Peninsula, and 1.5 million taels for the costs of occupying Weihaiwei to total as much as 340 million taels, a figure that includes captured vessels, machinery, and other spoils.

As to relations between China and Korea in the period leading up to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, in Japan there is Okamoto Takashi's *Zokkoku to jishu no aida* (Between a Tributary and an "Independent" State) (Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press, 2004). In China, Wang Ruhui's *Jindai Zhongri guanxi yu Chaoxian wenti* (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe [People's Publishing House], 1999) and *Jiawu zhanzheng yu Chaoxian* (Tianjin: Tianjin Guji Chubanshe [Tianjin Ancient Books Publishing House], 2004) focus on Sino-Korean relations, addressing the problem areas in the relationship and even looking at problems on the Chinese side from the Korean perspective; they indicate a new current in Chinese research on the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. They do not, however, adopt the theory that the war began on July 23, 1894.

Another key point is the issue of when Japan envisioned going to war with the Qing and began preparing for such a war in earnest. In Japan, this question is debated by taking into account various factors, such as the respective developments in the army and navy and their relationships with the Diet. In China, by contrast,

¹³ There are counterarguments to Takahashi's position. Kamiyama Tsuneo, for example, argues that from the standpoint fiscal history, there was little or no debate on creating a small government during the Matsutaka Deflation period. See Kamiyama Tsuneo, *Meiji keizai seisakushi no kenkyu* (Research on the History of Meiji Era Economic Policy) (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobo, 1995). But from a policy standpoint, an aggressive advance on Korea was not a continuous one.

Japan is asserted to have had a consistent “continental policy” ever since the early years of the Meiji era. With respect to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, most Chinese historians focus on Yamagata Aritomo, arguing that Japan was preparing to go to war from a relatively early date and was pursuing a course of military expansion. As demonstrated by Yamada Akira’s *Gunbi kakuchō no kindaiishi: Nihongun no bocho to hokai* (Modern History of Military Expansion: The Expansion and Collapse of the Japanese Military) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1997), some in Japan place emphasis on the establishment of a military force under the emperor and the adoption of divisions by the army in 1888. But the focus should rather be on the fact that the course of military expansion was put into motion only from 1891 in accordance with the path set forth in Prime Minister Yamagata’s “spheres of sovereignty and interest” speech at the first session of the Imperial Diet in 1890. The increased militarization was viewed as being problematic by the Diet, but the Otsu Incident, the arrival of a Russian fleet in Nagasaki, and other events that occurred that year provided justification for increasing Japan’s sea power, and an imperial edict for the building of warships issued on February 10, 1893, lent further impetus to naval expansion. In addition, in 1893 Yamagata issued a recommendation on military preparedness. This added momentum to the position that Japan’s military should be expanded as long as financial resources allowed it, thus accelerating the course of Japan’s military expansion.

2. The Boxer Rebellion and Changes in China’s International Relations

(1) International Relations following the Sino-Japanese War

A number of significant changes to China’s international relations became apparent following the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. First, after the war’s end Li Hongzhang and other members of China’s leadership sought closer ties with Russia. In March 1896 Li was sent to Saint Petersburg as an emissary on the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II, during which time he signed the secret Li-Lobanov Treaty of alliance between Russia and the Qing.¹⁴ The treaty’s provisions included granting the right to establish and manage a railroad in northeastern China to the Russo-Chinese Bank. The language contained in Article 1 of the treaty demonstrates that it was a military alliance that viewed Japan as a potential adversary: In the event of a Japanese invasion of the territory of Russia in Eastern Asia, the territory of China, or the territory of Korea, it read, measures shall be taken according to the present

¹⁴ Yano Jin’ichi, *Nis-Shin ekigo Shina gaikoshi* (History of China’s Foreign Policy following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95) (Kyoto: Toho bunka gakuin Kyoto kenkyujo, 1937); Sasaki Yo, “Nis-Shin Sensogo no Shinkoku no tai-Ro seisaku: 1896 nen no Ro-Shin Domei Joyaku no seiritsu o megutte” (The Qing’s Russia Policy following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95: Concerning the Establishment of the 1896 Sino-Russian Secret Treaty), *Toyo gakuho* Vol. 59, No. 1–2 (October 1997).

treaty. In such an event, it continued, both countries promise to dispatch all the land and naval forces that can be mobilized for mutual assistance; they shall also supply each other with munitions and provisions as far as possible.¹⁵ Japan, however, had no intentions of invading China in the immediate aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War.¹⁶

The second change is that the pace of railroad construction stepped up, mainly due to external investment. Mining rights and other factors became involved, leading to the emergence of spheres of influence. This movement was spearheaded by foreign powers including Britain, Russia, France, and Germany; Japan's involvement was limited, as it lacked sufficient capital to invest in China. Japan was able to extend its sphere of influence, though, to the territory opposite Taiwan by getting China to agree not to cede Fujian Province to another foreign power with the exchange of a diplomatic note on April, 1898.

Third, leased territories were established primarily for military purposes along the Chinese coast. Unlike settlements, leased territories holds involved the loaning of sovereignty. In addition to Germany's leasing of Jiaozhou Bay in March 1898, other leased territories included Port Arthur and Dalian to Russia and Weihaiwei to Britain. Though Japan did not participate in the race to obtain leased territories, it eventually gained Port Arthur and Dalian from Russia in the Russo-Japanese War and attacked and occupied Germany's Jiaozhou Bay leased territory in World War I.

Fourth, the United States became actively involved in China. It applied the Chinese Exclusion Act to curb the number of immigrants from China in the Philippines and Guam, which it occupied following its victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898, as well in its annexed territory of Hawaii, which had become home to many Chinese expatriates. Moreover, in September 1899 US Secretary of State John Hay issued the open-door policy declaration to Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, and Japan, according to which Chinese tariffs would apply in each country's areas of influence and settlements. It was also aimed at ensuring that each country did not interfere with one another's economic activities. The United States, which was late in becoming an imperial power, was not the only country to benefit from this policy; it was also acceptable to Britain, which was wary of Russia's leased territory in Dalian. Each country accepted the United States' declaration in principle.¹⁷ The fact that the United States did not claim areas of influence and settlements like other imperial powers is of great significance to China,

¹⁵ "Zhuanshi Li Hongzhang yu E'waibudachen Luobahubu dachen Weide ding Zhong'E miyue" (22nd Day of 4th Month, 22nd Year of Guangxu [May 22, 1896]), *Qing ji waijiao shiliao*, Vol. 122, 1-2.

¹⁶ In *Zhongguo jindaishi* (Changsha: Shangwu Yinshuguan [Commercial Press], 1938; Hong Kong: Lisheng Shudian, 1954: 96), Jiang Tingfu (Tsiang Tingfu) asserts that concluding this secret treaty was a mistake for China and holds it to be the source of the Russo-Japanese War, the Twenty-One Demands, the Manchurian Incident, and other developments.

¹⁷ A. Whitney Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1938), 36-86.

both for the period in question and in historical terms. (It had in fact been looking to establish a settlement in Fujian Province but later abandoned the idea.) Thereafter, the United States called for the preservation, in principle, of China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and came to have great influence in Chinese intellectual and administrative circles via cultural exchange and other avenues. It should also be kept in mind that it was US mediation that led to peace in both the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 and the Russo-Japanese War.

(2) Japan and the Hundred Days' Reform

In the process of negotiating the Treaty of Shimonoseki, many proposals were submitted that rejected peace and advocated reforms (of political and institutional systems), as evidenced by the second letter sent to the Guangxu Emperor by Kang Youwei and others.¹⁸ The Hundred Days' Reform, led by figures including Kang and Liang Qichao, refuted the "yitong chuishang zhi shi (China-centered world norms)" and espoused a new outlook that diverged from the aforementioned double standard on foreign policy, namely tribute relations and treaty-based international relations; for example, the promotion of the "lieguo bingli zhi shi (parallel relations among equal countries)." Domestically, their proposals included reforming national institutions, a policy for enriching the country, and the cultivation of human resources. Britain and Japan were not fully in accord with such proposals. Although British diplomat Claude MacDonald praised the imperial edict on government policy issued June 11, 1898, for sanctioning fundamental reforms, he also stated that there was almost no reason to expect that the emperor's admonition would be successful in profoundly moving the Chinese bureaucracy as a whole and that there was almost no indication that an imperial edict produced a single result in practical terms.¹⁹ And while the Hundred Days' Reform was modeled on Japan's Meiji Restoration, it received no support from Japan or any of the other powers. The new policy ended up lasting a mere three months.²⁰

Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao fled for their safety to Japan under the protection of Japanese and British diplomats. On June 13, 1899, they formed the Save the Emperor Society in Yokohama. Liang Qichao later published *Qing yi bao*, *Xinmin congbao* (*New Citizen*), and other works in Japan, which served as a place of refuge (or asylum) for China's antigovernment factions. Though the Japanese government monitored and controlled their activities at the behest of the Qing court, their

¹⁸ "Kang Nanhai zhibian nianpu", Zhongguoshi xuehui (Association of Chinese Historians), ed., *Wuxu bianfa*, Vol. 4 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1957).

¹⁹ Banno Masataka, *Kindai Chugoku gaikoshi kenkyu* (Study of the History of Diplomacy in Modern China) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970), 306–07; Hayashi Gonsuke, *Waga 70 nen o kataru* (A Tale of My 70 Years) (Tokyo: Daiichi Shobo, 1935), 78–103; Wang Shuhuai, *Wairen yu wuxu bianfa* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1965).

²⁰ Refer to Mao Haijian's *Wuxu bianfashi shikao* (Beijing: Shenghuo Dushu Xinzhi Sanlian Shudian [SDX Joint Publishing Company], 2005) regarding the development of the Hundred Days' Reform.

activities found numerous supporters in Japan and “private” exchanges with the two men would, in contrast to the hostility on the political and military fronts, be later emphasized in research on the history of Sino-Japanese relations as a “story of friendship” in the private sector.²¹

(3) The Boxer Rebellion and the Boxer Protocol

According to some interpretations, China became extremely conservative following the Hundred Days’ Reforms; however, this point is inconclusive. China took part in the First Peace Conference at The Hague in 1899.²² Thereafter, Sino-Japanese relations in the context of international conferences and organizations—such as the Berne Convention and the Universal Postal Convention—would take shape in ways different from the East Asian bilateral relationship.

Also in 1899 Shandong Province became the focal point from which the antiforeign religious organization known as the Boxers launched their activities. The Qing court at first tried to suppress the movement, but later sanctioned the Boxers after they migrated from Shandong to the Beijing area. On June 21, 1900, an imperial edict was issued declaring war against all foreign powers in China. Dong-Jiao-Min-Xiang, the area of Beijing in which foreign legations were located, came under attack, and members of the Japanese legation engaged in combat.²³ The foreigners experienced their first casualties on June 20, among them German minister Clements von Ketteler. On August 14, an alliance of eight nations, including Japan, invaded Beijing with a force totaling around 20,000 troops, nearly half of which were contributed by Japan.²⁴

During this incident, Viceroy of Shandong Province Yuan Shikai, General of Liangguang Li Hongzhang, General of Huguang Zhang Zhidong, General of Liangjiang Liu Kunyi, and others disobeyed the imperial edict declaring war. They decried the Boxers as rebels and worked to cooperate with the invading powers (via the Southeast Mutual Protection agreement).²⁵ Also, during the Boxer Rebellion

²¹ With respect to the activities of the constitutionalist and reformist factions in Japan, reference was generally made to Feng Ziyou’s *Zhonghua Minguo kaiguoqian gemingshi* (Taipei: Shijie Shuju, 1954). Its reliability was cast in doubt, however, following comparative critical studies of records from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other sources by Kong Xiangji, Murata Yujiro, and others.

²² Tang Qihua, “Qingmo minchu Zhongguo dui ‘Haiya baohehui’ zhi canyu (1919–1928)”, *Guoli zhengzhi daxue lishi xuebao* 23 (May 2005); Kawashima Shin, “Chugoku gaiko ni okeru shocho to shite no kokusaiteki chii” (Symbolic International Standing in Chinese Diplomacy), *Kokusai seiji* 145 (Summer 2006).

²³ Hattori Unokichi, *Pekin rojo hoka* (The Siege of Beijing and Other Stories) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, Toyo Bunko, 1965).

²⁴ Sato Kimihiko, *Giwadan no kigen to sono undo: Chugoku minshu nashonarizumu no tanjo* (The Origins of the Boxer Movement: The Birth of Popular Nationalism in China) (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 1999); Saito Seiji, *Hoku-Shin Jihen to Nihongun* (Japanese Troops and the Boxer Rebellion) (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo Shuppan, 2006).

²⁵ Li Guoqi, *Zhang Zhidong de waijiao zhengce* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia

Japanese troops emphasized discipline in their aim to distinguish themselves as “forces of a civilized country,” and they were responsible for saving the public records of the Tsung-li Yamen. According to Wang Luxian, an official working in this office, “During last year’s incident in the capital, bound records of various other *yamen* were burned, and their original forms therefore lost. Fortunately, however, the records at the main *yamen* (Tsung-li Yamen) were protected by Japanese soldiers and were not lost.”²⁶ On the other hand, Japanese troops took sycees (silver ingots), hanging bells, and other plunder from the Minister of Revenue and elsewhere and brought them back to Japan. The silver was transferred to the national treasury, and the hanging bells were presented to Yasukuni Shrine.²⁷

The Boxer Protocol signed on September 7, 1901, together with the Mackay Treaty in 1902 and other agreements that followed would, next to the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin, become a fundamental treaty governing China’s international relations. Japan was included in the protocol as a member of the world’s powers; thereafter, it would relate to China in coordinate with the other powers within the protocol’s framework. (Japan extracted itself from this treaty with the issuance of the Twenty-One Demands, and once again sought the path of coordination under the Washington Conference in 1921.)

The Boxer Protocol put a stop to the so-called “partitioning of China,” and the foreign powers supported the government in Beijing while promoting the country’s modernization. In terms of finances, too, they took steps to ensure the smooth repayment of loans. China was ordered to pay reparations of 450 million taels, more than twice the value of the indemnity incurred by its loss in the Sino-Japanese War. The indemnity took the form of public debt to be repaid in yearly installments over a period of 40 years, and was calculated using the market for gold coins. Russia and Germany received the largest proportion of the indemnity (29% and 20%, respectively). Japan and the United States each received the same proportion (7%). In addition to the establishment of a legation district, China permitted the stationing of troops from each country.

During the period from the Sino-Japanese War to the Boxer Rebellion, there were voices in Japan questioning China’s unity and the leadership’s ability to govern, alongside arguments calling for Sino-Japanese cooperation and the preservation of China. The overriding opinion, though, was that Japan should assume the lead in coming to China’s rescue.²⁸

Sinica, 1970).

²⁶ “Waiwubu siyuan Wang Luxian chengwen” (28th day of 3rd month, 28th year of Guangxu [1902]), “Gexiang tiaochen”, *Waiwubu dang’an* 02-14 and 14-2, held at the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica.

²⁷ “Keirikyoku: Hoku-Shin Jihen no sai kakutoku shitaru senrihin shobun no ken” (Accounts Bureau: Disposal of War Trophies Captured during the Boxer Rebellion), *Rikugunsho daiinikki*, May 13, Meiji 37 (1904), held at the Japan Center for Asian Historical Research (property of the National Institute of Defense Studies), Reference Code: C08010342000.

²⁸ For example, Okuma Shigenobu’s “Shina hozenron” (Argument for Preserving China), in

3. Entanglements Between “Modernizing” Japan and China

(1) The Guangxu Reforms and Chinese Students in Japan

There was a return to the path of the Hundred Days’ Reform after the Boxer Rebellion. On January 29, 1901, prior to the signing of the Boxer Protocol, the Qing court proclaimed the Reform Edict of the Qing Court, thus beginning the search for a system of constitutional monarchy.²⁹ In contrast to the Hundred Days’ Reform, the edict had both an internal foundation as well as international support. In July of that year, the first true Foreign Office was established, replacing the Tsung-li Yamen. Japan’s Komura Jutaro and William Rockhill of the United States created a blueprint for the new office when foreign envoys met with Qing representatives during peace negotiations for the Boxer Rebellion.³⁰ In terms of developing human resources, the civil service examination system was reformed and government ministries sent students to study abroad, with those who mastered their studies being awarded *jurem* and *jinshi* degrees. The 1905 decision to abolish the examination system accelerated the trend toward studying abroad.³¹

Enthusiasm for study in foreign countries brought a new development in Sino-Japanese relations, in the form of the large number of Chinese students who ventured to Japan.³² Just as many foreign language students were sent to China from Japan by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since the early years of the Meiji era (among them Odagiri Masunosuke and Segawa Asanoshin),³³ students from China were now arriving in Japan as attaches to the Chinese legation. This was due to the emphasis on law and political science under the reform program, coupled with the abolition of the examination system and making studying abroad a requirement for entry into the civil service; many young Chinese intellectuals selected Japan as their study abroad destination, as it was both the most conveniently located country and

Waseda Daigaku Henshubu, ed., *Okuma haku enzetsushu* (Collected Speeches of Okuma Shigenobu) (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 1907).

²⁹ Li Jiannong, *Zuijin sanshinian Zhongguo zhengzhishi* (Shanghai: Taipingyang Shudian, 1930).

³⁰ Kawashima Shin, “Gaimu no keisei: Gaimubu no seiritsu katei” (The Shaping of Foreign Affairs: The Process of Establishing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), in Okamoto Takashi and Kawashima Shin, eds., *Chugoku kindai gaiko no taido* (Fomentation of China’s Modern Foreign Policy) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2009).

³¹ During this period large numbers of foreign students came to Japan, and there are many positive depictions of “friendly” exchange between these students and Japanese people, notably Douglas Reynold’s description of a “golden decade” in Sino-Japanese relations. I do not believe, though, that the number of students itself is a true measure of friendship, and wish to avoid seeing the history of the Sino-Japanese relationship simply in terms of the friendly-unfriendly dichotomy. Douglas Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912: The Xinzheng Revolution and Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

³² Huang Fuqing, *Qingmo liuRi xuesheng* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1975).

³³ “Shinkoku e honsho ryugakusei haken zakken” (Matters Concerning the Ministry’s Dispatch of Students to the Qing), Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Records, 6.1.7.1.

offered low-cost opportunities for study, as well as owing to similarities in the written language. The economic relationship that existed between Japan and China at this stage meant that such students could generally—despite some individual differences—afford to live in relative comfort.³⁴

From 1903 until 1906–07, a large number of Chinese intellectuals came to Japan to study law and political science (as many as 10,000 at most per year, though the number of foreign students was greater during the war). Large numbers of individuals were educated in Japan, mainly in the field of law, administrative and political studies, and Tokyo became a focal point for the political activities of youths from countries throughout Asia.³⁵ A number of magazines expressing political views and ideological sentiments were published by such individuals in the city. The political movements and other activities of these overseas Chinese who were exposed to modern views of the state and nationalism were reported back to China. Such individuals as Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Sun Yat-sen, and Lu Xun studied in Japan during this time, and Chiang Kai-shek even enlisted in the Takada Regiment of the Japanese army; thus individuals who would later rise to importance in various walks of Chinese society in the early half of the twentieth century had experience of living in Japan.

In December 1905, however, Japan strengthened its regulations on foreign students.³⁶ The Chinese government, too, viewed as problematic the fact that Japanese institutions conferred degrees for short periods of study, and as a result it began promoting study in Europe and the United States (in scientific and technical fields). The number of foreign students in Japan consequently declined. Another factor that encouraged study in the United States was its allocation of part of its indemnity from the Boxer Rebellion toward educating and training Chinese individuals and covering the expenses of studying in the United States. (Tsinghua College was established using these funds.)

(2) Advances in Sino-Japanese “Cultural” Exchange

It was unprecedented in the history of Japan-China relations for several thousand Chinese youths to be residing in Japan’s major cities. Many of these students’

³⁴ Zhang Yufa, “Zhongguo liuri xuesheng de jingli yu jianwen (1896-1945 nian) yi huiyilu wei zhuti de tantao” in Eto Shinkichi, ed., *Kyosei kara tekitaie: Daiyonkai Nit-Chu Kankeishi Kokusai Shinpojiumu ronbunshu* (From Coexistence to Conflict: Compilation of Studies from the Fourth International Symposium on the History of Sino-Japanese Relations) (Tokyo: Toho Shoten, 2000).

³⁵ Saneto Keishu, *Chugokujin Nihon ryugakushi ko* (Manuscript on the History of Chinese Study in Japan) (Nik-Ka Gakkai, 1939); Osato Hiroaki and Son Ansuk, eds., *Chugokujin Nihon ryugakushi kenkyu no gendankai* (Current State of Research on the History of Chinese Study in Japan) (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 2002).

³⁶ Monbushorei (Ministry of Education Ordinance) 19: “Shinkokujin o nyugaku seshimuru koshiritsu gakkō ni kansuru kitei” (Regulations Concerning Public and Private Schools Admitting Chinese Students). This incurred opposition from Chinese students in Japan, and on December 5, 1905, Cheng Tianhua jumped to his death at Omorikaigan in Tokyo.

interests lay in the modern civilization that Japan imported from the West, rather than with the country itself. But this exchange provided an opportunity to convey to China the various fields of study imported to Japan from the West, and translations and interpretation of many terms frequently used in China today—including “society,” “economics,” and “socialism”—were introduced via Japan.³⁷ Japanese translations of Western words into kanji (Sino-Japanese characters) and technical terminology flowed into China. Also, discussion in Japan on the subject of China was exported to that country and influenced similar discussions there.³⁸

The end of the nineteenth century saw such phenomena as the reimportation of Chinese classical texts that had long been preserved in Japan.³⁹ In addition, Chinese-language novels portraying the lives of Chinese intellectuals in Japan were published in China. In Japanese society, which had gained exposure to large numbers of Chinese students, the perception of distance between the two countries rapidly shrank, and there appeared a large number of novels and other works centering on China.⁴⁰

(3) Japan and China’s “Modernization” and Nationalism

As for the two countries’ domestic political situation, during this period Japan firmly established a parliamentary system based on a constitutional monarchy. It transitioned into the “Keien period” (approximately 1905–12), a time in which the premiership alternated between Saionji Kinmochi of the Rikken Seiyukai (Friends of Constitutional Government Party) and Katsura Taro. With the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty of 1894 just prior to the Sino-Japanese War, Japan had high hopes of abolishing extraterritorial rights for foreigners, and customs autonomy was restored in 1911. As to finance, Japan used its indemnities from the war to adopt the gold standard, and the Bank of Japan began issuing convertible banknotes. The country at last found itself in the process of becoming a modern, “independent” sovereign state. On the economic front, too, capitalism took hold following the war, and in 1900 the country experienced its first capitalist-style financial panic. Production of cotton and silk thread increased from the end of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century, and these products became Japan’s primary exports. Exports of cotton thread to China and Korea

³⁷ Wu Yuzhang, in his *Wu Yuzhang huiyilu* (Beijing : Zhongguo Qingnian Chubanshe [China Youth Press], 1978), describes coming into contact with socialist ideology through the writings of Kotoku Shusui and others as a student in Japan.

³⁸ Liu Jianhui, “Nihon de tsukurareta Chugokujin no ‘jigazo’” (A “Self-Portrait” of a Chinese Person Made in Japan), *Chugoku* 21, vol. 22 (June 2005).

³⁹ Wang Baoping, *Shindai Chu-Nichi gakujutsu koryu no kenkyu* (Study of Sino-Japanese Academic Exchange during the Qing Dynasty) (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 2005); Wang Baoping, ed., *Riben wenhua yanjiu congshu: Zhongguoguan cang he eben hanji shum u* (Hangzhou: Hangzhou Daxue Chubanshe, 1997).

⁴⁰ Yan Ansheng, *Nihon ryugaku seishinshi: Kindai Chugoku chishikijin no kiseki* (Cultural History of Study Abroad in Japan: Locus of Modern Chinese Intellectuals) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991).

increased sharply, and in 1897 the volume of exports surpassed imports. Silk had been Japan's largest export product since the closing days of the Edo period (1603–1868); with the development of the machine textile industry, the country emerged as the world's largest silk exporter in 1909. In heavy industries, the Yahata Steel Works was established in 1897, and production was placed on a solid footing following the Russo-Japanese War.

China attempted to proceed with its modernization under the difficult circumstances described earlier. It frequently used the systems adopted by Japan, with which it shared the constitutional monarchy system, in designing its own laws and systems, and Chinese students brought home Western knowledge absorbed during their stay in Japan. In terms of foreign relations, in accordance with the 1902 commercial treaty between China and England (the Mackay Treaty), new rules were established for international trade, including the complete lifting of the *lijin* tax and other forms of internal taxation. It also promoted development of a modern legal system in China, which Britain promised would result in the lifting of extraterritoriality if achieved. Japan and the United States also concluded commercial treaties with China that paralleled the British treaty. Article 11 of an addition to the 1896 Sino-Japanese treaty of commerce and navigation concluded on October 8, 1903, reads: "The Qing court desires to reform its judicial system so that it conforms to the systems of Japan and Western countries. Japan promises to provide complete support for these reforms. Moreover, once Japan expresses satisfaction with the provisions for the execution of this state and other conditions with respect to the reform of the Qing legal system, Japan will not hesitate to lift its extraterritorial rights."⁴¹ Here, Japan outlined a path for a revision of the treaty with China on the diplomatic front, a course that bore a relation to the hastening of the compilation of new laws and the establishment of new systems during the time of Emperors Guangxu and Xuantong.⁴²

This orientation toward becoming a modern sovereign state had the potential of begetting a surge of nationalism in public opinion and political thought.⁴³ Nationalism grew stronger in Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century owing to the Russo-Japanese War. In China, too, political movements with a strong focus on ethnicity and the state emerged through the anti-Russian movement in connection with the withdrawal of troops from Russian-held Manchuria, boycotts of

⁴¹ For the Anglo-Chinese treaty refer to Tian Tao's *Qingchao tiaoyue quanji*, Vol. 2 (Harbin: Heilongjiang Renmin Chubanshe: 1999), 1193. For the Sino-Japanese treaty, see Vol. 3 of the same document: 1263 and 1270. Also, in Provision 6 of the Sino-Japanese treaty and Provision 13 of the Sino-American treaty, there is text stating that China will strive toward instituting a system of unified currency.

⁴² "Kaocha xianzheng dachen Li Jiaju zou kaocha Riben sifa zhidu bing bian Riben sifa zhidukao chenglan zhe" (1st day of 8th month, 1st year of Xuantong), *Xuantong zhengji*, Vol. 19, Leaf 1.

⁴³ Yoshizawa Seiichiro, *Aikokushugi no sosei: Nashonarizumu kara kindai Chugoku o miru* (Fomenting Patriotism: Viewing Modern China through Nationalism) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003).

US goods in response to that country's immigration policies,⁴⁴ and such Japan-related developments as the Anthropological Pavilion affair and *Daini Tatsumaru* Incident.⁴⁵ The Anthropological Pavilion affair came about when Chinese students learned of the "display" of Han Chinese opium addicts and women with bound feet at the Anthropological Pavilion of the 1903 National Industrial Exposition held in Osaka. *Zhejiang Chao* and other media for Chinese students in Japan lodged a protest over the fact that the Chinese were "treated the same way" as Indians, Malays, Javanese, and Africans in the exhibit. In the anti-American movement, the problem of immigration restrictions based upon racial discrimination against the Chinese had the effect of gaining sympathy even from those parts of China from which not many people had emigrated. Also, in the late 1890s China recovered the rail and mining rights it had ceded to foreign countries and established its own commercial ports,⁴⁶ and the movement to place the operation of treaty ports under Chinese leadership strengthened.

The center of these political movements was not the Qing court but rather "China" (中国, *Zhongguo*). During this period, "China" had gradually taken hold as the name of the state. In 1901 Liang Qichao wrote a treatise on Chinese history, stating, "What is most shameful for us is the fact that our country has no name." The Tang and Han were dynastic monikers, while the term "Shina" (支那) was one that had been applied by foreigners. Although the name *Zhongguo* ("middle kingdom") conveys a sense of self-glorification, after comparing the drawbacks of the three different names, Liang wrote, "I decided to call my work 'A Treatise on Chinese History' in keeping with our spoken custom."⁴⁷ He envisioned the name transcending changes in dynasty. The concept of the name, of course, had existed from long before, with each period ascribing its own interpretation as to its meaning. Liang no doubt sought to redefine the name once again in the context of a "sovereign state."⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Zhang Cunwu, *Guangxu sanshiyinian ZhongMei gongchao de fengchao* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1966).

⁴⁵ Sakamoto Hiroko, *Chugoku minzokushugi no shinwa: Jinshu,shintai, jenda* (The Mythology of Chinese Nationalism: Race, Body, and Gender) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004).

⁴⁶ Li Enhan, *WanQing de shouhui kuangquan yundong* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1963).

⁴⁷ Liang Qichao, "Zhongguoshi xulun", *Yinbingshi wenju*, Vol. 6 (Taipei: Zhonghua Shuju, 1960). The translated portion comes from Kishimoto Mio's "Chugoku to wa nani ka" (What is China) in Ogata Isamu and Kishimoto Mio, eds., *Chugokushi* (History of China) (Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1998).

⁴⁸ Japan was reluctant to use this as an official name for China. After the Xinhai Revolution, Japanese Ambassador to China Ijuin Hikokichi explained to the Foreign Ministry that a name such as "China," which transcended the dynastic system, rather than "Shin" and other such terms was required for use in Japan as well. The Foreign Ministry agreed with his proposal to use the term "Shina" in official documents. Refer to Kawashima Shin, "'Shina,' 'Shinakoku,' 'Shina Kyowakoku'": Nihon Gaimusho no tai-Chu kosho seisaku" (Shina, Shina-koku, and the Republic of Shina: The Japanese Foreign Ministry's Policy Regarding the Appellation of China)

4. The Russo-Japanese War and the Manchuria Question

(1) The Russo-Japanese War and Sino-Japanese Relations

International policy on China in the wake of the Boxer Protocol was based on the premise of restricting the division of China to the level reached before the Boxer Rebellion. The powers looked for a central government that would be able to guarantee their rights and concessions in China, and sought to expand their own interests while maintaining the status quo as far as further fragmentation of the country was concerned. The Chinese government, meanwhile, tried to take advantage of these movements of the great powers to implement modernization policies funded by foreign capital.

Russia, however, made no move to withdraw the forces it had sent into Manchuria during the Boxer Rebellion, even after the illness and death in November of 1901 of Li Hongzhang, who had pushed forward relations with Russia. In 1896 Russia had signed a secret pact with China granting Russia the right to build and maintain railways in Manchuria, while the Scott-Muravyov agreement signed between Britain and Russia in 1899 also acknowledged Russia's railways rights in Manchuria. An agreement reached between Britain and Germany in 1900 (the Yangtze Agreement) saw Britain join with Germany, then developing its own interests in Shandong, to prevent Russia from advancing further south, but this agreement did not counteract the terms of the Scott-Muravyov Agreement.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Russia's failure to withdraw its troops from Manchuria after the Boxer Rebellion forced Britain into a tough decision.⁵⁰ On January 30, 1902, Britain signed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Under this agreement, Britain and Japan acknowledged each other's special interests in China and the Korean peninsula. There were those in Japan, Ito Hirobumi among them, who advocated an entente with Russia and negotiations over Manchuria and Korea, but Katsura Taro's government opted to sign an alliance with Britain instead. On the whole, Chinese reaction to the alliance seems to have been positive.

Following the Anglo-Japanese alliance, Russia decided to withdraw its troops from Manchuria. On April 8, 1902, Russia signed an agreement to restore Manchuria to China and carried out the first stage of its troop withdrawal. But instead of progressing to the second stage of its withdrawal plans, Russia submitted seven conditions for China to meet before it would remove its troops. Public feeling against Russia in Japan was high following the Triple Intervention, with the public vowing to wait for a suitable moment for revenge under the slogan *gashin shotan* (Sleeping on

Chugoku kenkyu geppo (Monthly Journal of Chinese Affairs) 571 (September 1995).

⁴⁹ The United States also secretly acquiesced in Russia's interests in northeast China, as can be seen from the correspondence on the subject of Russian interests in the region exchanged between the US minister in China Edwin H. Conger and Secretary of State Hay. "Mr. Hay to Mr. Conger," Department of State, Washington, January 3, 1903, *FRUS*, 1903, 46-47.

⁵⁰ Leonard K. Young, *British Policy in China, 1895-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).

Firewood and Eating Bile). There was also a strong anti-Russian movement in China, prompted by a popular reaction against Russia's ongoing occupation of Manchuria. This movement started among students at the Imperial University of Peking and spread to Chinese students in Japan.⁵¹

(2) The Outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War and Chinese Neutrality

The Russo-Japanese War broke out on February 7, 1904. In addition to the collisions between Japan and Russia over the Korean Peninsula, Russia's failure to carry out its promise to return Manchuria to Chinese control was another major cause of the conflict. China declared neutrality on February 12.⁵² According to Michael Hunt, Yuan Shikai and Zhang Zhidong were summoned to a meeting on November 2, 1903, to discuss the situation in the Three Northeastern Provinces (whether they reached any decision on neutrality is unclear). Over the next two months, there were discussions with Sir Ernest Satow, Britain's minister in China, on whether China should provide logistic support to Japan in the form of transportation and food. In the end, suspicious of Japan's ambitions in Manchuria, Yuan Shikai decided against a policy of support for Japan.⁵³ For his account of the audience on November 2, 1903, Hunt relies on *Zhang Wenxiang gong nianpu* (A Chronology of Zhang Zhidong).⁵⁴

⁵¹ In Beijing the movement took place centered on Imperial University of Peking students; in Japan the Anti-Russia Volunteer Group was organized around Chinese students like Tang Erhe and Niu Yongjian. On the Anti-Russia Movement, see Wang Xuezhuan and Yang Tianshi, *Ju'E yundong*, edited by Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo Zhonghuaminguoshi yanjiushi (History of the Republic of China department, Modern history faculty, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe [China Social Sciences Press], 1979.) But although the content of this Anti-Russia Movement was similar to the strategy of people like Prince Qing Yikuang in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Governor General of Zhili Yuan Shikai (in terms of its demands for Russia to withdraw its troops), the government made use of the movement for its own convenience and did not rely on it. It should be remembered that when Tong and Niu returned to China for protest and participate in the movement, Yuan Shikai refused to meet them and the Qing minister to Japan said that "although the movement calls itself anti-Russian, in reality it is a revolutionary movement." See Wu Yuzhang, *Wu Yuzhang hui yi lu* (Beijing: Zhongguo Qingnian Chubanshe [China Youth Press], 1978), 18–21.

⁵² Kawashima Shin, "Nichi-Ro senso to Chugoku no churitsu mondai" (The Russo-Japanese War and the Problem of Chinese Neutrality) in the Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Nichi-Ro Senso (1): Kokusaiteki bunmyaku* (The Russo-Japanese War (1): The International Context) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, December 2004); and Suzuki Tomoo, *Kindai Chugoku to seiyo kokusai shakai* (Modern China and the Western International Society) (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 2007).

⁵³ Michael H. Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895–1911* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), 84–87. On relations between China and the USA, including during the period of the Russo-Japanese War, see the same author's *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

⁵⁴ The edition Hunt used was Hu Jun, ed. *Zhang Wenxiang gong nianpu* (Beijing: Beijing Tianhua Yinshuguan, 1939). I have relied on the later edition edited by Xu Tongxin and published by

This records Zhang Zhidong as having said, “If there is war between Russia and Japan, it would be unfortunate for us to get caught in the middle. But things will not be easy for us if we stay neutral either.” Yuan Shikai said: “If we join Russia, Japan will use its navy to attack us in the southeast; if we join Japan, Russia will send its army to attack us in the northwest.”⁵⁵ Ascertaining the policymaking process in the Chinese court is made difficult by limited access to historical sources, but the documents that are available for study suggest that China aimed to regain control over the Three Northeastern Provinces. The government seems to have believed that it stood a better chance of achieving this aim by siding with Japan rather than Russia, but understood that it stood to lose by joining either side because of attacks from the enemy.

Mandarin in the Chinese government appear to have supported this policy. In *Ri-E zhanzheng* (The Russo-Japanese War), a Chinese study of the war compiled by Cai Yuanpei and others in 1928, the situation is summarized as follows. (1) At the time, it was clear that Russia intended to invade. On the assumption that Japan was not ready to go that far, experts predicted a Japanese victory and attempted to use this to China’s advantage, using violence to repel violence. The general population simply looked to depend on Japan for support. On the other hand, (2) There was a tendency to be wary of Russia. A common view saw the Russians as the “northern barbarians” threatening the celestial realm. The historical idea that the most powerful foes came from the north combined with the sheer size of Russia to give the country the appearance of being China’s most powerful enemy.⁵⁶

China hurriedly ratified the Hague Peace Conference treaties it had not yet signed and worked to declare its neutrality in accordance with international laws.⁵⁷

Shang wu yin shu guan, 1944, 176. In this edition, in addition to the timeline articles, is included the following note: “On negotiations over the Three Northeastern Provinces, seven conditions were presented by Russia to the foreign affairs ministry in the 3rd month of the 29th year of Guangxu (1903). Russia was trying to achieve a monopoly on rights and privileges in the Three Provinces. China did not do as the Russian government asked, and did not set up an open port. On the employment of foreigners, the foreign affairs ministry refused on the grounds that acceptance would see Chinese jurisdiction confined to no longer reach into the northern part of China. Claiming that the Japanese were already preparing for war, Prince Qing Yikuang asked the American minister in China to mediate, but the United States turned this proposal down. In September, the problem over the Three Northeastern Provinces came to a boiling point. According to rumors, General Fengtian was chased out. Zhang Zhidong had an audience with Yuan Shikai the same day.”

⁵⁵ “Zhidu Yuan Shikai zhi waibu Ri-E kaizhang wo yingshou juwai qi heshi dian” (9th day of 11th month, 29th year of Guangxu), *Qing ji waijiao shiliao*, Vol. 179, Leaf 4.

⁵⁶ *Ri-E zhanzheng*, Wu Jingheng, Cai Yuanpei, and Wang Yunyu ed.; annotated by Lu Simian, revised by Zhu Shaonong, (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan [Commercial Press], Xinshidai shi de congshu, 1928), 92–93.

⁵⁷ China officially ratified the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes that it had delayed ratifying because of the Boxer Rebellion and endeavored to remain neutral in the Russo-Japanese War as a ratifying member of the Hague Peace Conference. China negotiated

China's declaration of neutrality⁵⁸ contained several details that made conditions tough for the Russians, who were building up their military forces in Manchuria at the time. Chinese involvement in the war was forbidden, and there were provisions banning transport of troops by rail and the sale of military supplies. In some respects, China's "neutrality" therefore tended to favor Japan. In fact, several high-ranking Chinese regional officials cooperated with the Japanese side individually and were honored by Japan for their efforts when the war came to an end.⁵⁹

How did the impending war affect the secret Li-Lobanov Treaty signed between China and Russia in 1896? One source is the diary of Natong, chief secretary in the Chinese Foreign Office. His entry for June 11, 1904, reveals that senior officials consulted the text of the secret treaty.⁶⁰ But there appears to have been no discussion of the possibility of China's siding with Russia because of the agreement. The diary of Zou Jialai, meanwhile, makes no mention of the document, although he is also

with the Netherlands and with the emperor's consent ratified the convention by depositing a copy in the Netherlands on November 21, 1904.

"Lianbing chuwen", issued 25th day of 7th month, 32nd year of Guangxu. *Waiwubu dang'an* 02-21, 12-1, held at the Institute of Modern History of the Academia Sinica. The Japanese side also received confirmation of ratification from the Netherlands' minister in Japan Sweerts de Landas at the beginning of the following year. A message sent from Foreign Minister Komura to the Prime Minister on January 16, Meiji 38 (1905), "Shinkoku ni oite Hagu bankoku wahei kaigi ni kankeiseru joyaku oyobi sengen no hijunsho o kitaku shitaruno ken" (Regarding China's Deposit of Ratification Papers Relating to the Treaty and Declarations Relating to the Hague International Peace Conference), Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Records 2.4.1-2, "Dai ikkai bankoku heiwa kaigi ikken (The First International Peace Conference)," Vol. 8.

⁵⁸ "Ri-E zhanzheng Zhongguo juwai zhongli tiaogui" (27th day of 12th month, 29th year of Guangxu), *Qing ji waijiao shiliao*, Vol. 181, Leaves 20-23. On the subject of China's Declaration of Neutrality, Banzai Rihachiro, who acted as advisor to Yuan Shikai at the time, wrote in his memoir "Shin no Nichi-Ro Senso e no kyokugai churitsu" (China's Neutrality in the Russo-Japanese War) that, "Fortunately, China took a position of favorable neutrality towards us," further admitting that, "the Chinese side had me write out the Declaration of Neutrality." He also touches on the secret pact between China and Russia: "Because China had a secret pact with Russia, it was important to ensure that Russia did not obtain evidence of any breach of neutrality," noting that, "for the sake of appearances Yuan Shikai did everything he could to ensure that Russia got no evidence of a breach of neutrality." Banzai Rihachiro, "Sono koro no Nippon to Shina," (Japan and China as They Were), in *Sansen niyu shosei Nichi-Ro Taisen o kataru* (Twenty Generals Who Took Part in Battle Discuss the Great War Between Japan and Russia), (Tokyo Nichi-nichi Shimbunsha, Osaka Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1935).

⁵⁹ Umetani Noboru, *Meiji-ki gaikokujin jokun shiryō shusei* (A Collection of Historical Materials Relating to Honors Bestowed on Foreign Nationals During the Meiji Era) (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1991). For Yuan Shikai, see "Shinkoku Chokurei Sotoku En Seigai Jokun no ken" (The Bestowal of Honors on Yuan Shikai, Governor General of Zhili in Qing China), dated September 16, Meiji 40 (1907), 380-381. In addition to Yuan Shikai, in Meiji 41 (1908) honors were also bestowed on Chinese who had acted as military interpreters and to Wu Peifu and other soldiers from the Beiyang Army. (525-529).

⁶⁰ 11th day of 5th month, 30th year of Guangxu (June 11, 1904), *Natong riji* (Diary of Natong), Collection of Beijing Municipal Archives.

believed to have seen the secret treaty.⁶¹ We can conclude that although Chinese officials were aware of the secret agreement with Russia, the agreement played no part in determining the stance they took vis-a-vis Russia as far as the Russo-Japanese War was concerned. Nor did Russia make any demands of China based on the agreement. It is important to bear in mind that senior officials in the Chinese Foreign Office confirmed the contents of the secret treaty on June 11, 1904. China declared its neutrality on February 12, 1904. We can therefore conclude that senior officials in the Chinese Foreign Office did not take the secret agreement into consideration while they were making a decision on neutrality in the conflict.

(3) The Signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth and the Global Significance of the Russo-Japanese War

Manchuria was the main battleground of the Russo-Japanese War. At first the fighting was limited in scope, but the conflict gradually spread; the Chinese policy of neutrality came in for regular criticism from both China and Japan.⁶² Meanwhile, although public opinion in China initially favored Japan during the early stages of the war, criticisms of Japan became more outspoken as Japan started to take Russia's place as occupier of Manchuria and it became clear that the only real effect of the war would be to transfer Russia's Manchurian rights and privileges to Japan.⁶³

The initial progression of the war was favorable to Japan, with Japan conquering Port Arthur and sinking the Baltic Fleet, but after the Battle of Tsushima the conflict lapsed into stalemate. Through the offices of the United States, the Treaty of Portsmouth was signed on September 5, 1905, bringing an end to the fighting. China was eager to participate in the peace conference, but failed to achieve this aim. The

⁶¹ 11th day of 5th month, 30th year of Guangxu (June 11, 1904), Zou Jialai, *Yiruo riji*, Collection of Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library), Tokyo.

⁶² In regard to Chinese neutrality, W. F. Tyler, famous for his record of the Sino-Japanese War, is said to have remarked that "it appears . . . that China has not even a rudimentary conception of the . . . obligations of the modern neutral state." "Extracts from a Memorandum on China's Neutrality in the Russo-Japanese War," presented by Capt. W. F. Tyler, for presentation at the International Congress at The Hague, in Hosea Ballou Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, Vol. 3 (London: Longmans Green, 1918), 478.

⁶³ Iguchi Kazuki, *Nichi-Ro Senso no jidai* (The Age of the Russo-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1998). Especially in "Senjo: Chosen to Chugoku" (The Field of Conflict: Korea and China) and "Seiho hado no ryoken", Iguchi writes that, "The peoples of Manchuria were unfolding their own battle against Russia as people abandoned by the state," but that when the war finally began, "the only change for the people of northeastern China was that the occupying power changed from Russia to Japan," confirming that the Japanese victory in the war was not welcomed positively by local Chinese people on the scene. On the Japanese occupation and administration, see Sato Saburo, "Nichi-Ro Senso ni okeru Manshu senryochi ni taisuru Nihon no gunsei ni tsuite," (A Study of the Japanese Military Administration of Manchuria in the Russo-Japanese War: An Aspect of a Modern History of Relations between Japan and China), in *Yamagata Daigaku kiyō (jimbun kagaku)* (Bulletin of Yamagata University [Humanities]), Vol. 6, No. 2, 1967.

Treaty of Portsmouth allowed Japan to take over Russian rights in Southern Manchuria, subject to the acceptance of the Chinese government. This confirmed Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria, but also demonstrated Japan's increasing involvement in international diplomacy on China as one of the world's major powers. Russia's rights in Southern Manchuria included the leased territories in Port Arthur and Dalian, the South Manchuria railway, and mining rights. But Japan failed to obtain any war reparations according to the Treaty of Portsmouth, and widespread discontent from a population growing impatient with repeated tax increases flared up in the Hibiya Incendiary Incident and other events. But it would be too simplistic to say that Japan adopted a tougher stance toward China following the Russo-Japanese War.

In Japan, meanwhile, people saw significance of various kinds in the victory. This also affected relations with China. One interpretation saw the war as a triumph of constitutionalism over autocratic authoritarianism and a victory for the colored peoples of Asia over a white Western nation. Japan's victory had a significant influence on nationalist and constitutionalist movements around Asia. People have found evidence of this approach in China in the writings of Sun Yat-sen, among others. Certainly the *Dongfang zazhi* (Eastern Miscellany)⁶⁴ provides support for this interpretation of the war as marking an Asian victory over the white races. Discussion along these lines was connected to the "Yellow Peril" rhetoric prominent at the time. Sun Yat-sen's 1924 speech on Pan-Asianism is often quoted in discussions of the Russo-Japanese War and its connections to nationalist movements in Asia, which also provided evidence to prop up Pan-Asianism in Japan. On June 11, 1905, Sun Yat-sen boarded a ship in Marseilles and sailed east. The famous episode below probably dates from his voyage to Singapore, where he arrived in early July.⁶⁵

"While Japan's victory over Russia may not have seemed so important and consequently aroused little interest in the peoples living in East Asia, it had a great effect on the peoples living in West Asia and in the neighborhood of Europe who were in constant touch with Europeans and subject to their oppression daily. The suffering of these Asiatic peoples was naturally greater than that of those living in the further East, and they therefore rejoiced even more at the news of this victory than we did."⁶⁶ This anecdote refers to the peoples in the western parts of Asia suffering from Russian oppression, who apparently rejoiced at Japan's victories even more than people in the Far East, and does not deal directly with the reactions of the Chinese themselves. In a speech he gave at a welcoming party in Tokyo on August 13, 1905, Sun Yat-sen stated clearly that "a constitutional monarchy is not suitable for

⁶⁴ "Lun Zhongguo minqi zhi keyong," *Dongfang zazhi*, *Diyiqi*, April 25, 1904.

⁶⁵ Chen Xiqi, ed. *Sun Zhongshan nianpu changbian*, Vol. 1, (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju [Zhonghua Book Company], 1991), 337.

⁶⁶ *Sonbun Zenshu*, ed. by Gaimusho Chosabu (the research division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (1935, reprinted by Hara Shobo 1967), Vol. 1, 1135-1136.

China.”⁶⁷ A week later, Sun Yat-sen was one of the founding members of the Revolutionary United League in Tokyo who published the *Minbao* (People’s Journal), on November 26, 1905, extolling the “Three Principles of the People.”

(4) The Beginnings of the Manchuria Question

The immediate causes of the Russo-Japanese War were the antagonism between Japan and Russia over the Korean Peninsula and the problems arising from Russia’s failure to remove its troops from Manchuria. During the war, Japan stepped up its intrusion into Korea, and in 1905 signed the Second Japan-Korean Convention (the Eulsa Treaty), installing the Office of the Resident General and taking control over Korea’s foreign policy. On December 22, 1905, Japan and China signed a treaty in Beijing. Based on the Treaty of Portsmouth, this dealt with Manchuria and confirmed Japanese privileges there.⁶⁸ In 1906, Japan set up the Kwantung (Kanto) Government-General in Port Arthur to rule over the Kwantung (Kanto) Leased Territory and established the South Manchuria Railway Company in Dalian. Japan had obtained railway rights in southern Manchuria at the cost of huge sacrifices during the Russo-Japanese War. From then on, rights to the South Manchuria railway became one of the most vital national rights for Japan. It was to defend these rights that the Manchurian Incident took place. In this sense, the Russo-Japanese War can be said to have decided Japan’s policies toward China and even to have defined the tone for Japan-China relations as a whole.

This treaty did not mark the end of negotiations between Japan and China on the subject of Japan’s rights in Manchuria. The treaty merely established the basic framework of the relationship; negotiations continued in an attempt to thrash out the details. Japanese Foreign Minister Komura Jutarō attempted to link the issue of ethnic Koreans in Kanto (Yanbian) to the so-called “five pending issues” in Manchuria: the railways between Xinmintun-Fakumen and Dashiqiao-Yingkou, mines in Fushun and Yantai and along the Antung- Fengtian line and the South Manchurian railway, and the extension of the Beijing-Fengtian railway. Probably Komura believed that yielding on the Kanto (Yanbian) issue would help him dispose of the other five issues successfully. The question of how to deal with Kanto (Yanbian), which was adjacent to Korea and had large numbers of ethnic Korean inhabitants, was an extremely delicate one. Sino-Japanese accords signed in September 1909 finally resolved the Kanto (Yanbian) question and the five pending issues in Manchuria. With this, the contents of the Beijing treaty were established,

⁶⁷ *Sun Zhongshan quanji*, Vol. 1, ed. by Guangdong sheng shehuikexueyuan lishi yanjiushi (Historical Studies Department of Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences), Zhongguo shehuikexueyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo Zhonghuaminguoshi yanjiushi (History of the Republic of China department, Modern history faculty, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), and Zhongshan daxue lishixi Sun Zhongshan yanjiushi (the Institute of Sun Yat-sen in the Department of History, Sun Yat-sen University). (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju [Zhonghua Book Company], 1981), 277–283.

⁶⁸ Wang Yunsheng, *Liushinianlai Zhongguo yu Riben*, Vol. 4 (Dagongbao she, 1932–34).

and a border was fixed between China and Korea. Consular jurisdiction over ethnic Koreans in Manchuria was restricted to the presence of the Japanese consul.⁶⁹

The United States, which played a conciliatory role in both the Russo-Japanese and Sino-Japanese wars, took exception to this gradual entrenchment of Japanese privileges in Manchuria. In 1905, “railway king” Edward H. Harriman proposed joint administration of the Manchurian railways, but the Japanese government rejected the proposal. In 1909 US Secretary of State Philander Knox made an attempt to make railway rights in Manchuria neutral. But when Japan signed the second Russo-Japanese entente in July 1910, it extended its control over the whole of southern Manchuria. Previously, Russia and Japan had effectively defined the line of demarcation between their respective rights as that laid down in the first entente between the two countries. This treated the region east of the Liao River, which had been an area of conflict in the Russo-Japanese War, as the western limit of Japanese influence. The American proposal on railway rights became entangled with the question of Japanese privileges, however, and in the second entente Japanese rights were taken to extend over the whole of southern Manchuria.⁷⁰ Japan and Manchuria were also intimately linked economically. Exports of cotton to Manchuria and imports of soya bean flour were important articles of trade for Japan.

5. Sino-Japanese Relations After the Russo-Japanese War and the Xinhai Revolution

(1) The Signing of Ententes among the Powers Concerning Interests in China

Japan was more strident than any other country in its demands for Russian withdrawal from Manchuria. This was due both to Japan’s ambitions to expand its own interests in China, and to the Japanese government’s principle of marching in step with the great powers. From 1900 to 1903, editorials in the *Osaka Asahi Shimbun* newspaper called on the government to take a tougher stance against Russia, but in a reaction against the rhetoric of Yellow Peril once war broke out, the paper adopted a stance that called for liberation of Manchuria and securing Chinese territory after Japan won the war. After the Battle of Mukden in March 1905, its position shifted and the paper started to argue that Japan’s position in respect to Manchuria was different from that of the other powers and that persuading China and the other powers to accept this fact would be one of the central tasks for Japanese diplomacy following the Russo-Japanese War.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Lee Sung Hwan, *Kindai Higashi Ajia no seiji rikigaku: Kanto o meguru Nit-Chu-Cho kankei no shiteki tenkai* (Political Dynamics in Modern East Asia: The Historical Development of Relations between Japan, China, and Korea Regarding Jiadao) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 1991).

⁷⁰ Kitaoka Shin’ichi, *Nihon rikugun to tairiku seisaku 1906–1918*, (The Japanese Army and Continental Policy 1906–1918), (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978).

⁷¹ Ito Yukio, *Rikken kokka to Nichi-Ro Senso: Gaiko to naisei 1898–1905* (The Constitutional State and

The war led to realignment in Manchuria, with Russia taking the north and Japan the south. Firstly, a Franco-Japanese entente signed in June 1907 arranged for a Japanese bond issue in Paris and the security of French possessions in Indochina. This was followed by the first Russo-Japanese entente, which set out the position of the two country's respective rights in Manchuria again. Together with an agreement between Russia and Britain, these accords combined to form a barrier designed to contain German ambitions in the region. There was concern at the time about the stance that Germany and the United States, both of which had appeared in East Asia since the 1890s, would take to the Triple Entente between Britain, France, and Russia, and how China would relate to it. Japan showed willingness to sign an understanding not just with the Triple Entente but with the United States as well (despite disputes over the problem of Japanese immigration to the United States).⁷²

In 1908, Tang Shaoyi, China's viceroy of Fengtian Province, visited the United States. Japan interpreted this as signaling that the US-German-Chinese entente proposed by Wilhelm II was in the works, and moved quickly to propose an agreement between Japan and the United States. As a result, the Root-Takahira Agreement was signed in November 1908. The aims of the agreement were maintenance of the status quo and trade liberalization in the Pacific; it also confirmed the commitment of both sides to an open-door policy, equality of opportunity, and territorial integrity in China. The agreement resulted in a slight easing of tension between Japan and the United States over Manchuria. Together, these international agreements more or less secured Japan's claims in Manchuria.⁷³

These developments in international relations during the second half of the first decade of the twentieth century, particularly the signing of an entente between Japan and Russia, created an environment conducive to Japanese annexation of Korea. Following annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, Chinese concessions in Korea were abolished and Chinese privileges on the peninsula were for all practical purposes lost. The annexation of Korea shocked the Chinese intelligentsia and lent weight and urgency to the sense that China was in a state of crisis and heading toward collapse.

(2) Attempts at a Constitutional Monarchy and Sino-Japanese Relations

the Russo-Japanese War: Diplomacy and Domestic Policy, 1898–1905) (Tokyo: Bokutakusha, 2000), 271.

⁷² Kawashima Shin, Chiba Isao, "Chugoku o meguru kokusai chitsujo saihen to Nit-Chu tairitsu no keisei: giwadan jiken kara Pari kowa kaigi made" (The Realignment of the International Order on China and the Formation of Sino-Japanese Antagonism: From the Boxer Rebellion to the Paris Peace Conference), in Kawashima Shin, Hattori Ryuji, eds, *Higashi Ajia kokusai seiji-shi* (A History of International Politics in East Asia) (Nagoya: Nagoya University Press), 2007; Chiba Isao, *Kyugaiko no keisei 1900–1919* (The Configuration of the Old Diplomacy 1900–1919), (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2008).

⁷³ Teramoto Yasutoshi, *Nichi-Ro Senso igo no Nippon gaiko: Pawa poritikusu no naka no Man-Kan mondai* (Japanese Foreign Policy After the Russo-Japanese War: The Manchuria and Korea Questions in the Context of Power Politics) (Tokyo: Shinzansha, 1999).

On November 25 1905, the Kaocha zhengzhi guan (Bureau for Consideration of Politics) was established in China (later renamed the Xianzheng biancha guan, or Bureau for the Study of Constitutional Systems). The purpose of this body was to carry out studies of the various political systems in use in countries around the world, including Japan. In 1907 Shen Jiaben and others were made ministers in charge of legal reform, and system of modern penal law was compiled (though this was ultimately never used). On August 27, 1908, an imperial rescript announced a new constitution, calling for a constitution to be established and a national parliament convened within nine years.⁷⁴ China's reformers drew on Japan's example in numerous areas as they overhauled the country's code of laws and moved toward a constitutional system of government. In terms of organizational reform made to the structure of government, for example, the Junzichu (Military Consultation Bureau) established in 1909 was based on Japan's Sanbo honbu (General Staff Office), while the Bideyuan (Privy Council) established in 1911, was modeled on the Sumitsuin in Japan. On an individual level, numerous Chinese students had a profound effect on establishing modern systems of national and regional governments after returning home from their studies in Japan.

In the regions, a Ziyiju, or regional assembly, was established in each province on October 4, 1909; representatives were chosen via indirect elections modeled on the system in place in Japan, and many of the first generation to sit in these assemblies had previously studied in Japan. The Zizhengyuan, a provisional national assembly, was established on October 3, 1910, and a decision was taken to open a national parliament officially in 1913.

Although China undoubtedly looked to Japan for models for many of the institutions and systems of a modern state, this should not be taken to mean that relations between Japan and China were uniformly positive during this period. The close relationship between Japan and China did not always lead to amicable relations, and the two countries frequently clashed.

Lu Zhengxiang, who represented China at the Second Hague Peace Conference in 1907, was particularly wary of Japan.⁷⁵ He was perhaps right to be: When China demanded equal treatment with world's top-ranked nations in disputes over the selection of magistrates for the Permanent Court of Arbitration, it was probably Japan that intervened to oppose to move.⁷⁶ The main issue for Japan was the limited progress of China's modernization; Lu therefore called on his country to establish a constitution and other aspects of a legal system promptly and called on people to

⁷⁴ Zhang Pengyuan, *Lixianpai yu Xinhai geming* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1969).

⁷⁵ "ZhuHe Lu gongshi zhi chencan Xin" (13th day of 3rd month, 30th year of Guangxu), *Waiwubu dang'an* 02-21, 2-2, held at the Institute of Modern History of the Academia Sinica.

⁷⁶ "ZhuHe Lu dachen wen: mi chen baohehui qianhou shizai qingxing bing jinlai shijie dashi" (2nd day of 9th month, 33rd year of Guangxu), *Waiwubu dang'an* 02-21, 4-1, and "ZhuHe Lu dachen xin yijian" (2nd day of 9th month, 33rd year of Guangxu), *Waiwubu dang'an* 02-21, 10-1.

defend the country's sovereignty.⁷⁷ The view that China needed to introduce a constitution and the other trappings of a modern state in order to secure its international position was shared by China's entire diplomatic representation overseas, who worried: "Unless we improve the legal system, where will China find herself ranked by the time of the next Peace Convention?"⁷⁸

In 1908, the *Daini Tatsumaru* Incident created further tensions between Japan and China. The decision of the Chinese government to negotiate with Japan following the seizure of the Japanese vessel *Daini Tatsumaru* on suspicion of arms smuggling near Macau failed to win popular support and led to widespread anti-Japanese riots.⁷⁹

(3) The Xinhai Revolution

In November 1908 the Guangxu Emperor and Dowager Empress died in quick succession. Xuantong became the new emperor and Yuan Shikai began to lose prestige as a new government came into being that was dominated by members of the imperial family. In May 1911, the first Chinese cabinet was born. With Prince Qing Yikuang as prime minister, 5 of the 13 cabinet ministers were related to the imperial household. The regional assemblies union protested in vain. Clashes of this kind between the central court and regional assemblies became an increasingly prominent problem during the course of Xuantong's reign. The railways were a particular source of conflict. When transport and communications minister Shen Xuanhuai announced plans to nationalize the railways in May 1911, demonstrations around the country protested the government's plans to use foreign bonds to finance its nationalization plans. The situation got so serious that the government had to send in the armed forces.

Meanwhile, the revolutionary movement, strongly influenced by Sun Yat-sen and the overseas Chinese diaspora, mounted an almost ceaseless series of armed insurrections. The Xinhai Revolution arose from a combination of the disputes between the court and the regions alluded to above and the force of revolutionary movements among overseas Chinese. On the outbreak of the Wuchang Uprising in October 1911, an increasing number of provinces called for independence from the central government, chiefly in the southern parts of the country. But this independence only went as far as a declaration of autonomy from the central government; the provinces had no ambitions to declare independence as new states. Sun Yat-sen was not in China at the time, but following his return he was appointed

⁷⁷ "Zhuanshi Lu dachen deng zhi benbu dian" (15th day of 8th month, 33rd year of Guangxu), *Waivubu dang'an* 03-34, 1-1.

⁷⁸ "Zhuanshi Lu, zhu'E Hu, Fa Liu, Bi Li, He Qian dachen dian" (15th day of 8th month, 33rd year of Guangxu), *Waivubu dang'an* 02-12, 2-3.

⁷⁹ A classic study of the *Daini Tatsumaru* Incident is Kikuchi Takaharu, "Daini Tatsumaru jiken no tainichi boikotto" (The *Daini Tatsumaru* Incident and the Anti-Japanese Boycott) in *Rekishigaku Kenkyu* (Journal of Historical Studies) 209, July 1957.

provisional president of the new Republic of China, on the first day of 1912, with a provisional capital in Nanjing. The next month, however, conflict between the court and the regions surfaced again; the Qing emperor agreed to abdicate and Yuan Shikai took office officially as president, relocating the capital was to Beijing.

Japan's policies regarding China were undergoing a major change around the time it was confronted with the Xinhai Revolution. A number of options were available to the Japanese government at the time, including strengthening its position in Manchuria, becoming directly involved in the south, and attempting to increase Japanese influence on the Chinese government. The second Saionji cabinet struggled to come to a decision, and eventually adopted a strategy of "wait-and-see." The Wuchang Uprising made the Japanese aware of the possibility that the imperial system might collapse, as Yamagata Aritomo warned in connection with the High Treason Incident of 1910. Tokutomi Soho commented that "a plague is a disease that has a form; republicanism is a disease that has no form."⁸⁰

At a meeting of the Saionji Cabinet on November 28, 1911, Foreign Minister Uchida Kosai offered to act as intermediary in negotiations between the Qing court and the revolutionary army. The idea was to join hands with Britain in order to encourage the Chinese government to adopt a constitutional monarchy—a system that was neither republican nor dominated by the Qing court.⁸¹ Britain, however, had already started mediation talks between North and South, eager to bring about a strong and unified government capable of protecting Britain's interests in China, and Japan's approaches were turned down. At a cabinet meeting on December 22, the Japanese government decided to let events take their course.⁸²

On January 1, 1912, the provisional government of the Republic of China took office in Nanjing, with Sun Yat-sen as provisional president. The new republic essentially inherited the territory of the Qing court, becoming a multiethnic republic incorporating Tibet and Mongolia and espousing the principle of "Five Races Together in Harmony" (*wuzu gonghe*).⁸³ Yuan Shikai seems to have hoped to use the

⁸⁰ Tokutomi Soho, "Taigan no hi," (Fires on the Opposite Shore), *Kokumin shimbun*, November 12, 1911. On trends in Japanese public opinion regarding the Xinhai Revolution, see Nozawa Yutaka, "Shingai kakumei to Taisho seihen" (The Xinhai Revolution and Taisho Era Political Change), in *Chugoku kindai no shakai kozo: Shingai kakumei no shiteki ichi* (The Social Structure of Chinese Modernization: The Historical Position of the Xinhai Revolution (in Historical Context)), ed. Modern Chinese History Department, Asian History Research Society, (Tokyo: Kyoiku Shoseki, 1960).

⁸¹ Chiba Isao, *Kyugaiko no keisei: Nippon gaiko 1900–1919* (The Configuration of the Old Diplomacy: Japanese Diplomacy 1900–1919) (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2008), 213.

⁸² Usui Katsumi, "Shingai kakumei to Nichi-Ei kankei" (The Xinhai Revolution and Anglo-Japanese Relations), *Kokusai seiji* 58, 1978.

⁸³ Kataoka Kazutada, "Shingai kakumei jiki no gozoku kyowaron o megutte" (On the Theory of Five Races Together in Harmony at the Time of the Xinhai Revolution), in *Chugoku kingendaishi no shomondai: Tanaka Masami sensei taikan kinen ronshu* (Problems in Early Modern and Modern Chinese History: A Festschrift on the Retirement of Professor Tanaka Masami) (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankokai, 1984).

birth of the new republic as an opportunity to revise the unequal treaties, but in the event the treaties signed by the Qing court with the great powers remained in effect and unchanged.⁸⁴

On February 12, 1912, the Qing emperor abdicated. As the situation moved toward resolution Sun Yat-sen resigned as provisional president on February 14. The following day, the provisional parliament in Nanjing unanimously elected Yuan Shikai as provisional president. On March 10, Yuan Shikai took office in Beijing, and on March 11, a provisional constitution was promulgated. This provisional constitution set considerable restrictions on the powers of the presidency—a fact that is thought to have been at least partly behind Yuan Shikai's later attempts to restore the imperial system with himself at its head.

The Japanese government issued loans backed by collateral from the Hanyeping Company immediately after the installation of the provisional government, and as efforts led by Yuan Shikai to resolve the situation proceeded, Japan along with Russia joined the Four-Power Loans Consortium. In April 1913, Japan joined Britain, France, Germany, and Russia in issuing a reconstruction loan of 25 million pounds sterling to support the Yuan Shikai government. This was another area in which Japan looked to collaborate with the other powers. Then, in October the same year, Japan officially recognized the Beijing government. In the years to come, China would live through the Second and Third Revolutions and the Guangdong government, but Japan continued to support the government in Beijing until the formation of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing.

During this time, Russia started to adopt a more active policy toward Mongolia, to the extent that Outer Mongolia declared itself independent. By negotiating with Russia, Japan extended the boundaries of its areas of control as set down in its two agreements with Russia until they reached far as Inner Mongolia. As a result, Inner Mongolia was split into two regions of control, with Japan dominant in the east and Russia in the west. This resulted in a recognition that the eastern parts of Inner Mongolia would henceforth form a part of the Japanese sphere of control. The Manchuria Question had become the Manchuria and Mongolia Question.

In Conclusion

The period from the Sino-Japanese War to the Xinhai Revolution can be summed up in the three following points.

First, relations between Japan and China were extremely close during this time; in a sense, the two countries lived through this period of world history together. Reasons for this include: the fact that the Chinese government, conscious of the Meiji Restoration, deliberately modeled many aspects of its modernization program on Japan's constitutional monarchy; the large numbers of Chinese who spent time in Japan studying the political and legislative system; and the extremely close economic

⁸⁴ Cao Rulin, *Cao Rulin yisheng zhi huiyi* (Taipei: Zhuanji Wenxue Chubanshe, 1980), 86–87.

and commercial relationship between the two countries. In terms of personal exchange, we might also note that passports were not necessary for travel between Japan and China at the time.

Second, although this was a period in which the overall relationship was close, it was also a time in which animosity and tensions became apparent—politically, diplomatically, and militarily. This was a period in which the antagonism and confrontational aspects of the relationship frequently made themselves felt, with two official declarations of war (the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 and the Boxer Rebellion) and another conflict fought largely on Chinese territory (the Russo-Japanese War).

Third, Japan signed unequal treaties with China, becoming involved in international great power relations with China. Japan obtained interests and concessions (settlements) in several parts of the country, and from early collaboration with other powers in its dealings with China to become a major player in its own right in the international politics of the region.

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 can be seen as a major turning point in the modern history of relations between the two countries. With the development of a system of unequal treaties advantageous to Japan came a tendency for people in Japan to look down on China. There can be no doubt that a tendency developed in this period that was quite different in tenor from what had gone before. Nevertheless, this was still a period in which numerous different policy choices were available, and it would be a mistake to describe the period simply as one in which relations went from friendship to animosity.

It would be more appropriate to understand the period as part of the process of modern Sino-Japanese relations, and to regard the development of real animosity between the two nations as beginning with the Twenty-One Demands and ensuing developments in the 1910s. In the period discussed in this chapter, Japan worked mostly alongside the great powers in its dealings with China, basically according to the rubric of the Boxer Protocol. But the period was also marked by the birth of Chinese nationalism and the first hints of antagonism between Japan and China in a number of areas.

Addenda

After publication, the author wished to have the underlined portions of the following information added to his text. The numbers refer to the footnotes in which the information appears.

¹⁰ “Jiangdu Liu Kunyi zouqing chi mishang E’guo cu Ri huan Liao yuyi Xinjiang shu cheng wei xie pian” (General Liu Kunyi proposed that the Emperor secretly make an offer to Russia to recover Liaodong from Japan in exchange for some cities in Xinjiang)

¹⁰ *Xu Wensu gong (Jingcheng) yi ji (Minguo qinian [1918] qianyinban)*

¹⁵ “Zhuanshi Li Hongzhang yu E’waibudachen Luobahubu dachen Weide ding Zhong’E miyue” (Qing’s Royal envoy Li Hongzhang made a Russo-Chinese secret treaty with Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lobanov and Russian Minister of Finance Wade)

¹⁶ *Zhongguo jindaishi (Chinese modern history)*

¹⁸ “Kang Nanhai zibian nianpu” (The self-edited chronological record of Kang Youwei)

¹⁹ *Wairen yu wuxu bianfa (Foreigners and the Hundred Days’ Reform)*

²⁰ *Wuxu bianfashi shikao (Reconsideration of history about the Hundred Days’ Reform)*

²¹ *Zhonghua Minguo kaiguoqian gemingshi (Revolutionary history before the Republic of China)*

²² “Qingmo minchu Zhongguo dui ‘Haiya baohehui’ zhi canyu” (Chinese participation in the Hague Peace Conference in the 1890s–1900s)

²⁵ *Zhang Zhidong de waijiao zhengce (Zhang Zhidong’s foreign policy)*

²⁶ “Waiwubu siyuan Wang Luxian chengwen” (The report by Wang Luxian, secretary of the Foreign Office)

²⁶ “Gexiang tiaochen” (Various requests)

²⁹ *Zuijin sanshinian Zhongguo zhengzhishi (Thirty years of recent Chinese political history)*

³² *Qing mo liu Ri xuesheng (Chinese students in Japan in the late Qing)*

³⁴ “Zhongguo liu Ri xuesheng de jingli yu jianwen (1896-1945 nian) yi huiyilu wei zhuti de tantao” (The experiences and observations of Chinese students in Japan: A consideration of their memoirs)

³⁷ *Wu Yuzhang huiyilu (The memoirs of Wu Yuzhang)*

³⁹ *Riben wenhua yanjiu congshu: Zhongguoguan cang he keben hanji shumu (A series on Japanese culture)*

⁴¹ *Qingchao tiaoyue quanji (The catalogue of all Qing treaties)*

- ⁴² “Kaocha xianzheng dachen Li Jiaju zou kaocha Riben sifa zhidu bing bian Riben sifa zhidukao chenglan zhe” (Li Jiaju, minister of research on constitutional systems and Western politics, investigated and submitted an edited report on the Japanese judicial system)
- ⁴⁴ *Guangxu sanshiyinian ZhongMei gongchao de fengchao* (The tide of Sino-American labor movements)
- ⁴⁶ *WanQing de shouhui kuangquan yundong* (The late Qing movement to recover mine resources)
- ⁴⁷ “Zhongguoshi xulun” (A description of Chinese history)
- ⁵¹ *Ju'E yundong* (Anti-Russia movement)
- ⁵¹ *Wu Yuzhang hui yi lu* (The memoirs of Wu Yuzhang)
- ⁵⁴ *Zhang Wenxiang gong nianpu* (The chronological record of Zhang Wenxiang)
- ⁵⁵ “Zhidu Yuan Shikai zhi waibu Ri-E kaizhang wo yingshou juwai qi heshi dian” (Zhili General Yuan Shikai sent a telegraph to the Foreign Office saying that China had to keep a neutral attitude toward both Russia and Japan when the Russo-Japanese War broke out)
- ⁵⁶ *Ri-E zhanzheng* (The Russo-Japanese War)
- ⁵⁷ “Lianbing chuwen” (A letter from a soldier-training branch)
- ⁵⁸ “Ri-E zhanzheng Zhongguo juwai zhongli tiaogui” (The regulation of neutrality in the Russo-Japanese War)
- ⁶⁴ “Lun Zhongguo minqi zhi keyong” (Discussion about the role of Chinese people’s power)
- ⁶⁵ *Sun Zhongshan nianpu changbian* (The chronological record of Sun Yat-sen)
- ⁶⁷ *Sun Zhongshan quanji* (The complete works of Sun Yat-sen)
- ⁶⁸ *Liushinianlai Zhongguo yu Riben* (Sixty years of modern Sino-Japanese relations)
- ⁷⁴ *Lixianpai yu Xinhai geming* (Constitutionalism and the Xinhai Revolution)
- ⁷⁵ “ZhuHe Lu gongshi zhi chencan Xin” (The letter from the minister Lu to the chen and can)
- ⁷⁶ “ZhuHe Lu dachen wen: mi chen baohehui qianhou shizai qingxing bing jinlai shijie dashi” (The letter from Chinese minister in Holland Lu: The report on the Hague Peace Conference and world climate)
- ⁷⁶ “ZhuHe Lu dachen xin yijian” (The letter from minister Lu)
- ⁷⁷ “Zhuanshi Lu dachen deng zhi benbu dian” (The telegram from minister Lu and others)
- ⁷⁸ “Zhuanshi Lu, zhu'E Hu, Fa Liu, Bi Li, He Qian dachen dian” (The telegram from minister Lu, minister in Russia Hu, minister in France Liu, and minister in Holland Qian)
- ⁸⁴ *Cao Rulin yisheng zhi huiyi* (The memoirs of Cao Rulin)

CHAPTER 3
JAPAN'S CONTINENTAL EXPANSION POLICY
AND THE CHINESE NATIONAL REVOLUTION MOVEMENT

Hattori Ryuji

Introduction

Surely no one would disagree that the two biggest turning points in modern Sino-Japanese relations were World War I and the Manchurian Incident. It was in the wake of the country's involvement in World War I that Japan issued the Twenty-One Demands to China. Previously, when faced with such events as the Boxer Rebellion and the Xinhai Revolution, Japan had always considered its relations with the other powers before planning a response, but in issuing the Twenty-One Demands, Japan placed itself in direct opposition to China alone. Similarly, there can be no doubt that the Manchurian Incident marked a key moment in deteriorating relations between the two countries. But it would be a mistake to assume because of this that Sino-Japanese relations moved straight downhill from the Twenty-One Demands to the Manchurian Incident. In between these two events came a relatively stable period of international order known as the Washington System, as well as such attempts at cultural exchange as the East Asian Cultural Affairs Project.

This chapter looks at the ups and downs of Sino-Japanese relations from the outbreak of World War I in 1914 to the period immediately before the Manchurian Incident in 1931. Sino-Japanese relations in these years have generally been divided into four distinct periods. The first runs from World War I to the Paris Peace Conference. The second I will treat as having lasted from the end of the World War I to the establishment of the Washington System of international order following the Paris Peace Conference and the Washington Conference. The third period runs from the later days of the Beijing government to the Northern Expedition. In Japan, this coincides with the first period of Shidehara diplomacy under Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijuro. The fourth period begins with the rise of the Nationalist government and lasts until just before the Manchurian Incident. In Japan, this was the time of Tanaka [Giichi] diplomacy and the second period of Shidehara diplomacy.

In what follows, I will discuss nearly 20 years of Sino-Japanese relations, following the four periods outlined above. Although the primary focus of my analysis is on diplomatic relations between Japan and China, I will also touch on the actions of the other major powers where necessary. As illustrated by the Paris Peace Conference, the Washington Conference, and the Special Tariff Conference held in Beijing, the course of Sino-Japanese relations was often influenced by wider developments in global politics. In the final section, I examine the Washington System of international order that prevailed during the 1920s from the perspective of Sino-Japanese relations.

1. World War I

(1) The Outbreak of World War I and the Twenty-One Demands to China

On June 28, 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo. In response, Austria declared war against Serbia on July 28; and World War I broke out between the Central Powers (Germany and Austria) and the Triple Entente (Russia, France, and Great Britain). Upon the outbreak of war, the British ambassador to Japan, Sir William Conyngham Greene, asked Kato Takaaki, Japan's foreign minister in the Okuma Shigenobu cabinet, to send the Imperial Japanese Navy to assist British attacks on German auxiliary cruisers in Chinese waters. Greene's request was limited to a call for help in protecting British merchant shipping, but Kato took advantage of the opportunity to maneuver Japan toward full-scale involvement in the conflict.

On the basis of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan issued an ultimatum to Germany on August 15 requiring not only the immediate disarmament and withdrawal of German shipping but also the surrender to Japan of Germany's Jiaozhou (Kiaochow) concession, on the premise that this would be restored to China. Germany was given a week to respond to the ultimatum; when no response came, Japan declared war on August 23, and became officially involved in World War I. On August 27, the Japanese Navy's Second Fleet blockaded Jiaozhou Bay. On September 2, the Kurume-based 18th Division of the Japanese Army landed at Longkou on the Shandong Peninsula and took possession of the Shandong Railway. In November, Japanese forces captured the fortress at Qingdao and forced the Germans to surrender. There was also limited British involvement in the battle for Qingdao.¹

In January 1915, Japan issued 21 demands, divided into five groups. The Japanese minister in China, Hioki Eki, presented these directly to the president of the Republic of China, Yuan Shikai, without involving the Chinese foreign ministry. The most significant particulars of the so-called Twenty-One Demands were as follows.

Group One: Demanded that China transfer all German interests in Shandong to Japan (four articles)

Group Two: Demanded an increase and consolidation of Japanese interests in South Manchuria and the eastern part of Inner Mongolia, extending the lease of Port Arthur and Dalian and Japanese control over the South Manchuria Railway and the Antung-Mukden Railway to a period of 99 years (seven articles)

Group Three: Demanded that the Hanyeping Company be run as a joint venture between Japan and China (two articles)

Group Four: Demanded an agreement that China would not grant further coastal leases or concessions to any other foreign power (one article)

¹ Saito Seiji, *Hi Taisho 3-nen Nichi-Doku senshi bekkann 2 Nichi-Doku Chintao Senso* (A History of the Japanese-German War of 1914, Appendix 2: The Battle between Japan and Germany for Qingdao) (Tokyo: Yumani Shobo, 2001).

Group Five: Demanded that China appoint Japanese experts as political, fiscal, and military advisors, etc. (seven articles)

The content of the demands ranged widely, but the priorities for Kato as foreign minister were those in Group Two, relating to Manchuria and Mongolia, which aimed to secure official treaty recognition for the rights and interests that Japan had already obtained. The demands in Group Five were shelved as desiderata during the final stages of negotiations. Japan nevertheless issued a final ultimatum on May 7; China capitulated on May 9, a date later commemorated as a Day of National Humiliation. On May 25, two treaties were signed and 13 diplomatic notes exchanged in Beijing. These included a treaty agreement on Shandong and another regarding South Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia, as well as an exchange of notes concerning the Hanyeping Company, the Jiaozhou concession, and Fujian Province.²

The first clause of the Shandong treaty stipulated that the Chinese government would leave Japan and Germany to settle the disposition of Germany's rights and concessions in Shandong between them. A diplomatic note exchanged at the same time stipulated that the leased territory in Jiaozhou would be returned to China on the condition that it be opened as a commercial port containing an exclusively Japanese settlement. On September 24, 1918, an additional diplomatic note gave the go-ahead for railways between Jinan and Shunde and between Gaomi and Xuzhou, to be built with Japanese financing. Separately, in return for Japanese involvement in the war, Britain, France, Russia, and Italy all announced in February and March 1917 that they would support Japanese claims to Germany's possessions in the Shandong Peninsula and the Pacific. Settlement of the Shandong issue would become a particular bone of contention at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

Kato was succeeded as foreign minister by Ishii Kikujiro, while in China Yuan Shikai declared himself emperor. Along with Britain and Russia, Japan put pressure on Yuan Shikai to abandon the idea of reviving the imperial system. The Okuma government adopted an aggressive stance toward Yuan Shikai. Kawashima Naniwa and other *tairiku ronin* (Japanese agents on the mainland) were giving support to the Chinese political organization Zongshedang and scheming toward a Manchurian and Inner Mongolian independence movement. The Japanese Army General Staff Office also supported this move. As the revolution against the imperial system (the so-called Third Revolution) spread throughout China, Yuan Shikai abandoned the revived imperial system shortly before his sudden death in June 1916. Japan switched to a policy of support for President Li Yuanhong, and the

² Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko nenpyo narabini shuyo bunsho* (Chronological Table and Important Documents of Japanese Diplomacy), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1965), 404–416; Usui Katsumi, *Nihon to Chugoku: Taisho jidai* (Japan and China in the Taisho Era) (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1972), 61–89.

Manchurian and Inner Mongolian independence movement was wrapped up.³

(2) From the Nishihara Loans to the New Four-Power Consortium Loans

In October 1916, a new cabinet led by Terauchi Masatake came to power in Japan. Under instructions from the new prime minister, Nishihara Kamezo traveled to Beijing to meet the Chinese Premier Duan Qirui. Loans were agreed to the Republic of China via the Industrial Bank of Japan, the Bank of Taiwan, and the Bank of Chosen (Korea), among others. The so-called Nishihara Loans comprised eight separate agreements for loans totaling 145 million yen. These included the first and second Bank of Communications loans, the telegraph loan, the Jilin-Hoeryong Railway primary loan, the Jilin and Heilongjiang Manchurian forestry and gold mining loan, the Manchuria and Inner Mongolia four railways primary loan, the Shandong two railways primary loan, and a war participation loan.

In addition to Premier Duan Qirui, the Chinese side was represented by Communications Minister Cao Rulin and by Lu Zongyu, president of the Exchange Bank of China. The aims of the Nishihara Loans were to invest booming Japanese foreign currency reserves in China, to foster a pro-Japanese faction centered on Duan Qirui and the Anhui clique, and to develop a Japanese-Chinese “coalition.” But there was criticism of the Nishihara Loans from the Japanese Foreign Ministry, which was prioritizing international cooperation efforts, and the attempt to build a Japanese-Chinese coalition was aborted. Of the money lent according to the terms of the Nishihara Loans, 120 million yen was never paid back.⁴

In March 1917, China broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and in August declared war on Germany and Austria. Around this time, Japan made an attempt to reach an agreement on China policy with the United States, which was starting to play an increasingly important role in the region. The Terauchi cabinet sent former Foreign Minister Ishii Kikujiro as special emissary; in November 1917 he succeeded in organizing an exchange of diplomatic notes with US Secretary of State Robert Lansing. According to the terms of the Lansing-Ishii Agreement, Japan and the United States continued to mouth support for an Open Door policy and equality of access and opportunities in China, even while the United States acknowledged

³ Kitaoka Shin'ichi, *Nihon rikugun to tairiku seisaku* (The Japanese Army and Continental Policy) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978), 181–193; Sakurai Ryoju, “Kaidai Taisho jidai shoki no Utsunomiya Taro: sanbo honbu dai-2 bucho shidanchō jidai” (Bibliographical Introduction: Utsunomiya Taro in the Early Taisho Era, His Time as Second Division Chief of the Army General Staff Office and Division Commander), in Utsunomiya Taro kankei shiryō kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon rikugun to Ajia seisaku Rikugun Taisho Utsunomiya Taro nikki* (The Japanese Army and Asia Policy: The Diary of Japanese Army General Utsunomiya Taro) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), vol. 2, 4–5.

⁴ Morikawa Masanori, “Terauchi naikaku kini okeru Nishihara Kamezo no tai-Chugoku ‘enjo’ seisaku koso” (The Thinking Behind Nishihara Kamezo’s Chinese “Aid” Policy during the Government of the Terauchi Cabinet), in *Handai hogaku* (Osaka Law Review) Vol. 50, No. 5 (2001), 117–146.

Japan's "special interests" in China.⁵

Meanwhile, revolution broke out in Russia, and in 1918 there was talk of for armed intervention against the Bolsheviks. Britain and France were the most vocal advocates of the idea. The United States was more standoffish, and in July the [Woodrow] Wilson administration suggested that Japan send troops to Vladivostok as part of an international coalition. The nominal purpose of the mission was to rescue the Czech Legion, which was stranded behind enemy lines. Joint operations between Japan and the United States began that August, with Japan sending 73,000 troops. That September, Japan elected its first party-dominated cabinet led by Hara Takashi of the Seiyukai, and the new government voted to cut the number of troops sent to Siberia and to limit the geographical range of their involvement.⁶

Around this time, the US Wilson administration suggested a New Four-Power Consortium to extend loans to China. The group would involve Japan, the United States, Britain, and France. During negotiations, Japan's Hara government accepted that Manchuria and Inner Mongolia would be except from the agreement only in areas where Japan's rights and options were confirmed by preexisting treaties. The United States and Britain refused to agree to Japanese suggestions that would have excluded Manchuria and Inner Mongolia from the terms of the agreement entirely.⁷ In spite of this, the Beijing government remained skeptical of the New Four-Power Consortium, and Japan too independently agreed a contract for an extension to the Nanxun Railway from Nanchang to Jiujiang and another contracting a Sitaio Railways loan, both of which infringed the terms of its agreements with the new four-party group.

(3) The Paris Peace Conference and the May Fourth Movement

The Paris Peace Conference took place at the end of World War I, running from January to May 1919. The Hara government of Japan was represented in Paris by former Prime Minister Saionji Kimmochi as chief plenipotentiary, along with Privy Councilor Makino Nobuaki, Ambassador to Britain Chinda Sutemi, Ambassador to France Matsui Keishiro, and Ambassador to Italy Ijuin Hikokichi. Saionji did not arrive until halfway through the conference, and in practice Makino took his place as chief plenipotentiary. The Chinese delegation, meanwhile, comprised Foreign Minister Lu Zhengxiang as chief plenipotentiary, along with V. K. Wellington Koo (also known as Gu Weijun, minister to the United States), Alfred Sao-ke Sze (also known as Shi Zhaoji, ambassador to Britain), and Wang Zhengting.

⁵ Takahara Shusuke, *Uiruson gaiko to Nihon* (Wilsonian Diplomacy and Japan) (Tokyo: Sobunsha, 2006), 61–102

⁶ Hosoya Chihiro, *Roshia Kakumei to Nihon* (The Russian Revolution and Japan) (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1972), 85–104.

⁷ Mitani Taichiro, *Zoho Nihon seito seiji no keisei: Hara Takashi no seiji shido no tenkai* (Augmented edition: The Formation of Japanese Party Politics: The Development of Hara Takashi's Political Leadership) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995), 334–344.

The priority for the Hara cabinet at the conference was to ensure the transfer of Germany's interests and possessions to Japan with British support. In most other matters, Japan was happy to go along with majority opinion. The Shandong Question became the biggest issue in Sino-Japanese relations. As already mentioned, Japan and China had already signed a joint agreement on Shandong in May 1915, following Japan's issuing of the Twenty-One Demands. This stipulated that the Chinese government would leave Japan and Germany to settle the fate of the Shandong concessions between them. In September 1918, China and Japan exchanged diplomatic notes declaring that the Shandong Railway would be built with Japanese loans.

On January 27, 1919, Makino demanded the unconditional surrender of all German possessions and interests to Japan at a meeting of the five Great Powers: Japan, the United States, Britain, France, and Italy. The Chinese delegation was strongly opposed to the idea of ceding Germany's former possessions to Japan. V. K. Wellington Koo, leader of the Chinese delegation on this issue, was allowed to give a statement to the Powers on January 28. Koo argued that agreements reached on the Shandong Question during the war had been intended simply as "temporary measures," and demanded the return of all German interests in Shandong directly to China, without Japanese intervention. The Japanese and Chinese views on Shandong were irreconcilable. From February, the focus of the meetings shifted to the establishment of the League of Nations, and the Shandong Question was shelved until late April.⁸

Eventually, as a result of decisions taken at the Paris Peace Conference, the Japanese demands were included as Articles 156–158 (Section VIII: Shantung) of the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was required to hand over all railways, mines, submarine, cables and all other interests in Shandong to Japan. In protest, the Chinese delegation refused to attend the ratification ceremony on June 28. But the Chinese *did* sign the Treaty of Saint-Germain that dealt with Austria, and as a result China was included as a member of the League of Nations, later being elected as nonpermanent council member on several occasions.⁹

Meanwhile, China was rocked by the mass protests that became known as the May Fourth movement. One June 10, the Beijing government responded by dismissing three of the main targets of the movement: Communications Minister Cao Rulin, Minister to Japan Zhang Zongxiang, and Director of the Currency Bureau Lu Zongyu. Three days later, Premier Qian Nengxun took responsibility for the crisis and resigned. Even so, the boycott of Japanese goods that had been sparked by

⁸ Hattori Ryuji, *Higashi Ajia kokusai kankyo no hendo to Nihon gaiko 1918–1931* (Changes in the East Asian Diplomatic Environment and Japanese Diplomacy 1918–1931) (Tokyo: Yuhikaku Publishing, 2001), 20–46.

⁹ See Kawashima Shin, *Chugoku kindai gaiko no keisei* (The Formation of Modern Chinese Diplomacy) (Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press, 2004), 249–265. See also Tang Qihua, *Beijing zhengfu yu guoji lianmeng 1919–1928* (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 1998).

the Shandong Question continued for almost a year longer. Unable to put aside the distrust of the Japanese, the Chinese decided that further bilateral discussions would not be to their advantage, and refused to negotiate directly with Japan on the Shandong Question even after the Paris Peace Conference. A solution was therefore postponed until the Washington Conference.

At this time in Manchuria, Zhang Zuolin had fulfilled his longstanding ambition of bringing the Three Northeastern Provinces under his control. Zhang had bolstered his position by allying himself to the Zhili clique during the Zhili-Anhui War that broke out in July 1920 between rival factions of the Beiyang Army. With the decline of the Anhui faction, Zhang increased his influence in Beijing, and the Hara government in Japan began to move closer to him. In May 1921 the Japanese held a Far Eastern Conference at which the government confirmed a strategy of supporting Zhang in the Three Northeastern Provinces. Even so, when fighting broke out again between the Fengtian faction and the Zhili faction in the First Zhili-Fengtian War of spring 1922, Japanese Foreign Minister Uchida Kosai of the Takahashi Korekiyo cabinet refused to provide weapons or financial support, despite insistence from Japanese Army officers in China that Japan should support Zhang Zuolin.

2. The Formation of the Washington System

(1) The Washington Conference and the Nine-Power Treaty

From the end of the Paris Peace Conference and into 1920, Japan's minister in Beijing, Obata Yukichi, called repeatedly on China to agree to negotiations on the Shandong Question and to clamp down on anti-Japanese boycotts. But in May 1920 the Beijing government announced that it refused to negotiate bilaterally on the Shandong issue. Japan had made its conditions clear, but China decided it would be disadvantageous to enter talks with Japan alone, and refused to take part in direct negotiations. In January 1921, an exchange of diplomatic notes officially ended the military agreement between the two countries that dated back to the aftermath of the Communist Revolution in Russia.

In March 1921, a new Republican administration came into power in the United States under President Warren G. Harding. The slogan of the new government was "Return to Normalcy," as Harding worked to move the world on from a wartime footing. It was at the instigation of the new administration that the Washington Conference took place in November 1921. Immediately before the conference began, Japanese Prime Minister Hara Takashi was assassinated. Chosen to succeed him was Takahashi Korekiyo, like Hara leader of the Seiyukai political party. The new prime minister reappointed the Hara cabinet in its entirety and continued most of his predecessor's foreign policy. But on domestic policy the new government was in favor of reducing the size of the military.

The Washington Conference lasted from November 1921 to February 1922. The chief results of the conference were the Nine-Power Treaty regarding relations

with China, the Five-Power Naval Agreement, and the Four-Power Treaty on the Pacific. The Nine-Power Treaty had particularly important ramifications for Sino-Japanese relations. Ratified in February 1922, the Nine-Power Treaty dealt with China and its relations with the world powers. Apart from Japan and China, the treaty was also signed by the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal. Soviet Russia was not invited to the conference. Additionally, Japan, the United States, Britain, and France signed the Four-Power Treaty, the fourth article of which formally terminated the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

The chief Japanese plenipotentiary at the conference was Naval Minister Kato Tomosaburo, but fellow plenipotentiary Shidehara Kijuro, Japan's ambassador to the United States, took charge of relations with China. On the Chinese side, the Beijing government consulted domestic opinion on the conference, and tried to achieve an appearance of unity by including in its delegation at least one member from each of the factions competing for power. China's chief plenipotentiary was Alfred Sao-ke Sze (also known as Shi Zhaoji), Chinese minister to the United States, who issued a series of ten principles on Far Eastern issues in November 1921. Included were calls for a guarantee of Chinese territorial integrity, and support for the Open Door policy, and equality of opportunity.¹⁰

In response, US Plenipotentiary Elihu Root proposed the four Root principles, supporting the status quo. The four principles were: respect for the sovereignty, independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China, support for the establishment of a stable government in China, equal opportunity for all nations in China, and the avoidance of any action that would abridge the rights or security of friendly states. By adopting Root's principles, the powers essentially agreed that each country would maintain its existing rights and privileges, even while claiming to respect Chinese sovereignty. The Root approach was a policy that cooperated with Japan in maintaining the status quo. The Root principles were incorporated into Article 1 of the Nine-Power Treaty. Although Article 3 of the treaty established an Open Door policy and the principle of equal access to China for all powers, Article 1 provided for the maintenance of the status quo.¹¹

In connection with this, US Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes put forward a resolution on the Open Door principle. Hughes's idea was to establish a board of reference on the principles of the Open Door policy. According to Hughes's proposal, the board would examine the existing rights and privileges of each country from the perspective of Open Door principles. This might easily have led to a flare up of arguments about applying Open Door principles to the powers' existing privileges in China. Japanese Plenipotentiary and Ambassador to the United States Shidehara Kijuro objected strongly to the idea that the board might examine Japan's

¹⁰ Kawashima, *op. cit.*, 266–318.

¹¹ Asada Sadao, *Ryo-taisen-kan no Nichi-Bei kankei: kaigun to seisaku kettei katei* (Interwar Japan-US Relations: the Navy and the Political Decision-Making Process) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1993), 128–132.

rights in China. As a result, existing privileges were excluded from consideration, and although a resolution espousing Open Door principles was adopted, in reality it had little effect.

(2) The Shandong Question and Calls for Revision or Annulment of the Twenty-One Demands Treaties

The Shandong Question was another subject discussed at the Washington Conference. In February 1922, Japan and China signed a treaty that aimed to resolve the pending issues in Shandong. According to the terms of the treaty, China would pay back Japan railway property and assets in Shandong by means of a 15-year government security loan. For the period of the payment, the management of the company would include a Japanese subject as traffic manager and another to be chief accountant, while mining interests in the province would be run jointly by Japan and China. American and British representatives John Van Antwerp MacMurray and Miles Wedderburn Lampson took part as observers, helping to bring a breakthrough in negotiations that had threatened to stall. The situation was quite different from the one that had prevailed at the Paris Peace Conference, where China felt obliged to refuse to sign the Versailles Peace Treaty.

A treaty concerning Chinese customs tariffs was also signed at the Washington Conference. The treaty agreed to China's increasing its tariffs, which later led to the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff in Beijing. There was also discussion on withdrawal from Siberia and the Chinese Eastern Railway. But no agreement could be reached on restoring tariff autonomy to China or on abandoning foreign powers' privileges of extraterritoriality.

Chinese Plenipotentiary V. K. Wellington Koo (Gu Weijun), meanwhile, put forward a proposal that called for the return of foreign concessions to China in December 1921. Japanese Plenipotentiary Hanihara Masanao was adamant that Japan's rights to its concessions in the Guandong Leased Territory were valid for a period of 99 years, according to a treaty concerning South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia. Hanihara interpreted negotiations on the New Four-Power Consortium that had taken place during the administration of the Hara cabinet as signifying approval of Japan's special rights and interests in China by the United States, Britain, and France. Hanihara also invoked the Root principles as support for maintaining the status quo. Britain was sympathetic to Japan's position, defending Hanihara's arguments by comparing the position of the Guandong Leased Territory to Britain's own interests in Kowloon.

Chinese Plenipotentiary Wang Chonghui called for the revision or total abandonment of all treaties relating to the Twenty-One Demands. Not surprisingly, this suggestion met with strong opposition from Japan, and was also coolly received by the United States and Britain. The British delegation supported the Japanese position, insisting that any debate about the validity of existing treaties would be absurd. Hughes, the US representative, regarded the revision of the Twenty-One Demands treaties as intimately related to the Shandong Question, and postponed

any discussion on revising the treaties until a solution was found to that issue.

Consequently, it was not until the very end of the conference, on February 2, 1922, that the question of revising or cancelling the Twenty-One Demands treaties was discussed for the first time. As Japan's representative, Shidehara continued to criticize the Chinese demands, though he yielded on three clauses. These compromises opened up Southern Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia to new loans from the newly formed international consortium (with the exception of Japan's special interest area in Southern Manchuria, as stipulated in previous treaties), abandoned the insistence that Japanese nationals should enjoy priority when hiring foreign advisors and instructors in Southern Manchuria, and renounced Group Five of the Twenty-One Demands, which had previously been postponed pending later negotiations. These compromises, were no more than the measures agreed as a formal compromise by the Hara cabinet in October 1921. US representative Hughes also refused to support Wang Chonghui's proposal.¹²

Meanwhile, the journalist Ishibashi Tanzan called on Japan to renounce all its possessions in China at the Washington Conference. His view was that Japan should abandon its claims in Manchuria, grant independence to Taiwan and Korea, and enter into a coalition with China. Ishibashi founded a study group to discuss problems in the Pacific region at the Toyo Keizai Shimpō-sha, a business and economics publisher, where participants included Suzuki Umeshiro, Tagawa Daikichiro, Uehara Etsujiro, and a number of intellectuals.¹³

(3) The Formation of the Washington System and Its Consequences

It is customary in Japanese academic circles to discuss the system of international order that prevailed in the 1920s under the rubric of the Washington System. The Washington System was built on an edifice of cooperative diplomacy between Japan, the United States, and Britain. China was dealt with as a junior partner under the terms of the system, while Soviet Russia was excluded altogether. The system had its origins in the Washington Conference that ran from 1921 to 1922.

The Nine-Party Treaty agreed at the Washington Conference was put under severe strain by the Special Tariff Conference in Beijing, the Northern Expedition and the Sino-Soviet Conflict of 1929, and by China's "revolutionary diplomacy," and the Washington System itself collapsed entirely in the aftermath of the Manchurian Incident in 1931. The Five-Power Treaty that was another pillar of the system lasted little longer. Supplementary restrictions were placed on the building of auxiliary ships and other armaments at the London Naval Conference of 1930. But Japan withdrew from the agreement at the second London Naval Conference in January 1936, and did not sign a new agreement on naval arms limitations.

In December 1922, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting and Japan's Minister to China Obata Yukichi reached detailed agreements on pending issues

¹² Hattori, *op. cit.*, 89–112.

¹³ Masuda Hiroshi, *Ishibashi Tanzan* (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1995), 73–81.

regarding Japanese possessions in Shandong and the Shandong Railway. Japan agreed to return the Shandong Railway to China in exchange for 40 million yen in Chinese treasury securities. A Japanese consulate general was set up in Qingdao the same month, and the Japanese garrison in Qingdao disbanded.¹⁴

In China, however, the movement calling for restoration of full sovereignty continued to gather force. In particular, there were widespread calls for the restitution of education, land lease, and railway rights, as well as the Japanese concessions of Port Arthur and Dalian. Japan owned land-lease rights in South Manchuria based on a Southern Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia treaty signed between Japan and China in 1915. A campaign calling for the return of Port Arthur and Dalian was particularly significant. The Beijing government regarded all treaties relating to the Twenty-One Demands as having no validity, and insisted that the lease on the concessions in the Guandong Leased Territory would end in March 1923. When Japan refused to accede to Chinese demands, there were demonstrations and boycotts of Japanese goods all over China.

At this time, Japan was embarking on a new cultural approach to its relations with China. Following World War I, the number of Chinese students studying in Japan fell to just two or three thousand, as the United States became the most popular destination for Chinese studying abroad. The idea of using Chinese reparations for the Boxer Rebellion to encourage cultural activities related to China was first mooted back when Japan's Terauchi [Masatake] cabinet granted a delay on indemnity payments on the occasion of China's participation in World War I. When Chinese Foreign Minister Yan Huiqing petitioned the Japanese government via its minister to China, Obata Yukichi, for a two-year extension on reparation payments in June 1922, the Japanese government decided to put the idea into practice.

The Japanese government passed a Special Accounts Act to fund its China Cultural Affairs Project in March 1923. Following a research tour to ascertain conditions in China carried out by Okabe Nagakage, an official of the China Cultural Affairs Bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Irisawa Tatsukichi, an Imperial University of Tokyo professor hired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a decision was made to fund activities such as encouraging study in Japan, building research centers and libraries, and supporting the provision of education in China through the East Asia Common Culture Society. Funding for the project was diverted from the balance remaining on Boxer Rebellion reparations, along with the money received as compensation for the Shandong Railway on resolution of the Shandong Question. In April that year, the Beijing government dispatched Zhu Nianzu, education director of Jiangxi Province, to Japan.

Zhu Nianzu visited Japan again in December 1923 for negotiations with Debuchi Katsuji, head of the China Cultural Affairs Bureau, alongside Wang

¹⁴ Honjo Hisako ed., *Nihon no Chintao senryo to Santo no shakai keizai 1914–1922-nen* (The Japanese Occupation of Qingdao and the Social Economics of Shandong 1914–1922) (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 2006).

Rongbao, Chinese minister to Japan. The results of these negotiations were published in an official memo in February 1924. The Debuchi-Wang memorandum stated that the project would establish a library and humanities research center in Beijing, as well as a science research center in Shanghai. It also suggested building museums, medical universities, and hospitals, and called for a board of trustees consisting of an equal number of Japanese and Chinese members, to be headed by a Chinese representative. As a consequence, there was reasonable scope for Chinese interests and priorities to be reflected. In addition, the project was renamed as the "East Asian Cultural Affairs Project." Even so, the movement calling for the restoration of educational rights, centered on the Three Northeastern Provinces, continued. Within China, there was mounting criticism of the project as "cultural invasion," culminating in the resignation of Chinese participants from the project following the Jinan Incident (May Third Tragedy) in 1928.¹⁵

3. The Beijing Government's Attempts to Revise the Unequal Treaties and the First Period of Japan's Shidehara Diplomacy

(1) The May 30 Incident

When the Debuchi-Wang memorandum was signed in February 1924, Japan's prime minister was Kiyoura Keigo. A bureaucrat by training, Kiyoura was a protege of the political leader Yamagata Aritomo, and most of the important posts in his cabinet were filled by members of Kenkyukai, the majority faction in the House of Peers. The only political party included in the cabinet was the Seiyu Honto (True Seiyu Party). The Kiyoura government was criticized as anachronistic by the Kenseikai (Constitutional Association), [Rikken] Seiyukai (Friends of Constitutional Government Party), and Kakushin Kurabu (Reform Club) parties, who between them constituted the Movement to Protect Constitutional Government. The movement won a convincing victory at the polls, and the three parties formed a coalition government in June. Kato Takaaki, president of the Kenseikai, became prime minister. The new government opened diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and introduced universal male suffrage legislation. Government by political parties continued until the May 15 Incident in 1932.

Shidehara Kijuro was appointed foreign minister under the Kato cabinet. In a speech in the Diet in July 1924, Shidehara staunchly defended a policy of non-interference in China, setting out plans to build international stability according

¹⁵ Abe Hiroshi, *"Tai-Shi bunka jigyo" no kenkyu: senzenki Nit-Chu kyoiku bunka koryu no tenkai to zasetsu* (Studies on the Japanese Government's China Cultural Affairs Project: the Development and Collapse of Sino-Japanese Educational and Cultural Exchange in the Prewar Period) (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 2004); Yamane Yukio, *Toho bunka jigyo no rekishi: Showa zenki ni okeru Nit-Chu bunka koryu* (A History of the East Asian Cultural Affairs Project: Sino-Japanese Cultural Exchange in the Early Showa Era) (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 2005).

to the spirit of the Washington Conference by deepening economic relations between China and Japan and adhering to a policy of equal access to Chinese markets. In addition to his time in the Kato cabinet, Shidehara served a total of more than five years as foreign minister in cabinets led by the Kenseikai and [Rikken] Minseitō (Constitutional Democratic Party), under Prime Ministers Wakatsuki Reijiro (twice) and Hamaguchi Osachi.

Shidehara maintained a position of neutrality during internal Chinese conflicts such as the Second Zhili-Fengtian War and Guo Songling's rebellion. His policy was frequently criticized as inept and ineffectual, not only by the higher and intermediate echelons of the Japanese Army, but also by outposts of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. During the Second Zhili-Fengtian War, elements of the Japanese Army in China worked behind the scenes to bring about a coup d'état by the Chinese warlord Feng Yuxiang. After the coup, a meeting was held between Zhang Zuolin, Feng Yuxiang, and Duan Qirui, following which Duan took power as interim leader. During Guo Songling's rebellion, the Guandong Army unilaterally announced a military-free zone within 30 kilometers of property belonging to the South Manchuria Railway Company. The Guandong Army was aware that Fu Yuxiang, under Soviet influence, and the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) had plans to get close to Guo Songling and convert the Three Northeastern Provinces to Communism. When Feng Yuxiang was forced into exile in the Soviet Union, Zhang Zuolin increased his influence in the Guannei region [south of the Great Wall] and for a time even ruled Beijing as Grand Marshal of a military government.

Around this time, textile factories were being built in China with capital from the Japanese cotton industry. At first most of these *zaikabo*, as they were known, were located in Shanghai, but after World War I factories were built in cities like Qingdao and Tianjin as well. Japanese exports of cotton to China peaked in 1914 and then started to decline. With the Japanese textile industry losing competitiveness because of increasing wages, the only way to control the Chinese cotton market was to expand into China and run the business from there.¹⁶ But in early February 1925, strikes broke out at several major Japanese textile concerns in Shanghai, including Naigai Cotton Company, Dai Nippon Spinners, and Nikka Boseki (textile). The dispute spread to Japanese-run textile factories in Qingdao, and in April around 2,500 workers at Dai Nippon Spinners joined the strike, demanding wage increases and improved working conditions. In response, Japan called on the Beijing

¹⁶ Takamura Naosuke, *Kindai Nihon mengyo to Chugoku* (The Modern Japanese Cotton Industry and China) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1982), 107–132. According to statistics on trade between Japan and China published in May 1931 by the trade department of the Japanese Ministry of Commerce and Industry (pp. 11–13), the figures for Japanese trade with China fluctuated as follows (figures in Japanese yen): 90,037,354 (1910), 88,152,792 (1911), 114,823,727 (1912), 154,660,428 (1913), 162,370,924 (1914), 141,125,586 (1915), 192,712,626 (1916), 318,380,530 (1917), 359,150,818 (1918), 447,049,267 (1919), 410,270,497 (1920), 287,227,081 (1921), 333,520,262 (1922), 272,190,662 (1923), 348,398,787 (1924), 468,438,956 (1925), 421,861,235 (1926), 334,183,608 (1927), 373,141,991 (1928), 346,652,450 (1929).

government's Foreign Minister Shen Ruilin to intervene.

By this time, the Beijing government had signed equal treaties with Germany and the Soviet Union, and had even succeeded in getting reparations from Germany, a first in the history of Chinese diplomacy. China was looking for diplomatic opportunities to revise the unequal treaties it had signed with the powers. These efforts focused on getting the treaties amended or abolished when they expired; more broadly speaking, treaty revision diplomacy refers to the diplomatic attempts to change the treaties undertaken by the Beijing government since 1912.

On May 30, 1925, the largely British police force in the Shanghai foreign concessions opened fire on a demonstration, causing numerous injuries and fatalities. The events set off major strikes and demonstrations in major cities across China from early June. From June 1, Chinese Foreign Minister Shen Ruilin held three meetings with ministers and other diplomatic representatives from Japan, the United States, Britain, France, Italy, and the Netherlands, demanding that the foreign police release the arrested students from custody and work to prevent such an event from happening again. On June 24, the ministry of foreign affairs in Beijing said it regarded the unequal treaties and the damage they had done to China's amicable relations with the great powers as one of the causes of the May 30 Incident, claiming that China found itself in a worse position even than the nations defeated in World War I, and proposing consular jurisdiction and improvement in the foreign concessions. Because of this, the May 30 Incident became tied up with the question of amending the unequal treaties.

Public opinion in China was especially critical of Britain, which had led the crackdown. But Japanese Foreign Minister Shidehara, who made cooperation between Japan, Britain, and the United States the keynote of his foreign policy, insisted that it was more important to find a resolution to the May 30 Incident itself, by dealing with the individual police officers responsible and extending assistance to the victims. Shidehara saw no need to discuss revision of the unequal treaties, which he believed had no direct connection to the event. Negotiations aimed at resolving the strikes got underway between the Chinese foreign ministry and Yada Shichitaro, Japan's consul general in Shanghai. A compromise was reached after Japan agreed to allow labor unions based on the Labor Law, to pay workers' wages for the period of the strike, to increase wages, and to refrain from firing workers unnecessarily.

(2) The Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff

The Chinese Customs Treaty signed at the Washington Conference in February 1922 determined that the tariff rate would be revised immediately to 5%, and decreed that a special conference should be held within three months of the treaty's coming into effect to abolish the *likin* tax, a transit toll levied by local regional governments, and envisioned an increase of 2.5% to be ratified at the tariff conference in Beijing. The overall import of this was to approve a total of 7.5% in surtaxes. The Chinese customs rate was duly increased to 5%, but a delay on the part of France in ratifying the treaty meant that no customs conference was held for several years. When

French ratification finally came in August 1925, Beijing invited the countries concerned to attend a conference to be held that October. With only a tenuous grip on power, the Beijing government worked to make the conference a success, hopeful that this would help it to secure its public finances and improve its legitimacy.

The Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff opened in Beijing on October 26, 1925. On the Chinese side, the plenipotentiaries were Shen Ruilin, Yan Huiqing, Wang Zhengting, Huang Fu, and Cai Tinggan. The Japanese delegation was led by Hioki Eki, with Yoshizawa Kenkichi as his deputy, along with Saburi Sadao, Shigemitsu Mamoru, Horiuchi Tateki, and Hidaka Shinrokuro also in attendance. The conference began with a formal opening address by Chinese Foreign Minister Shen Ruilin and a welcome greeting by Duan Qirui, provisional chief executive of the republic. Plenipotentiary Wang Zhengting called for tariff autonomy to revert to China, and proposed a graduated tariff of between 5% and 30% as an interim measure. In response, Plenipotentiary Hioki made a speech in which he said that Japan would in principle be willing to grant China customs autonomy. Once this was agreed, attention focused on the interim rates that would apply until control over customs tariffs reverted to China.

A compromise proposed by Japan, the United States, and Britain allowed for a graduated tariff of between 2.5% and 22.5%. Once this was approved in March 1926, attention turned to a discussion of whether the increased revenue accruing from these higher tariff rates should be used to settle China's outstanding debts. When Britain gave its unconditional approval for a 2.5% surtax, it seemed likely that agreement on the surtax would be passed with questions over the allocation of the extra revenue still undecided. But Shidehara viewed debt consolidation as a priority, and refused to approve the surtax proposal without resolution on the other pending issues. As a result, the conference was adjourned indefinitely in July without having achieved any concrete results. When it came to international order, Shidehara's concepts generally remained within the framework of agreements and resolutions reached at the Washington Conference.¹⁷

Partly because of this failure of the conference to achieve any real results, the Beijing government's foreign policy efforts have generally not been very highly regarded. China's attempts to revise the treaties were not entirely without their successes, however. In November 1926 China's Acting Premier and Foreign Minister V. K. Wellington Koo (Gu Weijun) introduced a provisional *modus vivendi* with Belgium that forced the lapse of the Sino-Belgian Treaty of Peace, Commerce, and Navigation. In addition, by the early 1920s the Beijing government had successfully regained control of concessions in Tianjin formerly controlled by Germany, Austria, and the Soviet Union. In 1927 the Beijing government persuaded Belgium to relinquish claims on its Tianjin concession during negotiations over a new treaty.

¹⁷ Akira Iriye, *After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921–1931* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 57–88; Usui Katsumi, *Nihon to Chugoku: Taisho jidai* (Japan and China in the Taisho Era), 196–254.

Following this, the only countries still holding concessions in Tianjin were Japan, Britain, France, and Italy.¹⁸

(3) The Northern Expedition and the Nanjing Incident (1927)

Meanwhile, the first national assembly of delegates from the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) was held in Guangzhou in January 1924. Three major policies were decided: alignment with the Soviet Union, an alliance with the Communist Party, and support for workers and peasants. This marked the beginning of the first national united front between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party.¹⁹ At the Nationalist government of Guangzhou, Chiang Kai-shek was appointed commander-in-chief of the National Revolutionary Army in June 1926. The NRA undertook military operations in the north of the country as part of its struggle to bring about Chinese reunification. As the Northern Expedition unfolded, the Nationalist government was relocated to Wuhan in January 1927. In March the same year, the NRA occupied Shanghai and Nanjing. In Japan, Prime Minister Kato [Takaaki] died in January 1926, and fellow Kenseikai member Wakatsuki Reijiro formed a new cabinet. Shidehara [Kijuro] was reappointed as foreign minister, and Wakatsuki, who had previously been a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Finance, entrusted Shidehara with responsibility for foreign policy decisions.

When Nanjing was occupied by the National Revolutionary Army on March 24, 1927, the British and United States consulates and numbers of foreign residents came under attack. American-founded Jinling University also suffered damage. In retaliation, Britain and the United States bombarded the city from warships. Japan, however, did not retaliate, partly in response to requests from Japanese residents. As foreign minister in the Wakatsuki cabinet, Shidehara was opposed to the idea of imposing sanctions in response to the incident. Indeed, Shidehara was rather impressed by Chiang Kai-shek and chose to negotiate with him, for which Shidehara was criticized in Japan for his “weak diplomacy.”

On March 25, the day after the Nanjing Incident, Commander Yang Jie of the 17th Division of the 6th Corps of China’s National Revolutionary Army visited Morioka Shohei, the Japanese consul in Nanjing. Yang expressed regret for the Nanjing Incident, and said that the looting and damage had been carried out by rogue elements in the army at the instigation of Communist Party members in Nanjing, adding that the Chinese government would crack down on those responsible and establish a Foreign Ministry to negotiate on reparations. By blaming

¹⁸ Hattori, *op. cit.*, 156–169.

¹⁹ Recent studies on the activities of Sun Yat-sen around this time include Tajima Nobuo, “Sonbun no ‘Chu-Doku-So Sangoku Rengo’ koso to Nihon 1917–1924-nen: ‘ren-So’ rosen oyobi ‘dai Ajia shugi’ saiko,” (Japan and the Concept of Sun Yat-sen’s Three-Nation Alliance between China, Germany, and Russia, 1917–1924: A Reconsideration of Alignment with the Soviet Union Policy and the Idea of Pan-Asianism) in Hattori Ryuji, Tsuchida Akio, and Goto Harumi, eds., *Senkanki no Higashi Ajia kokusai seiji*, (International Politics in East Asia During the Inter-war Period) (Tokyo: Chuo University Press, 2007), 3–52.

the Communists for the Nanjing Incident, Yang indirectly influenced Shidehara's views of China, via the Morioka telegram. Chiang Kai-shek was another who started to insinuate to the Japanese, via Huang Fu as his intermediary, that the Communists were responsible for the incident.

Shidehara instructed Yada [Shichitaro], the Japanese consul general in Shanghai, to have Chiang Kai-shek and his allies "express their deep sense of regret and encourage their resolve." Shidehara was implicitly demanding Chiang Kai-shek to deal severely with extremist left-wing elements. Shidehara believed he could use "central figures like Chiang Kai-shek" to resolve the situation and help restore law and order in China while using peaceful, diplomatic methods. At root, Shidehara's policy was driven by the idea that the national interest was best served by prioritizing economic profits. On April 12, Chiang Kai-shek organized an anti-Communist purge in Shanghai.

Besides his readiness to do business with Chiang Kai-shek, another characteristic of Shidehara's foreign policy was that he tended to march in step with Britain and the United States. During the Nanjing Incident, Japan was part of a joint declaration issued by Britain, the United States, France, and Italy. After this, however, it became increasingly difficult for the various powers to agree on a common policy. Britain in particular was adamant that a further warning should be issued to China, but the United States opposed this idea. As a result, each power reverted to carrying out its China policies independently.²⁰

The Hankou Incident broke out on April 3 the same year. According to documents kept by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the event was sparked when two members of the Japanese Navy were set upon by an angry crowd in the Japanese concession in Hankou. Japan was able to defend the concession by landing a marine ground unit, but public criticism of Shidehara's "weak diplomacy" continued to mount. Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek established a Nationalist government in Nanjing following his anti-Communist coup. The Wuhan Nationalist government led by Wang Zhaoming joined the Nanjing government in September.²¹

²⁰ Hattori Ryuji, *Shidehara Kijuro to nijusseiki no Nihon: gaiko to minshushugi* (Shidehara Kijuro and twentieth-century Japan: Diplomacy and Democracy) (Tokyo: Yuhikaku Publishing, 2006), 110–112. Not all scholars agree that Communists were really responsible for the Nanjing Incident, and some believe that the events were part of a plot by elements of the northern forces. On this subject, see Tochigi Toshio and Banno Ryokichi, *Chugoku kokumin kakumei: senkanki Higashi Ajia no chikaku hendo*, (The Chinese Nationalist Revolution: Tectonic Shifts in Interwar East Asia) (Tokyo: Hosei University Press, 1997), 259–262.

²¹ Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers), Showa Period 1, Part 1, Vol. 1 (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1989), 660–666; Iechika Ryoko, *Sho Kaiseki to Nankin kokumin seifu: Chugoku Kokuminto no kenryoku shinto ni kansuru bunseki* (Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Government in Nanjing: An Analysis of the Chinese Nationalist Party's Infiltration of Power) (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2002), 55–136.

4. The Chinese Nationalist Government's "Revolutionary Diplomacy," Tanaka Diplomacy and the Second Shidehara Diplomacy

(1) Japan's First Expedition to Shandong, the Far Eastern Conference, and the Yamamoto-Zhang Railway Agreement

The Wakatsuki [Reijiro] cabinet resigned en masse on April 20, 1927, and a new cabinet took office under Seiyukai leader Tanaka Giichi. The financial depression was the main reason for the change of government, but Seiyukai dissatisfaction with Shidehara's foreign policy was also a factor. With the Northern Expedition starting to move from Central China into North China, the Tanaka cabinet decided in late May to dispatch troops to Shandong to defend Japanese subjects living there, and a brigade of the Japanese Army was duly sent into Shandong Province. The National Revolutionary Army withdrew from Shandong, and when Chiang Kai-shek stepped down from command in August as part of a compromise between the Wuhan and Nanjing governments, the first Northern Expedition came to temporary end. Chiang Kai-shek came to Japan and visited Tanaka at his private residence in November, but the differences between the two men proved unbridgeable.²²

Meanwhile, from late June to early July 1927, the Tanaka cabinet called together a number of figures for a major meeting known as the *Toho kaigi*, or Far Eastern Conference. Those in attendance included Yoshizawa Kenkichi, Japan's minister to China, and Muto Nobuyoshi, commander of the Guandong Army. At the meeting, Tanaka described in outline his overarching China policy. For Tanaka, the ideal outcome was for Chiang Kai-shek and Zhang Zuolin, both of whom had strong anti-Communist tendencies, to govern between them a China divided into northern and southern jurisdictions. His plans for Chinese stability therefore included encouraging Zhang Zuolin to return to govern the Three Northeastern Provinces as a regional power, even while his government gave public support for Chinese unification under Chiang Kai-shek.

But Tanaka's framework design did not represent a distillation of the policies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japanese Army. His China policy framework, supposedly the main result of the conference, contained a contradictory assortment of claims and pronouncements. Its preamble, for example, claimed that, "Given Japan's special position in East Asia, it is inevitable that our interests in the Chinese mainland will differ from our interests in Manchuria and Mongolia." Clause 6 of the same document, however, claimed that "uniformly throughout Manchuria and Mongolia, and in both northern and southern China, we will encourage the

²² Sato Motoei, *Showa shoki tai-Chugoku seisaku no kenkyu: Tanaka naikaku no tai-Man-Mo seisaku* (Research on Japan's China Policy in the Early Years of the Showa Era: The Policy of the Tanaka Cabinet on Manchuria and Mongolia) (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1992), 23–76; Kobayashi Michihiko, "Tanaka Seiyukai to Santo shuppei: 1927–1928 (1) (2)" (Tanaka and the Seiyukai and the Shandong Expedition), in *Kita Kyushu shiritsu daigaku hosei ronshu* Vol. 32, Nos. 2 and 3, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2004–2005), 1–33, 1–52.

economic activities of all parties based on the principles of the Open Door policy and equality of opportunity.” The framework contained considerable contradictions.²³

Also relevant in the context of the Far Eastern Conference is an anonymous document known as the Tanaka Memorial, supposedly presented by Prime Minister Tanaka to the Emperor Showa (Hirohito). It contained plans for an invasion of China, based on the Far Eastern Conference. In fact, however, the contents of the Tanaka Memorial were quite different from what was actually discussed at the conference.²⁴

Japan’s railways in Manchuria were an important policy priority for the Tanaka cabinet. In October the same year, Japan signed agreements to construct five railways with Zhang Zuolin, through Yamamoto Jotaro, president of the South Manchuria Railway Company. Collectively, these are known as the Yamamoto-Zhang railways agreement. Japan’s close relationship with Zhang Zuolin was one of the central pillars of the Tanaka cabinet’s foreign policy. The Tanaka government negotiated on the details of the agreement, which had at its center contracts to construct railways from Dunhua to Laotougou to Tumen, Changchun to Dalai, Jilin to Wuchang, Taonan to Suolun, and Yanji to Hailin. In May 1928 contracts to build all but the line from Jilin to Wuchang were signed.

(2) The Jinan Incident and the Assassination of Zhang Zuolin

When Chiang Kai-shek restarted the Northern Expedition in April 1928, the Tanaka cabinet decided to send Japanese troops into Shandong for a second time. The troops dispatched to protect Japanese residents in Jinan included a division of Japan’s China garrison temporarily assigned to Jinan and the Sixth Division. Japanese forces and the National Revolutionary Army clashed on May 3 in Jinan. Fujita Eisuke, the Japanese consul general in Qingdao reported what happened: “Around 10 AM on the third, there were reports that Chinese soldiers were looting the houses of Japanese

²³ Sato, *op. cit.*, 77–164.

²⁴ Acting Charge d’Affairs Shigemitsu Mamoru and others gave assurances to the Kuomintang government’s Foreign Ministry that the Tanaka Memorial was fundamentally false, and until the Manchurian Incident China continued to respond to some extent to Japanese calls for security crackdowns. For this reason, it seems likely that the Chinese Foreign Ministry knew the Tanaka Memorial was a fabrication. On the historical evidence for this, see Hattori Ryuji, “‘Tanaka josobun’ to Nit-Chu kankei” (The “Tanaka Memorial” and Sino-Japanese Relations) in Institute of Cultural Science, Chuo University, ed., *Minkoku koki Chugoku Kokuminto seiken no kenkyu* (Studies on the Chinese Nationalist Administration in the Latter Years of the Republic of China) (Tokyo: Chuo University Press, 2005), 455–493, and Hattori Ryuji, “‘Tanaka josobun’ o meguru ronso: jitsuzon setsu to gizo setsu no aida” (The Debate Surrounding the “Tanaka Memorial”: Real or Fake?) in Liu Jie, Mitani Hiroshi, Yang Daqing, eds. *Kokkyo o koeru rekishi ninshiki: Nit-Chu taiwa no kokoromi* (Cross-Border Historical Recognition: An Attempt at Sino-Japanese Dialogue) (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 2006) 84–110, and Hattori Ryuji, “Manshu Jihen-go no Nit-Chu senden gaiko to Amerika: Tanaka josobun o chushin to shite” (Sino-Japanese Propaganda Diplomacy and the United States Following the Manchurian Incident: Focusing on the “Tanaka Memorial”), in Hattori Ryuji, Tsuchida Akio, Goto Harumi, eds., *Senkanki no Higashi Ajia kokusai seiji*, (International Politics in East Asia During the Inter-war Period), 199–275.

subjects. Four members of our armed forces were dispatched to rescue our nationals. They came under fire, and sustained injuries. Our troops therefore had no option but to return fire.”²⁵ However, this is one of many cases in which the accounts in Japanese and Chinese sources are irreconcilable.

Confronted with this incident, the Tanaka cabinet took a decision to send troops to Shandong a third time. Precise figures are hard to come by, but the Jinan Incident certainly caused more fatalities on the Chinese than the Japanese side. Around this time, Japanese intellectual Yoshino Sakuzo wrote: “For Japan to be fighting China like this is an absolute scandal for our country.”²⁶ Negotiations between the two countries on how to deal with the aftermath of the incident did not go smoothly.

Nevertheless, the Japanese minister in China, Yoshizawa [Kenkichi], and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting finally signed a document resolving the Jinan Incident in March 1929, following a series of negotiations. Head of the Second Bureau of the Army General Staff Office Matsui Iwane carried out talks with Zhang Qun in Jinan; Japan’s Shanghai Consul General Yada Shichitaro negotiated with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting in Nanjing; Yoshizawa and Wang negotiated in Shanghai; and the new Japanese Shanghai Consul General Shigemitsu Mamoru held talks with Zhou Longguang of the Chinese foreign ministry. A joint statement was issued that promised: “We resolve to forget the unpleasant memories associated with these events, and hope that diplomatic relations between our two countries will continue to grow closer in the future.” Restitutions were made to both sides based on the findings of a joint investigation committee, China’s Nationalist government guaranteed the safety of Japanese subjects within its territory, and Japan promised to withdraw its troops from Shandong within two months, thus resolving the issue.²⁷

In May 1928, following a cabinet decision to get more actively involved in building order in the Three Northeastern Provinces, Japan’s Prime Minister Tanaka issued instructions to Minister Yoshizawa regarding the conduct of Japanese forces in the event of a retreat by the Fengtian Army. The orders were that if the Fengtian Army withdrew promptly to the Three Northeastern Provinces, Japanese troops should prevent the Nationalist Revolutionary Army from pursuing them further. If the Fengtian Army continued to return fire while retreating, however, then the Japanese should demand disarmament of both sides. Tanaka planned for the prompt withdrawal of the Fengtian Army, and envisaged disarmament only as a last resort.

²⁵ Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers), Showa Period 1, Part 1, Vol. 2, (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1990), 344. Chinese studies of relations between Japan and China during the period of the Northern Expedition include Shao Jianguo, *Beifa zhanzheng shiqi de zhongri guanxi yanjiu* (Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House, 2006).

²⁶ Yoshino Sakuzo, *Yoshino Sakuzo senshu* (A Selected Anthology of Writings by Yoshino Sakuzo), Vol. 9 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), 345.

²⁷ Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers), Showa Period 1, Part 1, Vol. 3, (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993), 501–507.

Despite criticizing the Tanaka cabinet's plans as interference in its internal affairs, the Chinese Nationalist government nevertheless informed Japanese representatives of its intention not to give pursuit in the event of a Fengtian Army retreat, and to make Yan Xishan responsible for order in the Beijing-Tianjin area. Zhang Zuolin also informed Japan's special advisor Machino Takema of his intention to leave for Mukden. So although Tanaka's strategy outwardly came in for substantial criticism, in effect it seemed to be accepted by the most influential powers in both the north and south of China.

The harshest criticisms of Tanaka's approach came from within the Japanese Army. Army Minister Shirakawa Yoshinori had shifted from a position of support for Zhang Zuolin to arguing that the warlord should be removed from power. Araki Sadao, First Bureau Chief of the General Staff, argued passionately that troops should be sent beyond property belonging to the South Manchuria Railway Company to disarm the Fengtian Army. Prominent and powerful figures in the army were moving closer to the position of the Guandong Army, led by General Muraoka Chotaro.

The event that buried Tanaka's policy once and for all was the assassination of Zhang Zuolin on June 4. Zhang was on his way from Beijing to Mukden when the carriage in which he was traveling was blown up by high-ranking officers of the Guandong Army led by Colonel Komoto Daisaku. The assassination of Zhang (also referred to at the time as "a certain important event in Manchuria") deprived the Tanaka cabinet of a central pillar of the government's Manchuria policy. After his death, his son Zhang Xueliang assumed the position of de facto ruler of Manchuria.

In December, the Zhang Xueliang administration merged with the Nationalist government in Nanjing, bringing about the reunification of China. In Chinese history, this event is referred to as the "Northeast Flag Replacement." With Zhang's decision to hand diplomatic responsibility for Manchurian issues to the Nationalist government, the Manchurian railway policy that the Tanaka cabinet had prioritized ground to a halt.

(3) The Nationalist Government's "Revolutionary Diplomacy"

In southern China, the Nationalist government had been actively pursuing its own diplomatic strategy even before it was recognized formally as the official government. Its approach, which consisted of a strategy for regaining national sovereignty that refused to rule out the use of force, was often referred to as "revolutionary diplomacy." The classic example is surely its regaining of British concessions in Hankou and Jiujiang in January 1927. The idea of revolutionary diplomacy was first espoused by Chen Youren, who served as acting head of diplomacy in the Guangdong Nationalist government and later as head of diplomacy in the Wuhan Nationalist government. In 1928, head of diplomacy in the Nanjing Nationalist government Huang Fu and Wang Zhenting succeeded in getting recognition from the Western powers for Chinese customs autonomy.

Recognition of Chinese autonomy over its tariffs was the major diplomatic

success of the early days of the Nationalist government. The government was also starting to achieve results on a range of trade issues, including revision of treaties of commerce, the introduction of temporary graduated tariffs and an additional tax on exports by foreign-owned companies, and the abolition of preferential border tariffs between provinces. However, not all the diplomatic successes of the time can be credited to the political leadership of Huang Fu and Wang Zhenting alone. Much of the groundwork had already been done by the Beijing government's earlier diplomatic efforts to revise the unequal treaties toward the end of its time in office, and the United States and other countries were relatively open toward the Chinese position. The Nationalist government continued the previous government's diplomatic strategy on economy and trade in most of its essentials. These Chinese policies required a response from Japan. The Tanaka cabinet had delayed granting recognition for Chinese tariff autonomy, and planned to go along with Britain in its response to a graduated tariffs and the additional tax on exports by foreign-owned companies. Things did not go according to plan.

The Tanaka cabinet managed to prevent the takeover of the Hanyeping Company and the Nanxun Railway by the Nationalist government, but had been forced onto the defensive, and negotiations on the Manchurian and Mongolian railways failed to make progress. This was because Zhang Xueliang had handed responsibility for diplomatic negotiations on all issues relating to Manchuria to the Nationalist government.²⁸ In later years Wang Zhengting remarked that "the American government and particularly the American people have always shown their great friendship for China," and recalled that he "found in Sir Miles Lampson, the British minister, a man of keen intelligence, versatile and sympathetic to the aspiration of China for a full equality." With Japan, though, things were different. "The country I had to handle with gloved hands was Japan. . . . I took particular care in handling Japan."²⁹

Increasingly, Tanaka's diplomacy found itself at an impasse in its dealings with China. The table below outlines the Tanaka cabinet's responses to China's "revolutionary diplomacy" in the 1928–29 period. In Japan, the opposition Minseito

²⁸ Kubo Toru, *Senkanki Chugoku, jiritsu e no mosaku: kanzei tsuka seisaku to keizai hatten* (China's Quest for Sovereignty in the Interwar Period: Tariff Policy and Economic Development) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1999), 23–49; Hattori Ryuji, *Higashi Ajia kokusai kankyo no hendo to Nihon gaiko 1918–1931* (Changes in the East Asian Diplomatic Environment and Japanese Diplomacy 1918–1931), 218–226; Koike Seiichi *Manshu Jihen to tai-Chugoku seisaku* (The Manchurian Incident and Japan's China Policy) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2003), 115–127; Goto Harumi, *Shanghai o meguru Nichi-Ei kankei 1925–1932 nen: Nichi-Ei Domei go no kyocho to taiko* (Partners or Competitors: Anglo-Japanese Relations in Shanghai, 1925–1932) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2006), 98–99, 154. On the subject of "revolutionary diplomacy," see Li Enhan's *Beifa qianhou de geming waijiao 1925–1931* (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1993).

²⁹ Chengting T. Wang (Wang Zhengting), *Looking Back and Looking Forward* (ed. Hattori Ryuji) (Tokyo: Chuo University Press, 2008), 131–132.

party was increasingly critical of Tanaka’s foreign policy. When he discovered the truth about the assassination of Zhang Zuolin, Tanaka promised the Emperor Showa that harsh measures would be taken, but increasing pressure from the army meant that ultimately only administrative punishments were given to those responsible. Komoto Daisaku was suspended and General Muraoka Chotaro of the Guandong Army was moved onto the reserve list. When the emperor reprimanded Tanaka for his change of policy, Tanaka and his cabinet resigned in July 1929. A new cabinet was formed under Hamaguchi Osachi of the Minseito; Shidehara [Kijuro] was reappointed as foreign minister.

The “Revolutionary Diplomacy” of the Chinese Nationalist government and the responses of Japan’s Tanaka Cabinet (1928–29)

China’s Revolutionary Diplomacy Aims	Details	Response of Japan’s Tanaka Cabinet
Revision of unequal treaties	Autonomy over customs tariffs	Postpones until next cabinet
Trade policies	Signing of new commerce treaties	Consents to enter negotiations
	Introduction of graduated tariffs	Agrees to introduction of graduated tariff, tries unsuccessfully to have the ensuing income applied to China’s foreign debt
	Additional tax on exports by foreign-owned companies	Tries unsuccessfully to block the tax
	Abolition of preferential provincial border taxes	Protests, and postpones implementation
Takeover of important industrial assets	Control of Hanyeping Company	Protests, and succeeds in having the plan shelved
	Nationalization of Nanxun Railway	Secures continuance of debt securities

Source: Hattori Ryuji, *Higashi Ajia kokusai kankyo no hendo to Nihon gaiko 1918–1931* (Changes in the East Asian Diplomatic Environment and Japanese Diplomacy 1918–1931) (Tokyo: Yuhikaku Publishing, 2001), 222.

(4) The Sino-Soviet Conflict and Economic Relations

Conflict broke out between China and the Soviet Union in the second half of 1929. The conflict was sparked by China’s attempts to gain control over the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria. Because initially the lead player on the Chinese side was Zhang Xueliang and his local administration, the conflict is also known as the Fengtian-Soviet conflict. In Japan, Shidehara was reappointed foreign minister in the

Hamaguchi cabinet, a post he continued to hold in the second Wakatsuki cabinet that followed. Shidehara held talks separately with Chinese Minister Wang Rongbao and Soviet Ambassador Aleksandr A. Troianovskii, making strenuous efforts to bring about direct negotiations between the two countries.

Shidehara believed that the Chinese ought to accede to Soviet demands, so long as these were limited to a call for a return to the status quo ante. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson was attempting to put together a committee made up of countries including Japan, the United States, Britain, and France that had ratified an agreement renouncing wars of aggression. But Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting did not regard Stimson's efforts as valid. Ultimately, Zhang Xueliang showed readiness to consent to almost all of the Soviet demands, which included a restoration of the status quo ante and the immediate release of those in custody. Accordingly, Sino-Soviet negotiations held in Khabarovsk quickly reached a resolution. The Northeastern authority ratified a protocol with the Soviet government in December returning control of the Chinese Eastern Railway to the status quo ante, with a similar agreement also signed between the Chinese Nationalist government and the Soviet Union.³⁰ With this, the Fengtian-Soviet conflict was finally brought to an end.

In November the same year, Saburi Sadao, the Japanese minister to China, died in suspicious circumstances in a Hakone hotel. Japan appointed Obata Yukichi as his successor. But China made difficulties about granting *agreement* for his appointment. This is the consent given by the host country prior to the official appointment of an ambassador or minister. The Nationalist government's reason for not granting *agreement* was that Obata had been first secretary in the Japanese legation at the time of the Twenty-One Demands. Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting proposed that the status of Japanese mission to China be promoted from legation to embassy in return for China's approval of Obata's appointment. But Obata had already served as minister to China from 1918 to 1923, after the Twenty-One Demands, and had subsequently served as ambassador to Turkey and in other positions. Foreign Minister Shidehara turned down the Chinese conditions as unreasonable. Ultimately, China refused to agree to Obata's appointment.

A major priority for the Hamaguchi cabinet was to overcome the economic recession, and Japan duly lifted its gold embargo under Finance Minister Inoue Junnosuke. Economic expansion into China was also an important issue. From January 1930, Shidehara put Acting Charge d'Affairs Shigemitsu Mamoru in charge

³⁰ Tsuchida Akio, "1929 nen no Chu-So funso to 'chiho gaiko'" (The Sino-Soviet Conflict of 1929 and "Regional Diplomacy"), in *Tokyo gakugei daigaku kiyo dai-3 bumon shakai kagaku*, Vol. 48 (1996), 173–207; Tsuchida Akio, "1929 nen no Chu-So funso to Nihon" (The Sino-Soviet Conflict of 1929 and Japan), in *Chuo daigaku ronshu (Annals of Chuo University)*, No. 22 (2001), 17–27; Hattori Ryuji, Lei Ming, trans., Mi Qingyu, ed., "Zhongguo geming wajiao de cuozhe: zhongdong tielu shijian yu guoji zhengzhi (1929)", in Mi Qingyu, Song Zhiyong, Zang Peihong, eds, *Guoji guanxi yu Dong-Ya anquan* (Tianjin: Tianjin Renmin Chubanshe, 2001), 294–308.

of negotiations on Chinese customs autonomy. Particularly active on the Chinese side in terms of pursuing a Sino-Japanese Tariff Agreement was Finance Minister Soong Tse-ven (also known as Soong Tzu-wen, T.V. Soong, and Song Ziwen), who was aiming to establish China's public finances on a stable footing. Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting was more interested in abolishing extraterritoriality. Shigemitsu pushed ahead with negotiations on customs tariff autonomy with Soong Tse-ven, and the Sino-Japanese Tariff Agreement was signed in May. Under the terms of this agreement, Japan recognized China's right to autonomy over customs tariff rates; the exchange of notes that accompanied the agreement specified a freeze at present rates for three years on cotton and marine products, and decreed that preferential provincial border taxes would be abolished within four months of the agreement's coming into effect.

Other issues central to Sino-Japanese relations included the question of extraterritoriality and how to deal with China's foreign debt. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Zhengting had demanded an immediate repeal of extraterritoriality, a demand to which the powers had not yet agreed on a response. Another major concern was the question of how to make China pay back its foreign debts. Japan had a number of debts of uncertain status outstanding with China, among them the Nishihara Loans, and had been negotiating with China on this issue for some time. Within the Nationalist government, Soong Tse-ven argued for the importance of restoring international trust and reviving foreign investment in China. Wang Zhengting, on the other hand, publically announced that China would refuse to repay the Nishihara Loans. In China, the Nishihara Loans were notorious for having been used in civil wars between rival warlords. Shigemitsu therefore tried to work with people like Soong Tse-ven and Chiang Kai-shek. But when the Manchurian Incident occurred in September 1931, negotiations on China's foreign debt ground to a halt.³¹

(5) Japanese Communities in China

Finally, I will discuss Japanese communities in China. According to records kept by the Asian Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there were a total of 903,311 Japanese subjects in China at the end of 1930. This total includes people listed under three categories: subjects from Japan (the so-called "mainland"), Korea, and Taiwan. Of the total figure of 903,311, mainland Japanese made up 283,870, Koreans 609,712, and Taiwanese 9,729. The distribution of mainland Japanese was as follows: 116,052 in the Guandong Leased Territory; 112,732 in Manchuria; and 53,212 in "China proper," 1,868 in Hong Kong, and 6 in Macao. In other words, approximately 230,000 out of a total of roughly 280,000 Japanese were living in

³¹ Edmund S. K. Fung, *The Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat: Britain's South China Policy 1924-1931* (Hong Kong, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 184-189; Kubo, op. cit., 51-71; Hattori Ryuji, *Higashi Ajia kokusai kankyo no hendo to Nihon gaiko 1918-1931*, 263-278; Koike, op. cit., 127-218.

Guandong and Manchuria.

Of the 53,212 mainland Japanese living in “China proper,” nearly half (24,182) were in Shanghai. Of these, 18,607 lived in the International Settlement, 392 in the French concession, and 5,183 in “native quarters” nearby. Outside Shanghai, there were 11,211 Japanese in Qingdao, 5,760 in Tianjin, 2,137 in Hankou, 2,048 in Jinan, and 1,208 in Beiping. Of the 609,712 Koreans, as many as 605,325 lived in Manchuria. The Chinese population of Guandong, meanwhile, is thought to have been 820,534.³²

Nearly 90% of Japanese residents in Manchuria were concentrated in the Guandong Leased Territory and in areas belonging to the South Manchuria Railway Company. Nearly half of all the Japanese in Manchuria were employees of the railway or officials in the Guandong Bureau and their families. The rest was made up of people working in the local offices of Japanese companies, people involved in trade and commerce, and people working for commercial and service companies catering to the local Japanese population. Life in the Japanese communities tended to center on railway company employees and bureaucrats in the Guandong Bureau, with a network of trade and industry existing around them and catering to the needs of the Japanese community. In the 1920s, economic activity by Japanese in Manchuria declined following a restructuring in the South Manchuria Railway Company. The tendency for Japanese to congregate in the Guandong Leased Territory and areas belonging to the railway company became more pronounced. There were also clashes between Zhang Xueliang and Japan over the Chinese government’s plan for a rail network that would encompass the Manchurian railways and over land lease rights.³³

In Shanghai, where foreign interests were concentrated, there were some 24,000 Japanese at the beginning of the 1930s, many of them living in the northern part of the International Settlement. The Japanese in Shanghai were classed into two broad categories: the “settlers” who had moved in search of a better life, many of them from western regions of Japan, and the “company employees” seconded to work in the local offices of commercial companies, banks, and textile companies. Consequently, the Japanese community in Shanghai was a stratified society just like the local British community. As boycotts of Japanese goods spread following the Wanpaoshan Incident of July 1931, Japanese residents in Shanghai looked for assistance not from the Japanese consulate general but from the Navy. There were communication problems between the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the

³² Asian Bureau of the Japanese Ministry for Foreign Affairs, “Shina zairyu honpojin oyobi gaikokujin jinko tokeihyo” (Population Statistics on Japanese and Foreigners Resident in China), No. 23, as of end of December 1930, reprinted as *Senzenki Chugoku zairyu Nihonjin tokei* (Statistics on Japanese in China in the Prewar Period), Vol. 4 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 2004), 1, 96, 106, 108, 110–111, 119–120.

³³ Tsukase Susumu, *Manshu no Nihonjin* (The Japanese in Manchuria) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2004), 46–51, 120–121, 161–170.

Japanese Navy.³⁴

In Tianjin there had been a Japanese concession since 1898, the largest exclusively Japanese concession in China. In terms of numbers of resident Japanese, it came fourth, after Manchuria, Shanghai, and Qingdao. Like Shanghai, Hankou, and other cities, a Japanese residents group in Tianjin was formed to take responsibility for local services such as the water and electricity supply. In terms of the administration of the concession, the residents groups acted as decision-making bodies while an administrative board was in place to implement these policies. The Japanese in Tianjin were involved mostly in trade. At the top of local Japanese society were managers of the local branches of major companies, businessmen, those in transportation and communications, financiers, doctors, and lawyers. Next came medium-sized local traders and businessmen, and below them the small-time traders who ran local shops and restaurants. At the end of the 1920s, the Japanese in Tianjin together with residents groups and chambers of commerce from around China appealed to the Japanese government to respond to boycotts of Japanese businesses, and to prevent the abolition of extraterritoriality and the Nationalist government's repossession of foreign-held concessions, but these efforts proved fruitless.³⁵

In this way, there was considerable friction between expatriate Japanese and the Chinese authorities around the country. After the Manchurian Incident, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs compiled a report on damage to Japanese interests, aware of the Lytton Commission. The ministry's report gave an account of

³⁴ Shanhai Kyoryumin dan soritsu sanjugo shunen kinen shi hensan in, *Shanhai kyoryumin dan sanjugo shunen kinen shi* (Commemorative Gazette to Mark the 35th Anniversary of the Founding of the Association of Japanese Residents in Shanghai) (Shanhai kyoryumin dan, 1942); Takatsuna Hirofumi, "Seiyo jin no Shanhai, Nihon jin no Shanhai" (Western Shanghai, Japanese Shanghai) in Takahashi Kosuke, Furumaya Tadao, eds., *Shanhaishi: kyodai toshi no keisei to hitobito no itonami* (A History of Shanghai: The Formation of the Great Metropolis and People's Businesses) (Tokyo: Toho Shoten, 1995), 123–131, Goto Harumi, *Shanhai o meguru Nichi-Ei kankei 1925–1932-nen* (Anglo-Japanese Relations and Shanghai, 1925–32) 45–48, 217–243. According to page 1101 of the Commemorative Gazette to Mark the 35th Anniversary of the Founding of the Association of Japanese Residents in Shanghai, "the Japanese population began to stratify into groups of settlers and company employees, and there was quite strong competition between the groups, which seems to have given rise to disputes within the association." Antagonism between "settlers" and "company employees" was not limited to Shanghai, and seems to have been present in Tianjin and Hankou as well.

³⁵ Usui Chuzo, ed., *Tenshin kyoryumin dan sanjus-shunen kinen shi* (Commemorative Gazette to Mark the 35th Anniversary of the Founding of the Association of Japanese Residents in Tianjin) (Tenshin kyoryumin dan, 1941); Kobayashi Motohiro, "Tenshin no naka no Nihon sokai" (The Japanese Concession in Tianjin) in Tenshin chiiki shi kenkyu kai ed., *Tenshin shi: saisei suru toshi no toporoji* (A History of Tianjin: Topology of a City Reborn) (Tokyo: Toho Shoten, 1999) 185–207. On the concessions in Chongqing, Hankou, and Hangzhou, see Osato Hiroaki, Son An-suk, eds., *Chugoku ni okeru Nihon sokai: Jukei, Kankou, Koshu, Shanhai* (Japanese Settlements in China: Chongqing, Hankou, Hangzhou, and Shanghai) (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 2006).

anti-Japanese boycotts in China.³⁶ When the Lytton Report was subsequently released, it failed to support Chinese claims that the Chinese boycotts had been carried out legitimately.³⁷

In Conclusion

This chapter has traced the course of Sino-Japanese relations from the time of World War I to just before the Manchurian Incident. The main issues in this period include the Twenty-One Demands, the Nishihara Loans, the New Four-Power Consortium Loans, the Paris Peace Conference and May Fourth Movement, the Nine-Power Treaty and the Shandong treaty at the Washington Conference, the East Asian Cultural Affairs Program, May 30 Incident, the Special Conference on the Chinese Customs Tariff, the Northern Expedition and the Nanjing Incident, Japan's Shandong Expeditions, the assassination of Zhang Zuolin, the Sino-Soviet Conflict, China's refusal to grant *agrement* to the appointment of Obata, the Sino-Japanese Tariff Agreement, issues regarding extraterritoriality in China and the disposition of Chinese foreign debt, and Japanese communities in China. It was the framework agreed at the Washington Conference that determined the international order in East Asia in the 1920s.

During World War I, Japan blundered by issuing the unreasonable Twenty-One Demands to China as an ultimatum. Even so, Japan did not dive precipitously into nonstop expansion onto the continent from this time forward. One significant factor is what Kato Takaaki and Shidehara Kijuro learned from the experience of the Twenty-One Demands. When Kato later became prime minister, he handed responsibility for foreign diplomacy to Shidehara as his foreign minister, and thanks to the efforts of Kato's Kenseikai to incorporate rival parties within the system, Japan entered an age of party politics.

Including the Hara cabinet, Japan by and large tried to operate in partnership with the United States and Britain in the years after World War I. Throughout the 1920s, the central role in Japanese diplomacy was played by Shidehara, who as ambassador to the United States had represented Japan at the Washington Conference, and who served more than five years as foreign minister. No one embodied the Washington System more than Shidehara. In the spirit of the Washington Conference, Japanese diplomacy under Shidehara demonstrated

³⁶ Hattori Ryuji, ed., *Manshu Jihen to Shigemitsu Chuka Koshi hokokusho: Gaimusho kiroku "Shina no taigai seisaku kankei zassan 'kakumei gaiko' ni yosete"* (The Manchurian Incident and the Reports of Japan's Minister to China Shigemitsu: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Anthology of Documents Relating to the 'Revolutionary Diplomacy' of the Republic of China") (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Center, 2002).

³⁷ Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho: Manshu Jihen* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers: Manchurian Incident) (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1981), supplement, 227–229; Kato Yoko, *Manshu Jihen kara Nit-Chu Senso e* (From the Manchurian Incident to the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), 141–142.

understanding toward China as it moved closer to unification. However, particularly after the Nanjing Incident, Shidehara came in for increasing criticism at home for his “weak diplomacy.” Even under Tanaka Giichi, who had ordered the dispatch of troops to Shandong, Japan had no intention of abandoning the Washington System. However, the Guandong Army went against Tanaka’s wishes and orchestrated the assassination of Zhang Zuolin.

It was during this period that China achieved reunification through the Northern Expedition and the transference of the Three Northeastern Provinces to central Chinese sovereignty. Although the political situation became somewhat confused after the death of Yuan Shikai, the overall thrust of Chinese efforts can be described as having been aimed at achieving political stability and restoring national sovereignty, both through the Beijing government’s attempts to revise the unequal treaties and the Nationalist government’s “revolutionary diplomacy.” One of the defining characteristics of the period was the potential for cooperation and the attempts made in that direction, such as several projects that aimed to achieve at Sino-Japanese collaboration and cultural exchange.

The Washington System that formed the basis of international order in the 1920s did not affect only Sino-Japanese relations; it was a multi-faceted system that encompassed naval tonnage reductions and the Pacific. In terms of Sino-Japanese relations, the Washington System had two main aspects. First, Japan made harmonious relations with the United States and Britain a key pillar of its foreign relations according to the spirit of the Washington System, which meant that Japanese interference on the continent was relatively restricted. Second, the Washington Conference essentially upheld the interests and rights of the powers in China, so that relations between Japan, the United States, and Britain were based on the premise of maintaining the status quo. For China, the Washington System therefore had both positive and negative aspects: although it acknowledged the unequal treaties, it also served to restrict Japanese expansion into China. This might be described as the paradox of the system.

The Washington System was not a fixed system. It underwent gradual change throughout the period. There was no consensus between Japan, the United States, and Britain on how to respond to China’s moves toward restoring national sovereignty and reunification. As China pushed ahead with its efforts to revise the unequal treaties and revolutionary diplomacy, the close relationship between Japan, the United States, and Britain started to come apart as the three nations’ concepts of order in the region began to differ. Particularly during the period of Tanaka [Giichi] diplomacy, Japan was left behind in terms of building a relationship with the Chinese Nationalist government. Ultimately, following the Manchurian Incident, even Shidehara’s hopes of direct negotiations with China collapsed, and he reached a compromise with the idea of a puppet regime led by the Japanese Army. There is no doubt that the movement that brought down the curtain on the Washington System came from the Japanese side, in the form of this final shift and collapse in Shidehara diplomacy.

CHAPTER 1 THE MANCHURIAN INCIDENT TO THE SECOND SINO-JAPANESE WAR

Tobe Ryoichi

1. Manchurian Incident

(1) Liutiaohu Incident

On September 18, 1931, the South Manchuria Railway at Liutiaohu, on the outskirts of Mukden, was bombed during the night. The incident was a conspiracy planned by two officers in the Guandong Army: Ishiwara Kanji, operations officer, and Itagaki Seishiro, senior staff officer.¹ The Guandong Army, which was charged with the defense of the railway, called the bombing the work of Chinese forces and, in the name of self-defense, quickly seized control of Mukden.

Several months before the Liutiaohu Incident, a consensus had been reached among the section-chief-level officers in the Army Ministry and Army General Staff Office that military force should be used to respond to any serious violation of Japan's interests in Manchuria.² As they saw it, they would need about a year to shape public opinion and gain domestic and international understanding before they could resort to military action, and in this respect the Liutiaohu Incident had occurred too soon, but once the Guandong Army had gone ahead and embarked on military action, they felt that they naturally had to back it up. Backed by such a show of force, they aimed to force Zhang Xueliang's regime to abandon its "expel the Japanese" policy and so maintain and expand Japan's interests in China. They did not rule out the possibility of replacing Zhang Xueliang with a pro-Japanese regime in Manchuria in order to accomplish these ends.

However, to chief conspirators Ishiwara and Itagaki, military action was not simply for the purpose of self-defense or the protection of Japanese interests. Their intention was to seize all of Manchuria, including the north. Thus, the military action in Manchuria was initiated in violation of the basic policy of the government and the army high command.

Radical elements in the military, including Ishiwara and Itagaki, believed, first of all, that Japan's interests in Manchuria were facing a crisis in the face of the "revolutionary diplomacy" that had emerged out of China's increasingly radical

¹ On the conspiracy behind the Liutiaohu Incident, see Hata Ikuhiko, "Ryujoko jiken no saikento" (Reexamination of the Liutiaohu Incident), *Seiji-keizaishi gaku* 183 (August 1981).

² "Manshu mondai kaiketsu hosaku no taiko" (Outline of Measures to Resolve the Manchurian Problem), in Kobayashi Tatsuo and Shimada Toshihiko, eds., *Manshu Jihen* (The Manchurian Incident), Gendaishi shiryō 7 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1964), 164.

nationalism, and that Foreign Minister Shidehara's China diplomacy was doing nothing whatever to effectively address the situation. For this reason, radical elements in the military conspired to stage a clash between Japan and China and resolve the Manchurian "crisis" at one stroke through aggressive military action.

Second, they believed that military action in Manchuria was necessary not just for the resolution of the crisis in Manchuria but also for the defense of Japan. From the Soviet Union's actions in the Sino-Soviet conflict of 1929, Ishiwara and his allies concluded that the Russian military threat was emerging again, and they planned to put all of Manchuria under Japanese control in part to counter the military threat from the Soviet Union. They believed that if all of Manchuria were under Japanese control, they could establish an advantageous military position in terms of defending the nation against the Soviet Union, and at the same time secure access to Manchuria's rich resources and create an economically self-sufficient Japan-Manchuria bloc. World War I had taught the younger officers that the creation of an economically self-sufficient bloc was also a precondition for waging total war.

Third, they were hopeful that if the use of military force generated enough international political tension surrounding Japan to trigger a crisis in foreign relations, this could be used to catalyze an overhaul of domestic politics in Japan. The radical elements in the military believed that party politics was so preoccupied with partisan interests and partisan maneuvering that it gave short shrift to national defense and failed to respond to the interests and needs of the people. Their aim was to overthrow the "corrupt and decadent" system of party politics and rebuild the nation so that it could wage total war. Thus, one of their intentions in initiating military action in Manchuria was to create the impetus for this sort of "national reorganization."

The Liutiaohu Incident, therefore, was born of the meticulous planning and scheming of Ishiwara and his cohorts. After the incident, the Guandong Army, having taken control of Mukden, continued to advance and seize other key positions along the South Manchuria Railway, including Andong, Yingkou, and Changchun. It also advanced into Jilin, which was far removed from the South Manchuria Railway, ostensibly to protect the Japanese residents there, and then called on the Japanese Korean Army for reinforcements, on the grounds that this detour had stretched their defenses too thin in southern Manchuria.

On September 19, after word of the incident reached the government of Wakatsuki (Reijiro) in Tokyo, the cabinet decided to adopt a policy of non-escalation. The army high command approved the Guandong Army's actions and asked the government's permission to order Japanese Korean Army troops to cross the border (into Manchuria), but the government rejected the request as contravening its non-escalation policy. However, the Japanese Korean Army had a prior understanding with the Guandong Army staff regarding the dispatch of reinforcements, and with the army high command unable to win the government's approval and secure imperial sanction, the Japanese Korean Army ran out of patience. On September 21 the Japanese Korean Army crossed the Yalu River into

China on its own authority. The Wakatsuki cabinet was then obliged to approve the dispatch of Japanese Korean Army troops after the fact. Unauthorized cross-border action taken without imperial sanction would ordinarily have been subject to court-martial, but instead it was swept under the rug, just like the conspiracy behind the Liutiaohu Incident. This pattern was to repeat itself again and again, as local units would spearhead another advance, and the army high command and government in Tokyo would approve the action of the field army retroactively.

The mass media also took a hawkish stance. Unquestioningly accepting the Guandong Army's assertion that the incident was a premeditated act by the Chinese, newspapers explained to readers that this was the culmination of a long series of anti-Japanese acts and violations of Japanese interests and justified the Guandong Army's actions as legitimate self-defense. The newspapers vied fiercely with one another for coverage of the incident and used it to increase their circulation. Their hawkish position had the effect of inflaming public opinion.³

Public support for the Guandong Army's actions was grounded in the government's explanation that military force had been exercised for the purposes of self-defense and protection of Japanese interests. However, as already noted, the aim of Ishiwara and his allies in the Guandong Army went beyond self-defense and the protection of interests; their plan was to seize all of Manchuria. Yet even the more radical elements in the army high command were averse to the idea of seizing Manchuria. Ishiwara and his allies in the Guandong Army had therefore modified their plan and sought the establishment of an independent Manchurian state, but this objective, too, failed to win enthusiastic support. For the most part, support for the Guandong Army's use of force was based on the reasoning that it was for the purpose of self-defense or the protection of Japanese interests. Even the more hawkish of the army's mid-level officers hoped for no more than the replacement of Zhang Xueliang's regime with a pro-Japanese government.

(2) The Chinese Response and the League of Nations

The Guandong Army's military operation proceeded basically according to plan. One reason this was possible was that the Chinese made no attempt at military resistance. At the time of the incident, Zhang Xueliang was in Beiping (Beijing) with a force of 100,000 troops, but the Northeastern Army was in Manchuria, and this large force had more than 200,000 troops, while the Guandong Army had fewer than 20,000. However, prior to the incident Chiang Kai-shek had ordered Zhang Xueliang not to antagonize the Japanese, and Zhang Xueliang had instructed his forces in Fengtian to avoid any clash with Japan.

The reason Zhang Xueliang continued the policy of nonresistance immediately after the incident was that he believed the Japanese government could regain control

³ Ikei Masaru, "1930 nendai no masumedia" (The Mass Media in the 1930s), in Miwa Kimitada, ed., *Saiko Taiheiyō Senso zen'ya* (The Eve of the Pacific War Reconsidered) (Tokyo: Soseiki, 1981), 177–85.

over the Guandong Army. Another factor was Zhang Xueliang's own concerns as a warlord. He was worried that his own power base would be weakened if the Northeastern Army were to suffer troop losses fighting the Guandong Army.⁴ Nor did Chiang Kai-shek order Zhang Xueliang to put up a defense.⁵ Initially, the Chinese government, too, was counting on the Japanese government to control the Guandong Army. The reason Chinese Minister of Finance Soong Tse-ven (also known as Soong Tzu-wen, T.V. Soong, and Song Ziwen) proposed a joint Japanese-Chinese investigation of the incident to Japanese Minister to China Shigemitsu Mamoru on September 19 is that he still had such expectations.⁶ However, as the Guandong Army seized one position after another in southern Manchuria, the Chinese eventually abandoned their efforts to resolve the conflict through direct negotiations with Japan.

At this time the Nationalist government, embroiled in a military struggle with Communist forces based in Jiangxi Province and in conflict also with the Guangdong government that had been established in May that year, was in no position to try repelling the Japanese by force. For this reason, the Nationalist government made an effort to restrain Japan's behavior by two other means: anti-Japanese boycotts and appeals to the League of Nations. After the Liutiaohu Incident, boycotts of Japanese goods grew in scale and intensity as the focus of the anti-Japanese resistance movement. However, they could not restrain the Guandong Army.

The League of Nations, meanwhile, did not respond exactly as China hoped. Great powers such as Britain and France wanted to minimize any impact on the stability of the international order, and insofar as Japan's actions could be considered self-defensive measures for the protection of Japanese interests, they were inclined to respect Japan's position while calling on it to exercise restraint. They also had faith in the diplomatic efforts of Shidehara, who to that point had cooperated in supporting the international order. Shidehara insisted that the issue should be resolved through direct negotiations with China. China countered that the Guandong Army would first have to end its occupation of key positions—that is, withdraw to the area under railroad jurisdiction. On September 30, the League Council passed a resolution calling on the Japanese forces to withdraw promptly but imposing no deadline. China's demand that a team be sent to monitor Japan's withdrawal was rejected.

Despite these concerns on the League's part, the Guandong Army continued its

⁴ Uno Shigeaki, "Chugoku no doko (1926–1932)" (Developments in China [1926–1932]), in Pacific War Causes Research Department, Japan Association of International Relations, ed., *Taiheiyo Senso e no michi* (Road to the Pacific War), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1962), 274.

⁵ NHK Shuzaihan, Usui Katsumi, *Cho Gakuryo no Showa shi—Saigo no shogen* (Zhang Xueliang's Showa History: Last Testimony) (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1991), 123–27.

⁶ On opinions within the Nationalist government favoring direct negotiations with Japan in the immediate aftermath of the Liutiaohu Incident, see Kato Yoko, *Manshu Jihen kara Nit-Chu Senso e* (From the Manchurian Incident to the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), 107–11.

thrust into Chinese territory. Meanwhile, in Japan, a planned coup d'état led by mid-level officers of the General Staff Office was uncovered in mid-October (the October Incident). Although the coup was aborted, it stood as a tacit threat against the Japanese government as it attempted to rein in the army. On October 8, the Guangdong Army bombed Jinzhou in southwestern Manchuria, where Zhang Xueliang had established his headquarters for recapture of the Three Northeastern Provinces. Furthermore, it launched an offensive into northern Manchuria, something the army high command had kept it from doing for fear of provoking the Soviet Union. On November 19, the army seized the key position of Qiqihar. Disregarding government policy, which prohibited any involvement in the founding of a new state, it pursued that end by promoting the establishment of local governments independent of the Nationalist regime throughout Manchuria. To serve as head of the new state, the Japanese took the deposed Chinese emperor Puyi out of Tianjin under cover of riots that it staged in the city and brought him to Manchuria.

Japan's position that it was acting in self-defense to protect its own interests thus began to lose plausibility, and the League of Nations grew increasingly suspicious of Japan's intentions. On October 24, the League Council voted on a resolution calling for the withdrawal of Japanese troops by a specific deadline, but the opposition of Japan alone sent the resolution down to defeat. Finally, with Japan's assent, the League Council decided on December 10 to send a commission to the scene to investigate, and deferred any decision on the conflict until the investigation was completed. At Japan's insistence, the investigation was to cover not only the situation in Manchuria but also conditions in China as a whole (including such matters as the anti-Japanese movement and the Chinese government's capacity to carry out its treaty obligations).

(3) Bilateral Efforts Toward a Settlement

While the League of Nations was postponing any decision on the issue, the Japanese and Chinese governments were working behind the scenes to solve the issue through direct negotiations. Changes in government in both Japan and China played a role in these developments.

In China, the Nationalist government in Nanjing and the Guangdong regime negotiated to effect a merger, the better to resist the Japanese. With that merger as a condition, Chiang Kai-shek resigned his position as premier, president of the Executive Yuan, and commander-in-chief of the army and navy on December 15 and withdrew from public life. Sun Ke took Chiang's place as president of the Executive Yuan, and other former key figures in the Guangdong government became China's top leaders. He appointed as foreign minister Chen Youren, who had advocated direct bilateral negotiations to solve the Manchurian problem since his days in the Guangdong government. Under the Sun Ke regime, China was leaning toward direct negotiations, albeit briefly.

In Japan, meanwhile, moves were afoot to form a "cabinet of cooperation" involving both of the two major parties as a way to resist the rise of the military.

However, these moves led to disunity within Wakatsuki's Minseito cabinet, which resigned en masse as a consequence. It was succeeded by the Seiyukai cabinet of Inukai Tsuyoshi. Prime Minister Inukai, who had supported revolutionaries like Sun Yat-sen and Huang Xing since the Meiji era, sent a secret emissary to China in hopes of settling the conflict. His settlement plan involved preserving China's sovereignty over Manchuria while establishing a regional government with extensive powers and developing the region economically with Japan and China operating as equals.

For his secret emissary, Inukai chose Kayano Nagatomo, who had been a fellow member of the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance.⁷ Arriving in China just before the Sun Ke regime took power, Kayano met with Ju Zheng, Sun Ke, and others in an effort to find a resolution to the crisis based on Inukai's proposal. Sun Ke and the others suggested a plan to create a special administrative body called the Northeast Administrative Committee, and to recognize Japan's special economic rights and proceed with Manchuria's economic development with Japan and China participating on an equal footing. Their motive, it has been argued, was to expel Zhang Xueliang's forces and extend the Kuomintang's power to Manchuria.⁸

However, Kayano's efforts met with fierce opposition from key members of the Inukai cabinet and from the military. Inukai's government was controlled by the Seiyukai, which been highly critical of foreign policy under Shidehara, and the cabinet was dominated by hardliners, notably Chief Cabinet Secretary Mori Tsutomu (Kaku). Many were opposed to the very idea of letting the Kuomintang extend its rule to Manchuria. Faced with this opposition, Inukai was finally obliged to recall Kayano to Japan in early January 1932. Once direct negotiations with Japan had broken down, Chen Youren, feeling the pressure of anti-Japanese sentiment in China, began to advocate suspension of diplomatic relations with Japan.

In addition to attempting to resolve the crisis through secret negotiations with China, Prime Minister Inukai also attempted to reassert control of the army by naming Araki Sadao army minister. But here too, Inukai's hopes were betrayed. The army high command was unable to regain control of the Guandong Army. The Guandong Army secured the high command's permission to put down pockets of anti-Manchurian/Japanese resistance by attacking their strategic bases, and under this pretext, it seized control of Jinzhou on January 3. Until this point, US Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson had remained hopeful that Shidehara's diplomacy would prevail, but he reacted strongly against the capture of Jinzhou and sent notification enunciating a nonrecognition policy. The substance of the notes was that the United States would not recognize any de facto situation or agreement that violated the Nine-Power Treaty or the Kellogg-Briand Pact and impaired the rights of the

⁷ On Kayano's peace mission, see Tokito Hideto, "Inukai Tsuyoshi to Manshu jihen" (Inukai Tsuyoshi and the Manchurian Incident), *Seiji-keizaishi gaku* 209 (December 1983), 50–55.

⁸ Huang Zijin, "Manshu Jihen to Chugoku Kokuminto" (The Manchurian Incident and the Chinese Nationalist Party), in Nakamura Katsunori, ed., *Manshu Jihen no shogeki* (The Impact of the Manchurian Incident) (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1996), 360–61.

American people. On February 5, the Guandong Army attacked Harbin, where it had been forbidden to deploy forces, and succeeded in capturing the city.

(4) The Shanghai Incident and the Founding of Manchukuo

After the outbreak of the incident, Shanghai emerged as the center of the ever-escalating anti-Japanese boycott. With Japanese residents of the city growing increasingly resentful, clashes broke out. On January 18, Japanese Buddhist monks doing missionary work in China were attacked by a group of Chinese citizens, and the following day the Japanese retaliated with an attack on a Chinese factory. The clashes are said to have been engineered by Tanaka Ryukichi, army attache to the Japanese mission in Shanghai, at the request of Itagaki of the Guandong Army in order to distract the attention of the Western powers from the situation in Manchuria.⁹

Responding to the outrage of the Japanese residents' association in Shanghai, the consul general presented the mayor of Shanghai with an ultimatum, insisting among other things that the perpetrators be punished and that anti-Japanese groups be disbanded immediately. In this volatile atmosphere, the Japanese navy sent additional ships and land forces to protect Japanese residents, and China's 19th Route Army intensified security around Shanghai. On January 28, Japanese naval land forces clashed with the mighty 19th Route Army, which had fought the Communist forces in Jiangxi, and the Shanghai Incident began.¹⁰

Because Japan's naval forces in the area prior to the incident were no match for the 19th Route Army, the navy had no choice but to seek army backup. Prime Minister Inukai and Finance Minister Takahashi (Korekiyo) strenuously opposed the deployment of troops to Shanghai, but in the end the army and navy prevailed by arguing the necessity of protecting Japanese citizens in China. The army reinforcements faced a difficult battle, and ultimately a total of three divisions were deployed to Shanghai.

The Japanese government treated the Shanghai Incident as something separate and distinct from the Manchurian Incident and adopted a policy of avoiding any unnecessary escalation. The forces deployed to Shanghai made it their priority to deal a blow to the Chinese forces to demonstrate the superior strength of the Japanese military. It achieved this objective with the offensive that got underway at the beginning of March, and thereafter acted with restraint, partly in deference to the League of Nations.

In China, meanwhile, the administration of Sun Ke, formally inaugurated on

⁹ See Tanaka Ryukichi, "Shanghai jihen wa koshite okosareta" (How the Shanghai Incident Was Triggered), in *Himerareta Showa shi* (Secret History of the Showa Era), *Chisei* special issue (December 1956).

¹⁰ On the Shanghai Incident and ceasefire negotiations, see Shimada Toshihiko, "Manshu Jihen no tenkai (1931-1932)" (Developments in the Manchurian Incident [1931-1932]), in *Taiheiyo Senso e no michi*, vol. 2, chap. 5.

January 1, collapsed after less than a month. Wang Jingwei took office as president of the Executive Yuan, and Chiang Kai-shek joined the government again. Feeling that China still lacked the capability to fight Japan, Chiang Kai-shek opposed Chen Youren's policy of severing diplomatic ties with Japan. While deploying his own forces to the Shanghai front to aid the 19th Route Army's resistance, he continued to seek compromise with Japan.¹¹

It was Britain that moved to mediate a ceasefire. With the great powers working to quell the conflict and mediate a resolution, a de facto ceasefire was in place by the middle of March, and an official ceasefire agreement was signed on May 5. The key points of the ceasefire were the withdrawal of Japanese military forces and the establishment of a demilitarized zone where Chinese forces were not permitted to be stationed. It has been said that the conclusion of an agreement that involved the withdrawal of a foreign military force without any territorial concessions or war indemnity from China was hailed by some on the Chinese side as the greatest victory since the Opium War.¹²

Just as the Guandong Army's Itagaki had planned, the military clash in Shanghai had the effect of distracting the great powers from Manchuria. During this time, preparations for independence were moving steadily forward in Manchuria. On March 1, Manchukuo, with Puyi as its head of state (regent), declared itself an independent state. Manchukuo had become a fait accompli before the League of Nations fact-finding commission (Lytton Commission) had even arrived on the scene.

Pressed by rapidly unfolding events in Manchuria, the army high command had already approved the creation of a new state. Prime Minister Inukai was unwilling to recognize Manchukuo,¹³ but in May that year, he was assassinated in an act of terrorism led by naval cadets (the May 15 Incident). An elder of the Imperial Navy, Saito Makoto, was chosen to succeed Inukai as prime minister. With party government under siege from two failed military coups the previous year (the March and October incidents) and terrorist incidents continuing, the elder statesman Saionji Kinmochi, when consulted by the emperor about the next prime minister, advised that Japan put aside party cabinets for the time being, weather the crisis with a nonpartisan "national unity cabinet," and attempt to loosen the army's grip on government.

However, the army was not alone in its hard-line posture. When it came to recognition of Manchukuo, for example, the Diet and the press were more gung-ho than the cabinet. In June a resolution calling for recognition of Manchukuo passed the House of Representatives. Foreign Minister Uchida Yasuya (Kosai)—appointed

¹¹ Huang Zijin, "Manshu Jihen zengo ni okeru Kokumin seifu no tai-Nichi seisaku" (The Nationalist Government's Japan Policy Before and After the Manchurian Incident), *Higashi Ajia kindaiishi* 5 (March 2002), 22–24.

¹² *Ibid.*, 24–25.

¹³ Tokito, "Inukai Tsuyoshi to Manshu jihen," 56–57.

by Saito after having cooperated with the Guandong Army during the Liutiaohu Incident as president of the South Manchuria Railway—responded to questioning in the Diet by stating that Japan would stand its ground “even if it had to reduce the country to ashes” and strongly signaled Japan’s intention to recognize Manchukuo. On September 15, Japan signed the Japan-Manchukuo Protocol and officially recognized the state of Manchukuo. This was just after the League of Nations’ Lytton Commission had compiled its report in Beijing after completing the investigation in Manchuria.

Released on October 2, the Lytton Report refused to recognize the Guandong Army’s actions in the wake of the Liutiaohu Incident as legitimate self-defense, nor did it accept the claim that Manchukuo had been born from a spontaneous independence movement. Nonetheless, the report did not call for a return to the status quo ante. With the principles of Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity as a premise, it proposed expelling the warlords and establishing an autonomous government in Manchuria with due consideration for Japan’s interests and its historical involvement in the region. This was a reasonable solution that took into account Manchuria’s special circumstances, and it would probably have been fairly well received in Japan prior to the Manchurian Incident. However, by this time, a year after the incident, it was scarcely regarded as worthy of consideration.

(5) Circumstances in Manchukuo

Odo rakudo (a paradise under benevolent rule) and *minzoku kyowa* (ethnic harmony) were put forth as the founding principles of the new state of Manchukuo. Among the Japanese residents, there were some who embraced these principles and were passionate about rescuing the Manchurians from the oppression and extortion of the Fengtian clique and building an ideal state. Some local Manchurian leaders and lesser warlords also supported the new state out of enmity toward Zhang Xueliang or to protect their own interests.¹⁴

Of course, few natives of the area participated actively in the founding of the new state. Moreover, anti-Manchukuo-Japanese guerilla resistance persisted, and the Guandong Army, which was charged with the defense and internal security of Manchukuo, responded with a thoroughgoing and brutal clamp-down. In some cases, this went as far as the massacre of locals believed to have been in communication with the guerillas, as in the Pingdingshan incident of September 1932.

One achievement of the Manchukuo government was the establishment of a single common currency through reform of the monetary system. The regional financial system of Manchuria had been moving toward currency unification even before the Manchurian Incident, but the government of Manchukuo took up these

¹⁴ On the Chinese figures involved in the founding of Manchukuo, see Hamaguchi Yuko, *Nihon tochi to Higashi Ajia shakai* (Japanese Rule and East Asian Society) (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1996), chaps. 2 and 3.

efforts and worked aggressively to bring it about.¹⁵ Currency unification facilitated the modernization of the Manchurian economy, and by 1934 Manchuria was the most industrialized region in China.¹⁶ Manchukuo also focused on developing its economic infrastructure. It built some 6,350 kilometers of railroad between 1933 and 1944, and it completed construction of national highways totaling 15,480 km in length between 1932 and 1939.¹⁷ Industrial production rose dramatically in such sectors as coal mining, electric power, iron and steel, and aluminum.¹⁸

However, the establishment of an industrial base and the development of industry were not pursued with the aim of improving the living standards of the local populace. In most cases, development and modernization efforts were promoted out of military considerations, and industrial development was slanted toward the munitions sector. This tendency became more pronounced after the conflict between Japan and China spread, to the point where Manchuria was essentially transformed into a Japanese military supply base. When the Pacific War began, officials put Manchukuo on an even more rigorous wartime footing, making it the country's top priority to provide whatever Japan required for conduct of the war. In the final stages of the war, financial and economic imbalances caused great hardship among the populace.¹⁹ Manchukuo was never to become a "paradise under benevolent rule."

"Ethnic harmony," likewise, proved no more than an empty slogan. The Guandong Army effectively controlled Manchukuo. Real authority in both the central and regional (provincial) governments was concentrated in the hands of the Japanese officials (*Nikkei kanri*), and the proportion of central-government positions held by Japanese officials rose from 53% in 1934 to 69% in 1940.²⁰ The Japanese only strengthened their monopoly on power. The gap between the Japanese and the other residents of Manchukuo grew. The discrepancies between the founding principles and the reality of Manchukuo, large enough at the outset, only continued

¹⁵ Yasutomi Ayumu, "'Manshukoku' – Keizai kaihatsu to kokunai shikin ryudo" ("Manchukuo": Economic Development and Domestic Flow of Funds), in Yamamoto Yuzo, ed., 'Manshukoku' no kenkyu ("Manchukuo" Studies) (Tokyo: Ryokuin Shobo, 1995), 239–46.

¹⁶ Nakagane Katsuji, "Manchukuo and Economic Development," in Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 134.

¹⁷ Nishizawa Yasuhiko, "'Manshukoku' no kensetsu jigyo" (Construction Projects in "Manchukuo"), in Yamamoto, ed., *"Manshukoku" no kenkyu*, 392 and 407.

¹⁸ See Ramon H. Myers, "Creating a Modern Enclave Economy: The Economic Integration of Japan, Manchuria, and North China, 1932–1945," in Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931–1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

¹⁹ Tsukase Susumu, *Manshukoku* (Manchukuo) (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1998), 190–98; Tsukase Susumu, "Manshukoku no jikken" (The Experiment of Manchukuo), in Yamamuro Kentoku, ed., *Dai Nihon Teikoku no hokai* (Fall of the Japanese Empire), *Nihon no jidai shi* 25 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2005), 130–32.

²⁰ Tsukase, *Manshukoku*, 44.

to grow wider.

(6) The Rehe Incident and Withdrawal from the League of Nations

Manchukuo claimed as its territory not only the Three Northeastern Provinces of Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang but also Rehe [Jehol] Province. But the ruler of Rehe Province, Tang Yulin, was held firmly in check by Zhang Xueliang's army, which held sway over North China, and he maintained an ambivalent posture. Rehe provided an important route by which Zhang Xueliang sent guerilla detachments to infiltrate Manchukuo with the aim of destabilizing the country. For this reason the Guandong Army planned to oust Tang Yulin and seize control of Rehe by force.²¹ However, in early 1933, as the appointed time for military action against Rehe neared, Prime Minister Saito, Foreign Minister Uchida, and the emperor began to express deep concerns regarding such a move. The reason was that the League of Nations was then in the midst of deliberating a resolution calling for a settlement of the Manchurian Incident based on the Lytton Report.

Having already recognized Manchukuo, Japan could not possibly have accepted a settlement based on the report at that point. However, according to the rules of the League of Nations, if a decision approved unanimously by all countries except the parties to the dispute was accepted by one of those parties, the League could impose sanctions on the other party if it rejected the settlement and initiated new hostilities. The government's top leaders and the emperor worried that if Japan used military force in Rehe and the conflict spread to North China after the resolution was passed by the League of Nations, the league would impose sanctions on Japan. On February 20, however, the government decided to withdraw from the League of Nations in the event that the resolution was adopted. If Japan ceased to be a member, the league would presumably have no legal standing to impose sanctions.²² On February 24, the League of Nations Assembly passed the resolution, and on March 27 Japan announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations. At that point there was no longer any reason to let fear of league sanctions deter the army from the "pacification" of Rehe.

China, meanwhile, saw Rehe as an area distinct from the Three Northeastern Provinces and therefore naturally regarded any attempt by the Guandong Army to secure Rehe by force as a new act of aggression. This is why the Nationalist government responded to the Guandong Army's advance into Rehe by giving Tang Yulin and Zhang Xueliang strict orders to defend the province. Zhang Xueliang sent more than 200,000 troops from his Northeastern Army into Rehe, but in February 1933 two divisions of the Guandong Army launched Operation Nekka [Rehe], and the Chinese forces were routed in less than two weeks. Shocked at this sudden turn

²¹ On the Rehe campaign, see Uchida Naotaka, *Kahoku jihen no kenkyu* (Studies in the North China Incident) (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 2006), chaps. 1 and 2.

²² On the Rehe campaign and the League of Nations, see Inoue Toshikazu, *Kiki no naka no kyochogai* (Cooperative Diplomacy in Crisis) (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1994), chap. 1.

of events, Chiang Kai-shek, who was then coordinating the Nationalists' Communist-eradication campaign, dispatched a huge force of 250,000 troops from the Northeastern Army and Northwestern Army in North China for the defense of the Great Wall.

When the Guandong Army arrived at the Great Wall line, it was met with stiff resistance from the Chinese, and a fierce battle ensued. In April that year, the Japanese finally routed the defending forces, crossed the Great Wall line, and advanced inside the Wall. When the army high command objected, the Guandong Army temporarily withdrew beyond the Great Wall line, but in May it once again breached the line and penetrated inside the wall. The Guandong Army justified its penetration inside the Great Wall on the grounds that Zhang Xueliang was a threat to Manchukuo, and to defend the country against that threat it was necessary to destroy Zhang Xueliang's base of power in North China.

China was deeply shocked by the "Rehe debacle" in which Zhang Xueliang's army was put to rout. That shock was all the greater because the Chinese were inclined to view their defense of Shanghai as a success. Furthermore, the Nationalists had yet to prevail decisively in their fight against the Communist forces. Chiang Kai-shek, acting in accordance with his policy of "internal pacification before external resistance"—that is, of dealing with the enemy within before driving off the foreign invader—tried to strike a deal with Japan. Rather than continue to fight the Japanese army, which was closing in on Beiping, and risk losing even more territory, he planned to yield temporarily, strike a bargain, and prepare to recover lost ground in the future.²³

On May 31, 1933, Chinese and Japanese military commanders signed a ceasefire at Tanggu, on the outskirts of Tianjin.²⁴ The Guandong Army was to withdraw its forces north of the Great Wall line, and in return a vast demilitarized zone was to be established to the south of the Great Wall line, where no Chinese forces could be stationed. Public order within the zone was to be maintained by a police force (peace preservation corps). While knowing full well that the Tanggu Truce was unfavorable to China, the Nationalist government, under the joint leadership of Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei, felt it was more important that it avoid recognition of Manchukuo, prevent any further loss of territory—above all, holding on to "Bei-Tian" (Beiping and Tianjin)—and secure the Guandong Army's withdrawal north of the Great Wall line.

2. Gains and Setbacks in Stabilizing Relations

(1) Reversion of the Demilitarized Zone and Practical Agreements

²³ Lu Xijun, *Chugoku kokumin seifu no tai-Nichi seisaku 1931–1933* (The Chinese Nationalist Government's Japan Policy, 1931–33) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2001), chaps. 6 and 7.

²⁴ On the Tanggu Truce negotiations, see Uchida, *Kahoku jihen no kenkyu*, chap. 3.

With the Tanggu Truce, the Manchurian Incident essentially came to a close. But the situation in North China was still in flux. Although China considered formal recognition of Manchukuo out of the question, it still had to devise some way of dealing with its existence on a practical level. It was Huang Fu (chairman of the Beiping Political Council under the Executive Yuan) who applied himself to this difficult task. Under instructions from the central government in Nanjing, the regional North China governing body, led by Huang, entered into negotiations with Manchukuo, represented by the Guandong Army.

The first item on the agenda was negotiating the withdrawal of the Guandong Army outside the Great Wall and return of the demilitarized zone to Chinese control. Although some unresolved issues remained, such as the Guandong Army's control of the Great Wall line, a basic understanding was reached on reversion of the demilitarized zone to Chinese administrative control. Next on the negotiating agenda were various issues involved in linking China and Manchukuo. Beginning with the issue of railway connections, in June 1934 the two sides reached a through-train understanding under which a joint Japanese-Chinese private company would be set up to operate trains between Mukden and Beiping. More thorny was the problem of mail communications, which was bound up with the issue of diplomatic recognition. Nonetheless, an agreement was reached in December, after the League of Nations ruled that connections between the two postal agencies did not signify recognition of Manchukuo as a state. Shortly thereafter, negotiations to establish import tariffs with the Great Wall line as the border also reached a conclusion.

In the process of negotiating such practical matters, the North China authorities, under orders from the Nationalist government, consistently rejected anything tied up with recognition of Manchukuo, and while it assented to the drafting of memorandums of understanding with the Guandong Army, it did not recognize these as constituting official agreements, and it avoided signing them.²⁵ In this sense, China did not submit unilaterally to Japan. However, in many instances China had no choice but to accept the Japanese demands. Huang Fu came to believe that as long as negotiations were taking place within the framework of the Tanggu Truce, there was no way to remedy China's disadvantage, and for that reason it was necessary to abrogate that agreement and address North China issues through negotiations between central governments rather than talks between North China administrative authorities and the Guandong Army.²⁶

The Japanese government, however, left the Guandong Army virtually in charge of negotiations pertaining to the demilitarized zone. Taking the existence of Manchukuo as a *fait accompli*, the government and the Foreign Ministry left on-site

²⁵ Mitsuta Tsuyoshi, "Kahoku 'chiho gaiko' ni kansuru kosatsu," (A Consideration of "Local Diplomacy" in North China), *Kindai Chugoku kenkyu iho* 22 (2000), 53–54.

²⁶ Mitsuta Tsuyoshi, *Chugoku kokumin seifu ki no kahoku seiji 1928–1937* (Politics of North China in the Nationalist Era, 1928–37) (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 2007), 206.

negotiations in the “outlying region” of North China to the Guandong Army as a military matter while it set about trying to mend and stabilize overall relations with China.²⁷

(2) Diplomacy under Hirota and Shigemitsu

The period from September 1933, when Hirota Koki replaced Uchida as foreign minister, until February 1937, when Hirota’s tenure as prime minister came to an end, is commonly called the era of Hirota diplomacy. But where China policy was concerned, Vice-Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru took the initiative with Hirota’s blessing. Shigemitsu strove to stabilize Japan-China relations by forging a partnership with the Chiang-Wang regime, which was seen as favorably disposed toward Japan. His strategy was to induce China to cooperate with Japan by restricting or eliminating the Western powers’ involvement in Chinese affairs and sacrificing the great powers’ interests.²⁸

This strategy of Shigemitsu’s is evident in the so-called Amo statement of April 1934.²⁹ The Amo statement was an unofficial oral statement made by Foreign Ministry Information Bureau Chief Amo Eiji during a conference with newspaper reporters, which grew into an international issue after it was reported by the Japanese and overseas media. The thrust of the statement was as follows.³⁰ Japan had rejected the assertions and opinions of the great powers regarding the China problem and for that reason had withdrawn from the League of Nations, but maintaining the peace and order of East Asia was Japan’s duty, and it was committed to fulfilling that responsibility together with China. In contrast, any collective action by the Western powers involving China, even if nominally an economic or technological undertaking, could not but carry a political significance and had the potential to lead to an international mandate over China or the establishment of a sphere of influence. Accordingly, Japan was bound to oppose this kind of assistance from the Western powers as disruptive to the peace and order of East Asia.

The direct intent of the Amo statement, was to warn against maneuvering by China’s so-called pro-Western faction to forge economic partnerships with the West that excluded Japan. The previous year, when special provisions under the Japan-China tariff agreement had expired, Minister of Finance Soong Tse-ven had

²⁷ Usui Katsumi, *Nit-Chu gaikoshi kenkyu* (Studies in the Diplomatic History of Japan-China Relations) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1998), 126.

²⁸ Sakai Tetsuya, *Taisho demokurashu taisei no hokai* (The Collapse of the Taisho Democracy System) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1992), 58–62.

²⁹ On Shigemitsu and the Amo statement, see Tomizuka Kazuhiko, “1933-4 nen ni okeru Shigemitsu gaimu jikan no tai-Chugoku gaiko rosen” (Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Shigemitsu’s Diplomatic Policy Toward China in 1933 and 1934), *Gaiko shiryō kampo*, 13 (June 1999).

³⁰ “Amo Eiji johobucho no hikoshiki seimei” (Information Bureau Chief Amo Eiji’s Unofficial Statement), in Shimada Toshihiko and Inaba Masao, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* (The Sino-Japanese War) 1, Gendaishi shiryō 8, (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1964), 25–26.

slapped high tariffs on Japanese goods and had secured a credit of \$50 million from the United States (the wheat and cotton loans). He then began maneuvering to secure technical and economic aid from the Western powers. The advisor to Soong Tse-ven who was helping him hammer out the specifics of this China aid was Jean Monnet, former Deputy Secretary General of the League of Nations (later to become the chief architect of European unity).³¹

The Western media attacked the Amo statement as a declaration by Japan of an “East Asian Monroe Doctrine” and an indication of expansionist intentions. However, at the government level, other countries accepted Foreign Minister Hirota’s assurances that Japan would respect the open-door policy and the principle of equal opportunity. In China as well, the press was sharply critical, but the government’s response was measured.³²

(3) The Push for a Partnership

The blunder of the Amo statement notwithstanding, the push to stabilize relations with China continued under Hirota and Shigemitsu. In China, meanwhile, changing conditions were making it easier for the government to respond to these overtures. In November 1933, the 19th Route Army, which had been forced to relocate to Fujian, had forged an alliance with anti-Chiang forces and established the Fujian People’s Government, but the following January an all-out offensive by the Central Army of the Nationalist government brought the new government down. The Nationalist government’s fifth “extermination campaign” was also making good progress against the Communist forces in Jiangxi Province; in November 1934 Ruijin had fallen, and the Communist forces shifted to flight mode in the retreat now known as the Long March. With the Chiang-Wang coalition regime solidifying its base in this manner, the conditions for repairing ties with Japan took shape.

In January 1935, Chiang Kai-shek, writing under the borrowed name of Xu Daolin, published a piece titled “Di hu? You hu? Zhongri guanxi de jiantao” (Friend or Foe? A Consideration of China-Japan Relations) in the journal *Wai Jiao Ping Lun* (Review of Foreign Affairs). In the essay, Chiang Kai-shek acknowledged that not only Japan but China, too, bore responsibility for the deterioration of Japan-China relations and argued the necessity of a partnership between Japan and China.³³ On January 22 the same year, Foreign Minister Hirota called for a policy of non-intimidation and nonaggression against China in an address before the Imperial Diet and made the case for friendship between Japan and China. As if in response to

³¹ See Hamaguchi Manabu, “Jan Mone no Chugoku kensetsu gin konsu koso” (Jean Monnet’s China Development Finance Corporation Plan), *Gaiko shiryō kampo* 15 (June 2001)

³² Mitsuta Tsuyoshi believes that the Amo statement led Chiang Kai-shek to regard Japan as China’s chief enemy. See Mitsuta, *Chugoku kokumin seifu ki no kahoku seiji 1928–1937*, 202–204.

³³ Uno Shigeaki, “Chugoku no doko (1933–1939)” (Developments in China [1933–1939]), in *Pacific War Causes Research Department, Japan Association of International Relations, ed., Taiheiyo Senso e no michi*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1962), 281–282.

Hirota's speech, the following February the Nationalist government ordered the nation's newspapers to refrain from publishing anti-Japanese views.³⁴ In March, it ordered the education agencies of each province and city to ban the use of anti-Japanese textbooks in the schools.

The atmosphere of goodwill between Japan and China reached a peak with the exchange of ambassadors on May 17 the same year. The cabinet had already approved a policy of upgrading the permanent emissary to China from minister to ambassador in 1924, and this was finally implemented amid the stabilization of relations and the mood of goodwill spanning 1934 and part of 1935. Japan also lobbied the Western powers (Britain, the United States, Germany, and France) to exchange ambassadors with China and secured their assent. On June 1935 the Nationalist government banned the anti-Japanese movement with the promulgation of the Goodwill Mandate.

Amid this atmosphere of goodwill, the push for a Japan-China economic partnership gained momentum.³⁵ In October the same year, a team of economic observers from the Chinese business community visited Japan, and around the same time a team of economic observers from the Japanese business community visited China. The following year, in January 1936, the Japan-China Trade Association was established in Tokyo, and the China-Japan Trade Association was established in Shanghai.

(4) The He-Umezu Agreement

While Hirota and Shigemitsu, regarding the existence of Manchukuo as a given, were attempting to build stable relations with the Nationalist government as it sought to unify China, developments in North China undermined their efforts again and again. This was because neither of Japan's field armies, the Guandong Army and the China Garrison Army, favored unification of China by the Nationalist government. The Nationalist government had not given up hope of reclaiming its lost territory, and the field armies regarded it as essentially anti-Japanese. With an eye to the defense of Manchukuo and anti-Soviet strategy, they sought to block the Nationalist government from extending its control to North China. They worried that in the event of war with the Soviet Union, the Nationalists would cooperate with the Soviet Union to repel Japan. Officers of the field armies were critical of the exchange of ambassadors, convinced that the Nationalists' attitude of "good faith" was nothing more than posturing.³⁶

³⁴ On developments in Japan-China relations during this period, see Usui, *Nit-Chu gaiko shi kenkyu*, 133–37.

³⁵ Iechika Ryoko, *Sho Kaiseki to Nankin kokumin seifu* (Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Government in Nanjing) (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2002), 182–85; Kobayashi Hideo, "Heisei kaikaku o meguru Nihon to Chugoku" (Japan, China, and Currency Reform), in Nozawa Yutaka, ed., *Chugoku no heisei kaikaku to kokusai kankei* (China's Currency Reform and Foreign Relations) (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1981), 242–243.

³⁶ Tobe Ryoichi, "Rikugun 'Shina tsu' to Chugoku Kokuminto" (The Army's "China Hands" and

This was the background against which a military incident occurred in North China. A militia engaged in anti-Japanese/Manchukuo-resistance activities in the demilitarized zone had been making forays into Rehe and provoking the Guandong Army. Around the middle of May 1935, the Guandong Army, at the end of its rope, crossed the Great Wall line, put down the militia, and withdrew again into Manchukuo territory. The Japanese at that time suspected Hebei Provincial Governor Yu Xuezhong of providing clandestine support for the militia. In addition, in early May the owners of two anti-Chiang, anti-Kuomintang, pro-Japanese newspapers had been assassinated inside the Japanese concession in Tianjin. An investigation by the Japanese concluded that the perpetrator was a member of a special operations arm of the Kuomintang. In this case as well, many in the field army wanted to hold the Hebei government and Kuomintang organs responsible.³⁷

On May 29, Sakai Takashi, chief of staff of the China Garrison Army, charged He Yingqin, acting chairman of the Beiping subcommittee of the Military Council, with responsibility for the two incidents and demanded that all Kuomintang units withdraw from Hebei, that Yu Xuezhong be relieved of his post, and that both Yu Xuezhong's army (formerly the Northeastern Army) and the Central Army relocate outside of Hebei Province. Sakai was acting on his own authority, taking advantage of the absence of Commander Umezu Yoshijiro.³⁸ However, although Umezu and the army high command were momentarily perplexed when presented with a report on the demands already submitted, they approved them after the fact.³⁹

After submitting these demands, the China Garrison Army deployed troops in front of the provincial governor's official residence in Tianjin, and the Guandong Army ratcheted up the pressure by building up troop concentrations near the border. China called on the Japanese government to intervene, but Foreign Minister Hirota refused to get involved, regarding local military issues as outside the purview of diplomatic negotiations. Backed into a corner, He Yingqin finally submitted to Sakai's demands orally on June 10, and the following day he sent a letter recording only the fact that he had accepted the demands. This letter is what is referred to as the He-Umezu Agreement. The Chinese carried out the terms agreed on, but they took the position that they were voluntary administrative measures, not the result of a formal agreement with Japan. In short, China's position was that a He-Umezu Agreement did not exist.⁴⁰

the Kuominang), *Boei Daigakko kiyo* 68 (March 1994), 48–50.

³⁷ Shimada Toshihiko, "Kahoku kosaku to kokko chousei (1933–1937)" (The North China Strategy and Adjustment of Diplomatic Relations, 1933–37), in *Taiheiyō Senso e no michi*, vol. 3, 98–101.

³⁸ On Sakai's arbitrary actions, see Matsuzaki Shoichi, "Saiko Umezu–Ka Okin Kyotei" (The He-Umezu Agreement Reconsidered), in Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso no shoso* (Aspects of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 1997), 35–39.

³⁹ Telegram to Foreign Minister Hirota from the counselor of the embassy in China Wakasugi (June 7), in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers), Showa Period 2, Part 1, Vol. 4a, document 299.

⁴⁰ On the process leading up to the He-Umezu Agreement, see Usui, *Nit-Chu gaiko shi kenkyu*,

Around the same time an incident occurred in Zhangbei, Chahar Province. Members of one of the Japanese army's special operations units had been illegally detained by Chinese troops. To that point there had been repeated clashes between Song Zheyuan's 29th Army (formerly part of the Northwestern Army), garrisoned in Chahar, and the Guandong Army/Manchukuo forces. The Guandong Army tried to take advantage of the incident in Zhangbei to further its strategies for defense of the Manchukuo border and the establishment of autonomous government in Inner Mongolia.

Dispatched by the Guandong Army, Doihara Kenji (chief of the Special Service Agency at Mukden) presented Qin Dechun, deputy to Provincial Governor Song Zheyuan, with a list of demands, including the 29th Army's withdrawal south of the Great Wall and a ban on anti-Japanese organizations, and on June 27 Qin Dechun submitted a written reply acceding to these demands (the Doihara-Qin Agreement). As a result, the 29th Army relocated to Hebei Province. Having battled the Guandong Army fiercely in defense of the Great Wall, and having then been run out of Chahar Province, the 29th Army naturally harbored a deep grudge against the Japanese thereafter.

The Japanese government seemed to be having some measure of success, however limited, in its efforts from 1934 through the first half of 1935 to rebuild stable relations with the Nationalist government, with the existence of Manchukuo as a given. But the machinations of field army officers in North China disrupted these initiatives. The "pro-Japanese" members of the Nanjing government and the Beiping Political Council, who had been working to forge a partnership between Japan and China, lamented the highhanded behavior of Japan's military and the failure of the Japanese government to rein it in. According to Huang Fu, the He-Umezu Agreement undermined their domestic support and "filled them with grief and despair."⁴¹

(5) Hirota's Three Principles

Although the changing situation in North China raised added difficulties, initiatives aimed at stabilizing the Japan-China relationship overall were not abandoned. On the contrary, there was a feeling that the two governments needed to stabilize Japan-China relations overall with the help of an upgrade of diplomatic emissaries from minister to ambassador status if they were to restrain the field armies' unauthorized actions.

So thinking, Japanese and Chinese diplomats entered into consultations aimed at improving relations overall. In January 1935, shortly after Foreign Minister Hirota had called for friendship between Japan and China in the Imperial Diet, Wang

141-54.

⁴¹ Telegram to Foreign Minister Hirota from Ambassador to China Ariyoshi (June 25), in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers) Showa Period 2, Part 1, Vol. 4a, document 245.

Chonghui, a judge on the Permanent Court for International Justice, had visited Japan and put forward three guiding principles for diplomatic relations between Japan and China. In September, Jiang Zuobin, the Nationalist government's first ambassador to Japan, elucidated those principles again. Ambassador Jiang stated that if the principles of (1) respect for one another's independence and equal relations, (2) relations grounded in friendship, and (3) conflict resolution by peaceful means were put into practice, China would overlook the Manchukuo problem for the time being, and further, if Japan would agree to abrogation of the Shanghai Ceasefire Agreement and the Tangu Truce, China would be willing to move ahead with an economic partnership and would consider military cooperation as well.

In Japan, meanwhile, officials of the Foreign Ministry and the Army and Navy ministries had been consulting since around July to hammer out a basic policy toward China, and the outcome appeared on October 4 in the form of "items of understanding" among the three ministers.⁴² These included what were later referred to as "Hirota's three principles": (1) a crackdown on anti-Japanese activities in China and a rejection of policies of dependence on the West by the Chinese government, (2) tacit recognition of Manchukuo's independence (preferably official recognition), and (3) bilateral cooperation to quash the threat of communism (an anti-communist front). In addition, a statement appended to the items of understanding indicated that Japan would neither help nor hinder Chinese unification or fragmentation. This was doubtless added with the situation in North China in mind in order to restrain the army.

Even a cursory comparison of Japan's and China's sets of three principles reveals clearly that while China's principles were at least grounded in reciprocity, Hirota's three principles were nothing but unilateral demands on Japan's part. Rather than give-and-take with the other country, Japan's principles are aimed at accommodating and reconciling the various assertions and demands of the major domestic parties involved. On October 7, Foreign Minister Hirota presented these three principles to Ambassador Jiang. This made it extremely difficult to make progress on negotiations to stabilize relations, since the "principles" that were put forth as premises of such negotiations were problematic themselves. In addition, in the second half of 1935, conditions were becoming less and less conducive to negotiation.

3. Imbrolio in North China

(1) Currency Reform

In addition to the political and military challenges of resisting Japan while suppressing hostile domestic elements, the Nationalist government faced serious

⁴² "Tai-Shi seisaku 'Hirota san gensoku' kettei no keii" (How "Hirota's Three Principles" of China Policy Were Adopted) in Shimada and Inaba, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* 1, 102-8.

problems on the economic front. Compounding the impact of the Great Depression, the prolonged campaigns to eradicate the Communists and armed clashes with Japan since the Manchurian Incident were causing defense spending to swell and straining the state's budget. The loss of Manchuria had led to a substantial drop in tariff revenue. And topping it all off was the US silver policy. Because the United States had been buying up silver on domestic and foreign markets, the price of silver had skyrocketed, and massive amounts of silver were flowing out of China. Since China was on a de facto silver standard, this dealt the country a serious blow.

China called on the United States to stop buying up silver and take steps to restrain silver prices, but cooperation was not forthcoming. Next China requested loans from several countries. Japan, for its part, was hesitant to respond to the request. Because it was pouring so much money into building Manchukuo, the government felt it lacked the fiscal leeway to buy foreign debt. The only way it might comply were if China first repaid its existing debt. Moreover, for China to make effective use of foreign loans, it first needed to overhaul its complicated currency system, and the Japanese did not believe the Nationalist government was capable of achieving that.

In Britain, likewise, the prevailing view was that in the absence of currency reform, a loan would be no more than a temporary stopgap. Still, Chancellor of the Exchequer Neville Chamberlain had hopes for a Japanese-British loan as a way to strengthen collaboration between Japan and Britain and contribute to the stability of East Asia. With the Treasury's encouragement, Britain decided to send Chief Economic Adviser Frederick Leith-Ross to China to assist in China's fiscal rehabilitation.

Before arriving in China, Leith-Ross visited Japan in September 1935 and made a noteworthy proposal to the Japanese government. He made the point that currency reforms to remove China from the silver standard were indicated to save the country from economic chaos, and for those currency reforms to succeed, it was necessary to extend credit. As a means of achieving this, he suggested that Japan and Britain together extend loans to Manchukuo totaling 10 million pounds, and that Manchukuo hand that sum over to China as compensation for the loss of Manchuria. By offering China a joint loan from Japan and Britain by way of Manchukuo, Leith-Ross's plan proposed to extricate China from its economic plight, build cooperative ties between Japan and Britain, and at the same time induce the Chinese government to acknowledge Manchukuo.⁴³ But the Japanese government was unreceptive to the proposal. It remained skeptical of China's ability to accomplish currency reform, and it was opposed to the idea of a joint loan. As the Japanese saw it, a loan from any of the Western powers was undesirable, as it could open the way for an international mandate over China, and at the least would maintain and strengthen the Western powers' political influence. Foreign Minister Hirota and

⁴³ Kibata Yoichi, "Risū-Rosū shisetsudan to Ei-Chū kankei" (The Leith-Ross Mission and Anglo-Chinese Relations), in Nozawa, *Chugoku no heisei kaikaku to kokusai kankei*, 210.

Vice-Minister Shigemitsu argued that it was best for China to bite the bullet for a while and recover by its own efforts rather than rely on loans.⁴⁴

Disappointed by Japan's response, Leith-Ross next advised the Chinese government and made his recommendations for currency reforms, which more or less coincided with the reform plan the Chinese government had been deliberating. So it was that, on November 4, the Nationalist government proclaimed a sweeping monetary reform. In its outlines, the reform instituted a shift from the silver standard to a managed currency system, limited the right to issue currency to three banks, and nationalized silver. Although Britain did not go so far as to extend a loan on its own, it helped the reforms succeed by transferring some of the silver reserves of its own banks to the Chinese. The United States concluded an agreement to purchase Chinese silver (US-China silver agreement), making it possible for China to sell off its silver reserves and abandon the silver standard using the dollars or gold it received as a base.

Japan's dire predictions notwithstanding, China's currency reform was on the road to success. Through currency reform, the Nationalist government hoped to undermine the economic base of such local forces as the Southeastern Faction and the North China warlords and advance unification from that angle as well.⁴⁵

(2) The North China Operation (North China "Autonomous" Movement)

To the Japanese army, the currency reform of the Nationalist government was an unwelcome development. It regarded the reform as something engineered by Britain and feared that it meant an increase in British influence. Nor did it welcome the prospect of the Nationalist government strengthening its economic control over North China. Regional interests motivated some of the North China warlords to resist the currency reforms as well. The Japanese field army in North China began to fight back.

The field army began by pressuring Song Zheyuan and other North China warlords who had relocated from Chahar to Hebei to block the transport of silver coinage to the south and obstruct the currency reform. At the same time, they plowed ahead at full speed with their North China "autonomy" movement, which they had been orchestrating from behind the scenes ever since the He-Umezu agreement.

To encourage the North China warlords to break away from the Nationalist

⁴⁴ Hatano Sumio, "Heisei kaikaku e no ugoki to Nihon no tai-Chu seisaku" (Moves Toward Currency Reform and Japan's China Policy), in Nozawa, *Chugoku no heisei kaikaku to kokusai kankei*; Matsuura Masataka, "Saiko Nit-Chu Senso zenya" (Rethinking the Eve of the Sino-Japanese War), *Kokusai seiji* 122 (September 1999), 135–37.

⁴⁵ For a new interpretation of the political aspects of the currency reform, see Higuchi Hidemi, "1935 nen Chugoku heisei kaikaku no seijishiteki igi" (The Political Significance of the Chinese Currency Reform of 1935), in Hattori Ryuji, et al. eds., *Senkanki no higashi Ajia kokusai seiji* (International Politics in East Asia During the Inter-war Period) (Tokyo: Chuo University Press, 2007).

government, the Guandong Army concentrated part of its troop strength along the border of Manchukuo near the Shanhai Pass. The central army command was surprised by this move, and although it approved the troop movement, it urged the Guandong Army to exercise restraint, arguing that they had not reached the stage of using military force to advance the North China operation. Top officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Army Ministry, and Navy Ministry conferred and agreed to support North China "autonomy," but they also agreed that it was necessary to proceed cautiously to that end, and that where the degree of "autonomy" was concerned, the Japanese should avoid demanding too much at the outset and proceed incrementally.

In China, meanwhile, such local leaders as Song Zheyuan (Beiping-Tianjin regional commander), Shang Zhen (Hebei provincial governor), and Han Fujun (Shandong provincial governor) had been approached by Doihara to assert North China's "autonomy" but were doing their best to parry Japanese pressure and avoid any commitment. In the end, the only concrete achievement of the "autonomy" movement was the establishment on November 25 of the East Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Council (reorganized as the East Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government on December 25), headed by Yin Rugeng, commissioner of the demilitarized zone, and claiming the demilitarized zone as its territory. The Nationalist government issued a warrant for Yin's arrest on charges of treason.

The Nationalist government in Nanjing needed to find a way of convincing the North China warlords not to go along with Japan while also responding to Japan's demands in some measure. To this end, Chiang Kai-shek proposed dissolving the Beiping subcommittee of the Military Council, appointing Song Zheyuan Chief of the Hebei-Chahar Pacification, and dispatching to North China a *daguan* (high official) with a large degree of autonomy. Taking note of this proposal, Ariyoshi Akira, Japan's ambassador to China, offered the opinion that Japan should ease off on the "autonomy" movement and see how Chiang Kai-shek handled the situation. But the Japanese government opposed the dispatch of the *daguan*, wary lest the influence of the Nationalist government and the Kuomintang persist or increase. The Nationalist government sent He Yinjin to North China as *daguan*, but when he tried to consult with the Japanese on such matters as the form of self-government and defense against the Communists, the Japanese refused to meet him.

The Japanese field army stepped up its pressure on the North China warlords. "Autonomy" movements were launched throughout the region, with special operations and other army units manipulating behind the scenes. In reaction to these activities, a group of several thousand demonstrators led by students rallied in Beiping on December 9, calling on the Chinese people to "resist Japan and save the country" and clashing with public security forces. Another demonstration held in Beiping on December 16 drew more than 10,000 participants. With pressure to assert "autonomy" on one side and public opposition to it on the other, the North China warlords aimed for self-preservation with the interests of their own factions in mind.

As the turmoil mounted, He Yingqin was forced to acknowledge that he was helpless to resolve the situation.

The final product of compromise was the creation of the Hebei-Chahar Political Council on December 18. The council was established as a local administrative organ of the Nationalist government, taking the place of the Beiping Political Council, which had been dissolved at the end of the previous August. But the Nationalist government was not permitted to send influential leaders with no power base in North China, such as Huang Fu or He Yingqin, to take charge of administration. Instead, the council remained a regional organ dominated by North China strongmen, as evidenced by the appointment of Song Zheyuan as chairman; this was because the Japanese had insisted on “autonomy” for the North China warlords. To this extent, communication between Nanjing (the Nationalist government) and Beiping (the Hebei-Chahar Political Council) became increasingly patchy. The aims of the central government and the interests of the local warlords became hopelessly tangled.⁴⁶

Japan’s goal at the beginning was “autonomy” for the five provinces of North China (Hebei, Chahar, Shandong, Shanxi, and Suiyuan), but the Hebei-Chahar Political Council had jurisdiction only over the two provinces of Hebei and Chahar and the cities of Beiping and Tianjin. Moreover, while the Japanese wanted the region to break with the Nationalist government, the Hebei-Chahar Political Council had been established as an administrative organ of the Nationalist government. From this standpoint, the Japanese field army in China had yet to achieve its goal of North China “autonomy.”

When the Nationalist government approached Japan’s senior diplomats, calling on Japan to curb the “autonomy” movement, they deflected the request on the grounds that it was an internal Chinese matter. At the same time, they opposed the Nationalist government’s plan to send a *daguan* to North China and avoided all contact with He Yingqin once he reached the North. In January 1936, the Japanese government adopted its first Guidelines for Settling the North China Situation by cabinet resolution. While continuing to call on Japanese forces in China to do nothing rash, it retroactively approved the push for North China “autonomy.”⁴⁷

Inside the Nationalist government, the field army’s machinations in North China had the effect of weakening the co-called pro-Japanese faction. A few months before the Beiping Political Council was dissolved, Huang Fu resigned his position as chairman. In November 1935, Wang Jingwei was shot at by a sniper, and not long after, he resigned his posts as president of the Executive Yuan and foreign minister. In December, vice-minister for foreign affairs Tang Youren, who had presided over

⁴⁶ On relations between the Nationalist government in Nanjing and the North China warlords, particularly Song Zheyuan, see Marjorie Dryburgh, *North China and Japanese Expansion 1931–1937: Regional Power and the National Interest* (Surry: Curzon Press, 2000) and Mitsuta Tsuyoshi, *Chugoku Kokumin seifu ki no Kahoku seiji 1928–1937*.

⁴⁷ Shimada and Inaba, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* 1, 349–50.

China's Japan policy, was assassinated. The diplomatic policy of Hirota and Shigemitsu, which aimed to stabilize relations with China by cooperating with the pro-Japanese faction in the Nationalist government, had lost its key premise, and negotiations on Hirota's three principles were at a virtual standstill.

Furthermore, in February 1936 a group of radical army officers led a coup d'état in Tokyo (the February 26 Incident), temporarily paralyzing the capital. The rebellion was quelled, and a new cabinet was inaugurated with Hirota as prime minister, but the upshot was that the government and the army were both obliged to focus their concerns and efforts on preventing the recurrence of such an incident and maintaining domestic stability.

(3) A Rash of Incidents

In China, a raft of issues and incidents—in North China and other regions as well—were further complicating Japan-China relations. One of the issues complicating bilateral relations was the problem of East Hebei's "special trade."⁴⁸ From China's viewpoint, this was nothing less than smuggling in the region of East Hebei. Even before the Manchurian Incident there was a substantial amount of smuggling of goods from the Guandong Territory across the Bohai Gulf to coastal Hebei and the Shandong Peninsula. But after the incident, smuggling of such Japanese goods as rayon and sugar via the demilitarized zone increased precipitously, encouraged by China's high tariffs on Japanese goods and the fact that the Japanese did not permit Chinese patrol boats to enter the waters off the demilitarized zone.

When the East Hebei government was set up, it levied a special duty on imports to help defray administrative expenses, but this amounted to only about a fourth of the regular tariff imposed by the Nationalist government. The "special trade" that took advantage of this low tax flourished, cutting deeply into the Nationalist government's tariff revenues and disrupting the domestic economy as well. The Chinese protested the situation, but Japan refused to address the matter, calling it an internal Chinese issue.

Japan-China relations in North China were further strained when the China Garrison Army's troop strength was tripled (to about 5,800) in May 1936. The ostensible purpose of this buildup was to deal with the Communist forces, which had established a base in Yan'an in Shaanxi Province after the Long March (October 1935), but there was a hidden motive as well—namely, to force the Guandong Army, which was acting hastily and coercively in its North China "autonomy" machinations, to set aside the North China operation and focus on building Manchukuo. The plan was to put the China Garrison Army in charge of the North

⁴⁸ On East Hebei's "special trade," see Fujieda Kenji, "Kito boeki o meguru seisaku to tai-Chu kanzei hikisage yokyu" (Policies on East Hebei's Special Trade and Demands for China to Lower Tariffs), in Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso sairon* (Reexamining the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 2008).

China operation. For this purpose, its troop strength was increased, and the post of commander was made an imperial commission, on an equal level with the commander of the Guandong Army.⁴⁹

The buildup of the China Garrison Army drew fierce criticism from the Chinese, all the more so because no advance notice was given, and because the Fengtai district [on the outskirts of Beijing], where the new garrison was located, was not expressly included in the Boxer Protocol.⁵⁰ Naturally, the Japanese did not announce that the real motive for the buildup was to put the brakes on the Guandong Army, and as a result the Chinese grew increasingly suspicious that Japan was building up troop levels as part of some nefarious plan.

In Shanghai, meanwhile, an incident occurred in November 1935 in which a sailor in the Japanese naval land forces was shot and killed, and the following February it was determined that the perpetrator was connected with the Kuomintang's special operations agency. The killing of a Japanese sailor in Shanghai inflamed the Japanese navy, which was charged with the protection of Japanese interests and citizens in Central and South China. In August 1936, as the temporarily closed Japanese consulate in Chengdu was about to reopen, a mob attacked a group of Japanese citizens, including newspaper reporters covering the local scene, killing two and injuring two (Chengdu Incident). In September the same year, in Beihai in Guangxi Province, a Japanese citizen who ran a pharmacy was killed (Beihai Incident). Concerned that the 19th Route Army, which had been relocated to Guangxi, was fanning anti-Japanese sentiment in Beihai, the navy deployed a battleship to Beihai to conduct an investigation and adopted a hard line, warning that it might resort to force if the Nationalist government did not take responsibility and solve the case without delay. Shortly after the Beihai Incident, a police officer attached to the Japanese consulate was killed in Hankou, and another sailor was killed in Shanghai. These incidents hardened the navy's attitude.

However, the army was reluctant to send troops to Beihai because it placed more importance on the situation in North China, and ultimately the Beihai Incident was left to be resolved through the negotiations already under way between Ambassador Kawagoe Shigeru and Foreign Minister Zhang Qun to resolve the Chengdu Incident.

⁴⁹ On the China Garrison Army's buildup, see Matsuzaki Shoichi, "Shina Chutongun zokyo mondai (On the China Garrison Army Buildup), *Kokugakuin zasshi* 96-2 (February 1995) and 96-3 (March 1995).

⁵⁰ Originally the Japanese army wanted to locate the new garrison in Tongzhou, but since Tongzhou was not among the locales that the powers were expressly permitted to occupy under the Boxer Protocol, those plans were abandoned out of concern over international criticism. Although Fengtai was not specified in the protocol either, the army chose it for the new garrison because the British army had previously garrisoned troops there without eliciting any protest from the Chinese.

(4) Soviet Strategy and China Policy

Around the same time, the Japanese government was rethinking its China policy in view of the deadlock caused by Hirota's Three Principles and was charting a new course. The army and navy revised their basic defense policy in June 1936, and the government, working in tandem with them, drafted a national strategy document called Fundamentals of National Policy, adopted in August. With this as a basis, the government then drafted its Basic Foreign Policy of the Japanese Empire, the Action Plan toward China, and second Guidelines for Settling the North China Situation.⁵¹

The Action Plan toward China outlined an approach that included steering the Nationalist government toward rejection of the Soviet Union and dependence on Japan and having the Chinese acknowledge the special nature of North China and accept its "autonomy." Specifically, it called for an anti-Communist military alliance with China, installation of Japanese advisors, establishment of air routes between Japan and China, a reciprocal tariff agreement (abolition of the "special trade" in East Hebei in exchange for the reduction of high tariffs on Japanese goods), and the development of an economic partnership.

The inclusion of an anti-Communist pact is noteworthy as an indication of the worsening Japan-Soviet strategic balance at the time. One of the original objectives in initiating the Manchurian Incident was to put Japan on an advantageous footing in terms of its Soviet strategy, yet the outcome, paradoxically, had been a continued deterioration in the strategic balance from Japan's viewpoint. Diplomatically, the Soviet Union adopted a conciliatory attitude toward Japan, but militarily it saw Japan as a serious threat and had strengthened its defenses in the Russian Far East. As of June 1934, the Soviets' troop strength in the Far East was comparable to the manpower of the entire Imperial Japanese Army, and in Manchuria and Korea, which were the front lines of Japan's anti-Soviet defense, the troop strength of the Japanese army was less than 30% that of the Soviet Far Eastern Army. Moreover, this gap continued to widen.⁵²

This unfavorable strategic balance was one underlying reason why the army, concerned over how the Chinese would side in the event of a conflict between Japan and the Soviet Union, was trying to rid North China of the Kuomintang, which it regarded as fundamentally anti-Japanese. In addition, in February 1936, the Communist forces based in Shaanxi Province briefly thrust into Shanxi, adding to concerns in the field army and the central command alike. China Garrison Army Commander Tada Hayao responded by concluding a top-secret anti-Communist pact with Song Zheyuan at the end of March.⁵³ The Japanese also sensed the

⁵¹ Shimada and Inaba, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* 1, 361–71.

⁵² Office of War History, National Institute for Defense Studies, *Daihon'ei Rikugunbu* (The Imperial General Headquarters Army Section) 1, *Senshi Soshō* (War History Series) (Tokyo: Asagumo Shimbunsha, 1967), 352.

⁵³ Usui Katsumi, "Kisatsu seimu iinkai to Nihon" (The Hebei-Chahar Political Council and Japan), *Gaiko Shiryō kampo* 16 (June 2002), 34–35; Yasui Sankichi, *Rokokyo Jiken* (The Marco Polo

Communists' growing influence in the demonstrations staged in Beijing the previous December to protest the North China "autonomy" movement. Ironically, the Communists had seeped in to fill the gap left after the Japanese had expelled the Kuomintang and freed the area from the harsh suppressive tactics of the KMT's special operations agency.⁵⁴

These concerns regarding the Soviets and the Chinese Communists also informed the second Guidelines for Settling the North China Situation. Under the new guidelines, Japan was to avoid actions intended to deny Chinese territorial sovereignty, establish an independent state, or expand the territory of Manchukuo. However, it did intend to promote "separate rule" for North China and establish an anti-Communist, pro-Japanese/Manchukuo zone there, while developing defense resources and expanding and improving the transportation infrastructure to prepare for a Soviet invasion. At the same time, the plan called for trilateral "partnership and mutual aid" between Japan, Manchukuo, and China. Particularly noteworthy here is the fact that "separate rule for North China" appears as an approved government policy. In terms of defense resources to be developed, the plan mentions iron, coking coal, salt, coal liquefaction, cotton, and wool. Surveys of economic resources in North China were already under way, commissioned by the Guandong Army and the China Garrison Army. The Xingzhong Company had been established in December 1935 as a subsidiary of the South Manchuria Railway Company and had launched operations oriented to the development of resources in North China.⁵⁵

The Chengdu Incident occurred just around the time that these policies for "adjustment of diplomatic relations" had taken shape. Initially, the Japanese demands placed priority on resolving of the case through punishment of the perpetrators and others responsible and a crackdown on anti-Japanese activity, but as time went on they expanded to embrace the entire agenda covered by the new "adjustment of diplomatic relations." The series of incidents that followed, including the Beihai Incident, hardened Japan's attitude. The Chinese, for their part, agreed to solve the case and crack down on anti-Japanese activity, but they refused to yield to Japan's other demands. Instead the Chinese confronted the Japanese head-on, calling for abrogation of the Tanggu Truce and Shanghai Ceasefire Agreement, dissolution of the East Hebei government, an end to the free use of North China's airspace (to put pressure on the Chinese to establish air connections between Manchukuo and North China, the Guandong Army was flying military aircraft over North China under the pretext of monitoring the Chinese forces), an end to smuggling, and disbandment of the [Chinese collaborationist] "puppet army" that had penetrated into Inner Mongolia.

Thus, the Kawagoe–Zhang Qun talks that began in September 1936 in response

Bridge Incident) (Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 1993), 68–71.

⁵⁴ Yasui, *Rokokyo jiken*, 85.

⁵⁵ On Japan's economic activity in North China, see Nakamura Takafusa, "Nihon no Kahoku keizai kosaku" (Japan's Economic Strategy in North China), *Nenpo kindai Nihon kenkyu* 2 (1980).

to the Chengdu Incident failed to make headway. While they were under way, the Inner Mongolian Army pushed into northern Suiyuan Province, backed by the Guandong Army, and clashed with Chinese forces. The talks hit an impasse over the event (Suiyuan Incident) and were for all intents and purposes suspended in December that year.

(5) The Inner Mongolia Operation and the Suiyuan Incident

The forces that clashed with the Chinese army in Suiyuan belonged to the army of De Wang [Prince Demchugdongrub] a prince of the Mongolian royal family, which had previously campaigned in Chahar for Inner Mongolian autonomy. The Nationalist government in Nanjing, under pressure from Mongolians demanding autonomy, had established the Mongolian Regional Autonomous Political Council, but De Wang was not satisfied. He approached the Guandong Army, which had used the Doihara-Qin Agreement to drive Song Zheyuan's army out of Chahar. In April 1936, the Mongolian Military Government was set up in Dehua in Chahar, under the Guandong Army's leadership, with De Wang as the head of government, and it quickly concluded a treaty of mutual assistance with Manchukuo.

The driving force behind this high-handed Inner Mongolia operation was Tanaka Ryukichi, a staff officer of the Guandong Army. The central army command was not entirely supportive of his efforts. Before long, De Wang was trying to take control of the eastern region of Suiyuan in order to shore up the weak fiscal base of the Mongolian Military Government. In November that year, a disreputable band of marauders rounded up by Tanaka invaded Suiyuan, calling for Chiang Kai-shek's ouster. However, this force was easily defeated at Honggor. De Wang's Mongolian Army, garrisoned at Bail Miao, was routed by the Suiyuan Army.⁵⁶

The outcome of the Suiyuan Incident was reported with great fanfare in China as the Chinese army's first triumph over Japan and a major victory over the "invincible" Guandong Army, and it was applauded enthusiastically throughout China. Although there is no doubt that the Guandong Army was indirectly involved in the incursion into Suiyuan, it barely participated in the fighting. But the release of pent-up feelings of subjugation toward Japan contributed to an overblown perception of the Chinese victory in the Suiyuan Incident. The Suiyuan Incident fueled anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese and restored their confidence in their ability to stand up to Japan. It was shortly followed by another event that was to change the course of history.

(6) The Xian Incident

On December 12, Chiang Kai-shek was in Xian to launch a new campaign to

⁵⁶ On the Inner Mongolian operation, see Mori Hisao, "Kantogun no Naimo kosaku to Mokyo seiken no seiritsu" (The Guandong Army's Inner Mongolia Strategy and the Establishment of the Mengjiang Government) in *Shokuminchi teikoku Nihon* (Colonial Empire Japan) Iwanami Koza, Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992).

exterminate the Communists when he was seized by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, who called for the two sides in the civil war to conclude a truce and join forces to save China from the Japanese. Zhang and Yang had already entered into a cooperative relationship with the Communists in Yan'an to resist the Japanese. When Zhou Enlai received word of the incident, he flew to Yan'an, and ultimately Chiang Kai-shek was released. Although the events leading up to the incident's denouement remain unclear to this day, there is no doubt that the Xian Incident helped catalyze the joint resistance and Nationalist-Communist united front against Japan that came later.

Ever since the Manchurian Incident, Chiang Kai-shek had sought to compromise with Japan in keeping with his policy of "internal pacification before external resistance," but he had not neglected preparations to fight Japan should it come to that.⁵⁷ In its war to exterminate the Communists, the Nationalist government had brought in military advisors from Germany to help modernize its military organization and operations, and it was in the process of drawing up military plans for fighting the Japanese on the basis of that advice.⁵⁸ In April 1936, it concluded a 100 million mark trade agreement with Germany, a barter agreement under which China would import arms from Germany in exchange for exports of tungsten and other materials. China hoped to contain Japan through this close economic and military relationship with Germany, but when Japan and Germany concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact in November that year, it derailed the Nationalists' plans for using its ties with Germany to contain Japan.

In addition to cooperation with Germany, Chiang Kai-shek had also been exploring the possibility of a collaboration with the Soviet Union (with which it had normalized relations in December 1932) in order to check Japan's advance.⁵⁹ Moreover, the Soviet Union, which had formerly viewed the Kuomintang as the enemy, was now looking to Chiang Kai-shek's leadership to help maintain and strengthen its containment of Japan. The Comintern, having adopted the strategy of the "popular front" against fascism (August 1935), admonished the Chinese Communist Party to give up its "oppose Chiang and resist the Japanese" policy in favor of a "join with Chiang to resist the Japanese" approach. Chiang Kai-shek could not quell his distrust of the Soviet Union, which had made Outer Mongolia into a

⁵⁷ On China's national defense plan, see Yasui, *Rokokyo jiken*, 126–35.

⁵⁸ On the contribution of the German military advisory team to China's preparations for war with Japan, see Hsi-Huey Liang, *The Sino-German Connection: Alexander von Falkenhausen Between China and Germany 1900–1941* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1978), chaps 7 and 8.

⁵⁹ On Chiang Kai-shek's initiatives to enlist the cooperation of Germany and the Soviet Union, see Kinaka Tsuyoshi, "Sho Kaiseki no minzoku kakumei senjutsu to tai-Nichi teiko senryaku" (Chiang Kai-shek's National Revolution Tactics and Anti-Japanese Resistance Strategy), *Kokusai seiji* 152 (March 2008) and Lu Xijun, "Nis-So sogo kensei senryaku no henyō to Sho Kaiseki no 'osen' kettei" (Transformation of the Japan-Soviet Mutual Containment Strategy and Chiang Kai-shek's Decision to Fight Back Against Japan), in *Military History Society of Japan*, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso sairon*.

satellite state, spread communism in Xinjiang, and sold the Chinese Eastern Railway to Manchukuo (i.e., Japan). Still, to resist Japan's strong-arm tactics in North China, he had approached the Soviets to determine whether he could count on military aid from the Soviets in the event of war with Japan.⁶⁰ In addition, while Chiang Kai-shek had never interrupted his campaign to destroy the Red (Communist) Army, he had not ruled out the possibility of a political compromise with the Communists for the purpose of resisting Japan. True, he had not yet given up on the possibility of a rapprochement with Japan. But if attempts to separate North China escalated any further, he would have to prepare for the possibility of an armed confrontation with the Japanese. This was the situation at the time of the Xian Incident.

(7) Tokyo Rethinks Its China Policy

The Xian Incident had a major impact in Japan as well. On the one hand, the incident was taken as evidence of the depth of China's internal divisions; on the other, it was seen as an important turning point in the struggle for national unification. The Guandong Army concluded from the incident that China and the Soviet Union were in complete accord in their anti-Japanese posture, and it argued that Japan should be pursuing North China "autonomy" independently, without regard for the will of the Nationalist government, instead of pushing for devolution of political authority from the Nationalist government, as it had done up to that point.⁶¹ In contrast, the War Guidance Section of the Army General Staff Office pointed out that the Xian Incident had given momentum to the anti-civil war, pro-unification forces in China, and that transformation of the anti-Japanese popular front faction into a healthy movement to build a new China depended on Japan's ability to lay aside the "aggressive imperialist policies" of the past.⁶² From the pundits came a "reassessment of China" that viewed the nation's unification under the Nationalists in a positive light, and in the second half of 1936 certain elements in the business community began to criticize the separatist strategy in North China and to advocate an economic partnership between Japan and China.⁶³

So began a rethinking of Tokyo's China policy. The person who took the

⁶⁰ On Sino-Soviet relations at this time, see Jonathan Haslam, *The Soviet Union and the Threat from the East, 1933–41* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), chapter 3.

⁶¹ Guandong Army Staff Office, "Tai-Shi-Mo josei handan" (Assessment of the Situation in China and Mongolia) (February 1937) in Usui Katsumi, "Showa 12 nen 'Kantogun' no tai Chugoku seisaku ni tsuite" (The Guandong Army's China Policy in 1937), *Gaiko shiryō kampo* 11 (June 1997), 67–70.

⁶² Second Section, Army General Staff Office, "Teikoku gaiko hoshin oyobi tai-Shi jikkosaku kaisei ni kansuru riyu narabini Shina kansatsu no ittan" (Rationale for a Revision of Imperial Japanese Foreign Policy and the Action Plan toward China, together with a Few Things Gleaned from Observing China) in Shimada and Inaba, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* 1, 382.

⁶³ On this point, see Iko Toshiya, "Nit-Chu Senso zenya no Chugoku ron to Sato gaiko" (Views of China on the Eve of the Sino-Japanese War and Sato Diplomacy), *Nihonshi kenkyū* 345 (May 1991).

initiative in this reassessment was Ishiwara Kanji, who had been promoted from head of the War Guidance Section to chief of the Operations Division. Ishiwara wanted to avoid a clash with China and instead focus for the time being on building Manchukuo and creating a strong combined Japan-Manchukuo industrial base to supply the military in preparation for future conflict with the Soviet Union. For this reason he opposed the Inner Mongolia operation, rejected North China separatism, and was even considering dissolving the East Hebei government.

A reexamination of Japan's China policy was also under way in the Foreign Ministry, where the main focus was on halting the operation to establish separate rule for North China and replacing it with economic measures. In March 1937, Sato Naotake was appointed Foreign Minister in the cabinet of Hayashi Senjuro, which had replaced the Hirota cabinet, and a reexamination of Japan's China policy moved into high gear with the Army and Navy ministries involved. In April, the government adopted a new Action Plan toward China and Measures for Leading North China, which stipulated no political maneuvering to achieve "separate rule" in North China or to cause political chaos in China, thus rejecting the policy of promoting separate rule adopted the previous year. In the Action Plan toward China, "a fair-minded approach" to the Nationalist government's unification campaign was put forth as the basis for action, and earlier demands for an anti-Communist pact and a military alliance were dropped. The new plan also dropped the previous year's policy of steering China toward hostility toward the Soviets and dependence on Japan. In Measures for Leading North China, the policy makers agreed to use "economic strategies" vis-a-vis the people of North China to achieve Japan's objectives and to seek the Nationalist government's cooperation in these measures.⁶⁴ It was an epoch-making policy shift.⁶⁵

Around the same time, a team of businessmen visited China, led by Yokohama Specie Bank President Kodama Kenji, and conferred with Chinese businessmen. After the group returned home, Kodama submitted a written opinion to Foreign Minister Sato calling for dissolution of the East Hebei government and abolition of East Hebei's "special trade." Another member of the team, Fujiyama Aiichiro (president of Dai-Nippon Sugar Manufacturing Co.), relayed a message from his father-in-law, Minister of Finance Yuki Toyotaro, to top leaders in the Nationalist government, including the newly appointed foreign minister, Wang Chonghui. The thrust of it was that he hoped to take advantage of a successful Japan-China economic partnership to rein in the local Guandong and China Garrison Armies and stabilize bilateral relations.⁶⁶

In China, the China Garrison Army was sympathetic to the Hayashi cabinet's

⁶⁴ Shimada and Inaba, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* 1, 400–403.

⁶⁵ On the policy shift under Foreign Minister Sato, see Usui, *Nit-Chu gaiko shi kenkyu*, chapter 9, and Fujieda Kenji, "'Sato gaiko' no tokushitsu" (Characteristics of Sato Diplomacy), *Komazawa Daigaku shigaku ronshu* 34 (April 2004).

⁶⁶ Matsuura, "Saiko Nit-Chu Senso zenya," 142–43.

new policy, but the Guandong Army criticized it sharply.⁶⁷ It argued that to abandon political maneuvers and focus on economic stratagems was an extraordinarily passive approach compared with the former policy, and that to seek friendly relations with the Nationalist government, which had no intention of responding to the “adjustment in diplomatic relations” with Japan, would merely encourage China’s exclusionary, contemptuous attitude toward Japan. On the other hand, it argued, if only the use of force were permitted, the most profitable approach would be to give China a drubbing to eliminate the threat from the rear in the event of war with the Soviet Union.

In Japan, the impact of the Xian Incident triggered moves to effect a shift in the nation’s China policy, but there was also deep-seated opposition from the Guandong Army and elsewhere. Moreover, time was needed to reap the benefits of a policy shift, and the Hayashi cabinet resigned en masse in June 1937, before such benefits could accrue. Filling the post of foreign minister under the new Konoe cabinet was Hirota Koki.

(8) On the Eve of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident

Under Japan’s basic national defense policy, China was regarded as a hypothetical enemy. Accordingly, each year the army would draw up a plan of operations to follow in the event that war broke out with China. In consideration of China’s military buildup, the plan of operations for fiscal year 1937 (beginning September 1936) called for a troop strength of 14 divisions, up from 9 the previous year.⁶⁸ Even so, the General Staff Office’s top priority was to boost military readiness for a possible war with the Soviet Union, and its view was that Japan should do its utmost to avoid a war with China.

Under instructions from the General Staff Office, the China Garrison Army drew up plans for seizing control of North China in accordance with this plan of operations.⁶⁹ Moreover, since the plan of operations involved not merely “seizing” key positions in North China but “securing” them for a fairly long period of time,⁷⁰ the field army’s strategy, although a contingency plan, was appropriately detailed.

Moreover, given the situation in North China, such a contingency was becoming a real possibility. In 1936, as a barracks was going up in Fengtai on the outskirts of Beiping to accommodate the China Garrison Army’s troop buildup, dark suspicions spread among the Chinese populace that the Japanese were building a

⁶⁷ Telegram from Counselor Sawada of the Japanese embassy in Manchukuo to Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Horinouchi (June 11), in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers), Showa Period 2, Vol. 5a, document 144.

⁶⁸ Office of War History, National Institute for Defense Studies, *Daihon’ei Rikugunbu* 1, 368–70 and 412–14.

⁶⁹ On the China Garrison Army’s plan for occupation of North China, see Nagai Kazu, *Nit-Chu Senso kara sekai senso e* (From Sino-Japanese War to World War) (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2007), chapter 1.

⁷⁰ Office of War History, National Institute for Defense Studies, *Daihon’ei Rikugunbu* 1, 413.

military airfield.⁷¹ The autumn maneuvers staged by the China Garrison Army the same year in the Beiping-Tianjin area also fueled suspicions among the Chinese.⁷²

Of all the divisions of China's 29th Army, the 37th Division, garrisoned on the outskirts of Beiping, was regarded as the most anti-Japanese. Moreover, the 29th Army had Communist Party members lurking among its senior officers.⁷³ On September 18, 1936, on the fifth anniversary of the Liutiaohu Incident, a skirmish broke out between the Japanese forces in Fengtai and Chinese soldiers of the 37th Division. The situation was resolved by an apology from the Chinese side and withdrawal of the 37th Division from Fengtai, but word spread that the reason the Japanese army had not demanded that the Chinese forces be disarmed was that it feared the 29th Army. It is said that regiment Commander Mutaguchi Ren'ya became incensed when he heard these rumors and told his subordinates that should a similar event happen again, they would have to punish the Chinese army swiftly instead of making allowances, and give their contemptuous, anti-Japanese ideas a good thrashing.⁷⁴

The incident Mutaguchi envisioned occurred 10 months later at Marco Polo Bridge. While conducting nighttime maneuvers to train for battle with the Soviets, a Japanese army unit clashed with Chinese troops. This time the hard-liners who opposed the policy shift of the previous (Hayashi) cabinet, resented Chinese "swaggering," and were scheming to sever North China from the political control of the Nationalist government did not hesitate to give the Chinese "a good thrashing."

⁷¹ Edward J. Drea, "Senso zenya" (The Eve of War), in Hatano Sumio and Tobe Ryoichi, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso no gunjiteki tenkai* (The Military Development of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2006), 27.

⁷² Yasui, *Rokokyo jiken*, 107–13.

⁷³ The vice chief of staff of the 29th Army, Zhang Kexia, was a member of the Communist Party, and the commander of the 37th Division, He Jili, was a communist sympathizer who joined the party in 1939. *Ibid*, 91.

⁷⁴ Hata Ikuhiko, *Rokokyo jiken no kenkyu* (A Study of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1996), 67–69; Usui Katsumi, "Kisatsu seimu iinkai to Nihon," 36–38.

CHAPTER 2

THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1937–45: JAPANESE MILITARY INVASION AND CHINESE RESISTANCE

Hatano Sumio, Shoji Jun'ichiro

Introduction

A distinctive feature of the clashes that broke out between Japan and China starting in July 1937 is that until the start of the Pacific War (J: Taiheiyo Senso, a Japanese term for the Pacific theater of World War II) in 1941, both sides avoided declaring war on each other even though the fighting turned into all-out belligerency. The main reason was that a declaration of war was liable to cause them to become subject to the provisions of the US Neutrality Acts, with effects similar to economic sanctions. In Japan, furthermore, the judgment was that elevating the situation to the status of “war” would hinder its early resolution. Prolongation of the Japan-China conflict also needed to be avoided for the sake of readiness for the confrontation with the Soviet Union and with Britain and the United States—the countries originally envisaged as enemies. Japan thus initially called this war the “North China Incident” (J: Hokushi Jihen) and officially called it the “China Incident” (J: Shina Jihen) starting in September 1937, when the hostilities expanded.

Another distinctive feature is that the Japanese side sent out countless peace feelers during the entire period through various channels. These reflected hopes and anxiousness for an early resolution. Despite this anxiousness for an early resolution, however, the hostilities continued for over eight years, becoming even fiercer than a declared war and imposing great burdens and sacrifices on the people of both nations. The war left deep scars particularly on China, which became the battleground, and the majority of the causes must be said to have been created by the Japanese side.

1. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident and Expansion to All-out War

(1) The Outbreak of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and Factors behind Its Expansion

As of 1937 the Chinese provinces of Hebei and Chahar were under the control of the Hebei-Chahar Political Council, chaired by Song Zheyuan. This Hebei-Chahar administration differed from the East Hebei government in that it had been set up by the Nationalist government as a “buffer organ,” and so quite a few people in Japan’s China Garrison Army harbored doubts about its pro-Japanese posture. Meanwhile, the frequent nighttime exercises that the China Garrison Army conducted looked like “provocations” to the Chinese Twenty-ninth Army that Song Zheyuan

commanded, and they needlessly fanned the suspicions of the Hebei-Chahar administration.

On the evening of July 7, the Eighth Company, Third Battalion, First Infantry Regiment, China Garrison Army, stationed in Fengtai, was again conducting nighttime exercises in the vicinity of the Marco Polo Bridge, spanning the Yongding River to the north of Wanping Fortress. At around 10:40 PM, the unit came under gunfire twice from the direction of the encampment on the left-bank levee. Company commander Shimizu Setsuro sent an orderly to report to battalion headquarters in Fengtai. Battalion commander Ichiki Kiyonao, summoning forces for patrol duty, dispatched a unit of about 500 soldiers to a bluff dubbed Ichimonji-yama near Wanping Fortress. At around 3:30 the following morning, the unit, which had arrived at Ichimonji-yama, confirmed the sounds of gunfire from the direction of Longwang Miao and reported the situation to regimental commander Mutaguchi Ren'ya in Beiping (Beijing), who ordered the unit to engage. Battalion commander Ichiki prepared to engage, giving the order to attack at 5 AM, and he sent the Eighth Company forward to lay siege to the Chinese forces encamped on the embankment. When fighting started between the advancing Eighth Company and the Chinese, Ichiki gave an order for an all-out attack at 5:30 AM. Meanwhile, immediately after the two earlier gunfire attacks, one of the soldiers of the battalion had gone missing; he returned safely to the battalion shortly thereafter, but his return was not reported to company headquarters or others until considerably later, and this was a factor that made the situation even more tense.

As sporadic fighting continued on July 8, since Imai Kiyoshi, vice chief of the Army General Staff, was on sick leave, Ishiwara Kanji, chief of the Operations Division, reported in his place to the Army chief of staff, and he sent an order in the latter's name to the commander of the China Garrison Army to prevent expansion of the incident: "Avoid advancing further and exercising military force." On the following day, July 9, a directive was sent in the name of Vice Chief of Staff Imai setting forth conditions for a cease-fire, including prohibition of garrisoning of Chinese forces on the left bank of the Yongding River, an apology and punishment of those responsible, and a crackdown on anti-Japanese groups. Cease-fire talks were held between Japan's Beiping Special Military Agency and representatives of China's Twenty-ninth Army, and on July 11 the Twenty-ninth Army accepted demands including (1) an apology and punishment of those responsible, (2) not to station troops in Wanping Fortress or Longwang Miao, and (3) a crackdown on anti-Japanese groups; at 8 PM on that day a local cease-fire agreement took effect.¹

¹ The account of the course of events of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident is based on the following sources: Hata Ikuhiko, *Rokokyo Jiken no kenkyu* (A Study of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1996), 138–211; Office of War History, National Defense College (now National Institute for Defense Studies, NIDS), *Shina Jihen Rikugun sakusen* (Army Operations in the China Incident), *Senshi Sosho* (War History Series) 86 (Tokyo: Asagumo Shimbunsha, 1975), 145–51; Yasui Sankichi, *Rokokyo Jiken* (The Marco Polo Bridge Incident)

At an emergency session on July 8, the Konoe Fumimaro cabinet decided not to expand the incident, but this did not mean restraining the dispatch of additional troops to North China. At another emergency cabinet session the following day, Army Minister Sugiyama Hajime argued that it was necessary to dispatch three divisions from the home islands, but other ministers opposed, and the proposal was shelved. But then another clash occurred at Longwang Miao on July 10, and the following day, July 11, the cabinet, while deciding on a policy of nonexpansion and local resolution of the matter, accepted the request of the Army for the dispatch of three divisions (with the actual dispatch put on hold). The statement concerning the dispatch of forces, issued after 6 PM on July 11, declared, "There can no longer be any doubt that this incident was a planned military anti-Japanese [move] entirely from the Chinese side," but it stated, "We do not abandon hope for peaceful negotiations in order to keep the situation from expanding."²

On the evening of July 11, Prime Minister Konoe assembled leading figures from the media and the political and business worlds and requested their total cooperation with a dispatch of forces to North China, declaring that in order to make the Nationalist government see the error of its ways, "There is no choice at this point but to send a considerable number of troops from the Guandong Army, the Japanese Korean Army, and the home islands." Konoe did not desire expansion of the situation, but he believed that if Japan showed a hard-line posture with the dispatch of troops, the Chinese side could be expected to yield, and the situation could be cleared up in short order.³ Be that as it may, the decision to dispatch troops and the announcement thereof were actions that disregarded the efforts to reach a truce that were being conducted simultaneously in the field, and they had the effect of making subsequent negotiations in the field difficult.⁴

(Tokyo: Kenbun Shuppan, 1993), 141–257; Teradaira Tadasuke, *Rokokyo jiken: Nihon no higeki* (The Marco Polo Bridge Incident: Japan's Tragedy) (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shimbunsha, 1970), 54–125; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MoFA), ed., *Gaimusho shitsumu hokoku: Toa Kyoku* (Report on Official Business of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: Bureau of Asiatic Affairs), vol. 3 (1937 [1]) (Tokyo: Kuresu Shuppan, 1993), chaps. 1 and 2.

² MoFA, ed., *Nihon gaiko nenpyo narabi ni shuyo bunsho* (Chronological Table and Important Documents of Japanese Diplomacy), vol. 2 (Tokyo: U.N. Association of Japan, 1955; reprint, Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1966), 366.

³ Shoji Jun'ichiro, "Nit-Chu Senso no boppatsu to Konoe Fumimaro no taio" (The Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War and Konoe Fumimaro's Response), *Shin boei ronshu* 15, no. 3 (1988), 78–81; Usui Katsumi, *Nihon gaikoshi kenkyu: Showa zenki* (Studies in the Diplomatic History of Japan-China Relations: Early Showa Era) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1998), 212–42.

⁴ Imai Takeo, who as a member of Japan's Tianjin Special Military Agency took part in the cease-fire talks with the Twenty-ninth Army, wrote as follows in his memoirs: "Inasmuch as this was an extremely delicate juncture, when both the Japanese and Chinese sides were working toward a local settlement, the Court Council decision rendered our activities difficult as the local Japanese representatives, and it also caused a chain reaction on the Chinese side, hardening their attitude; it had a destructive impact on both sides." Imai Takeo, *Shina Jihen no Kaiso* (Reminiscences on the China Incident) (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1964), 31–32.

On the Chinese side, meanwhile, the rise of anti-Japanese sentiment lessened the possibility of accepting an accommodative cease-fire. On July 8, one day after the incident, the Communist Party issued a nationwide telegraphic bulletin calling for the launch of a defensive war against Japan and the formation of a united front between the Nationalists and the Communists. For his part, Nationalist Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek emphasized a peaceful settlement of the incident for the time being, because preparations of the domestic and international arrangements for war with Japan had not been completed. Thus, in his July 17 Lushan Statement (released on July 19), Chiang, while expressing hope for a diplomatic settlement, declared that China would definitely go to war if the incident could not be settled and matters came to the final pass.⁵

Meanwhile, efforts to settle the incident continued in Tianjin, and on July 19 a document on implementation terms for the control of anti-Japanese activities (a detailed armistice), under which the Chinese side accepted the conditions set by the Japanese side, was signed between the forces in the field.⁶ On July 21 the China Garrison Army sent a cable to the Army General Staff Office in Tokyo expressing caution regarding the dispatch of additional forces, declaring, "The Twenty-ninth Army has accepted the [Japanese] Army's demands across the board and is moving to implement them point by point," but on the previous day, July 20, the cabinet had approved the dispatch of forces to North China. This was in response to a request from the Army, but the Army General Staff once again put off the dispatch of forces in response to the opinion of Japan's China Garrison Army and reporting concerning the situation in the field from personnel sent there by the General Staff itself.

Then, however, in response to two skirmishes that broke out consecutively on July 25 and 26 (the Langfang and Guang'anmen Incidents), the Army decided to carry out the postponed mobilization of the three divisions, and the cabinet approved this move on July 27. The China Garrison Army commenced an all-out offensive on July 28, and on the following day it took nearly complete control over Beijing and Tianjin as far south as the Yongding River. The Tongzhou Incident (Tungchow Mutiny),⁷ which occurred just after this, solidified hard-line public

⁵ The Japan Institute of International Affairs, ed., *Chugoku Kyosanto shi shiryoshu* (Materials on the History of the Communist Party of China), vol. 8 (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1974), 434–35 (appendix 75), 468–71 (appendix 84); Ishijima Noriyuki, *Chugoku konichi sensoshi* (History of China's War of Resistance against Japan) (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1984), 59–60.

⁶ Katsuki Kiyoshi, commander of the China Garrison Army, reported his judgment as follows in his memoirs: "With this the local negotiations were completely settled, and so in formal terms the China Garrison Army had achieved a local settlement as directed by Tokyo in line with the policy of nonexpansion [of the incident]." "Katsuki Kiyoshi djujo kaisoroku" (Reminiscences of Lieutenant General Katsuki Kiyoshi), in Kobayashi Tatsuo, Inaba Masao, and Shimada Toshihiko, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* (The Sino-Japanese War), vol. 4, Gendaishi shiryō (Materials on Modern History) 12 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1965), 538.

⁷ This was an incident in which security forces of the East Heibei government slaughtered around 200-plus Japanese residents and others in Tongzhou, a city in the suburbs of Beijing.

opinion in Japan against China.

Despite this expansion of the situation, the policy of nonexpansion continued to be maintained, and the Army General Staff's plan for the dispatch of forces was undertaken under a basic policy of limiting the operation to Beijing and Tianjin. Starting late in July, Operations Division chief Ishiwara, along with Army Ministry Military Affairs Section chief Shibayama Kaneshiro, worked on the Foreign Ministry and the Navy, pursuing the possibility of accepting a cease-fire from the Nationalist government side. The Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministries together set conditions for a cease-fire, and Funatsu Tatsuichiro, head of the Association of Japanese Textile Businesses in China, was asked to approach the Chinese side in Shanghai (the "Funatsu peace initiative"). Funatsu arrived in Shanghai on August 7 and initiated contacts, but because of the tension in the situation in Shanghai, they did not progress.⁸

The initial shooting incident at the Marco Polo Bridge was "adventitious,"⁹ and efforts to reach a local settlement were undertaken in the field. But the China Garrison Army (later to become the North China Area Army) and Guandong Army, seeing this clash as offering a good opportunity, moved to implement their vision of toppling the government of Chiang Kai-shek and occupying North China by using their overwhelming military strength. One of the major reasons why it was not possible to restrain the activities of the forces in the field was the existence of a conflict within the Army between the "expansionists" and the "nonexpansionists." Nonexpansionists like Ishiwara argued for a local settlement on the grounds that a war with China would inevitably drag on, sapping Japan's national strength and interfering with military preparations against the Soviet Union, and that it might invite Soviet intervention. By contrast, expansionists like Army Affairs Section chief Tanaka Shin'ichi and Operations Section chief Muto Akira made the case for the "single blow" approach starting immediately after the incident occurred, calling for settling the Japan-China problem in one fell swoop by dealing a blow to the Nationalist government forces and pushing the Nationalists to switch away from their anti-Japanese stance. This "single blow" camp overwhelmed the nonexpansionists and became the majority within the Army.¹⁰

⁸ Tobe Ryoichi, *Pisu fra: Shina Jihen Wahei Kosaku no Gunzo* (Peace Feelers: The Crowd of Peace Initiatives during the China Incident) (Tokyo: Ronsosha, 1991), 31–35.

⁹ The mainstream view among Japanese researchers is that the gunfire was adventitious, while many Chinese scholars take the view that the shooting was planned by the Japanese military. Hata surmises that it was adventitious fire by army officers (Hata, op. cit., 138–82). Yasui subscribes to the "adventitious" view, but he finds fault with the response of the Japanese Army immediately thereafter (Yasui, op. cit., 168, 300–16).

¹⁰ Hata, op. cit., 282–339. Takahashi Hisashi, "Nik-Ka Jihen shoki ni okeru Rikugun chusubu" (The Army Nerve Center in the Early Stage of the Sino-Japanese Incident), in *Nempe kindai Nihon kenkyu* 7 (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1985), 188–93; "Ishiwara Kanji Chujo kaiso otoroku" (Interview Record of Lieutenant General Ishiwara Kanji's Reminiscences), in Usui Katsumi and Inaba Masao, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso* (The Sino-Japanese War), vol. 2, Gendaishi shiryō (see note 6) 9

During the crucial first few days after the incident, contacts through diplomatic channels were limited to a few between Counselor Hidaka Shinrokuro and the Chinese Foreign Ministry; the Army held the initiative in dealing with the matter, and the diplomatic authorities were powerless. Factors promoting expansion of the incident were also present in government and public opinion. As noted above, the government announced the dispatch of forces at an early stage, disregarding the cease-fire efforts in the field; Prime Minister Konoe was in concord with this, and the opinions expressed in the mass media were all in favor of “teaching the rogue Chinese a lesson.” Factors of this sort combined to encourage the Japanese Army’s invasion of North China. The Konoe cabinet, rather than restrain expansion of the incident, took it as a good chance for a breakthrough in its stalemated China policy and approved a major dispatch of forces with a view to the quick defeat of Chiang Kai-shek’s government, dismissing the efforts to reach a local settlement.

During this period, on July 29 Chiang Kai-shek held an emergency press conference at which he expressed his judgment that the situation had now come to the final pass, declaring there was no possibility of a local settlement and expressing his renewed determination to fight; he then moved to settle the outstanding differences between the Nationalist and Communist parties with the aim of forming a unified front against Japan (the Second United Front). Chiang came to seek final victory through “internationalization” of the war with such initiatives as the conclusion of a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union (August 21) aimed at securing leadership over the united front for himself, a request to the Soviet Union to join in the war against Japan (November 26), and an appeal to the League of Nations regarding the situation in North China (September 12).¹¹

(2) Active Intervention by the Guandong Army and the Advance to the South by the North China Area Army

Before the outbreak of the incident, it was the Guandong Army more than the China Garrison Army that had been pushing Tokyo to take a hard-line policy toward China. The War Ministry dispatched Military Affairs Section chief Shibayama to Mukden at the end of May, and he explained to the Guandong Army the decision of the four ministers’ meeting (among the prime minister and the foreign, army, and navy ministers), “Implementation Policy toward China” (April 16, 1937), which sought an end to operations aimed at separating North China from the rest of the country, but those in the Guandong Army did not accept the need for diplomatic adjustments

(1964), 305–13.

¹¹ Kinaka Tsuyoshi, “Sho Kaiseki no minzoku kakumei senjutsu to tai-Nichi teiko senryaku” (Chiang Kai-shek’s National Revolution Tactics and Anti-Japanese Resistance Strategy), *Kokusai seiji* 152 (March 2008), 76–78; Lu Xijun, “Seikaika suru senso to Chugoku no ‘Kokusaiteki kaiketsu’ senryaku” (The Globalization of the War and China’s “International Solution” Strategy), in Ishida Ken, ed., *Bocho suru teikoku kakusan suru teikoku :Dainiji taisen ni mukau Nichi-Ei to Ajia* (A Swelling Empire, a Proliferating Empire: Japan/Britain and Asia Head toward World War II) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2007), 211–19.

with the Nanjing government; instead they spoke only of dealing the Chinese a military blow.¹² After the outbreak of the incident, the Guandong Army submitted repeated proposals to the Army General Staff Office for the use of military force in Inner Mongolia in coordination with the campaign in North China so as to promote the operations in Inner Mongolia and prevent the advance of the Chinese army into Rehe and Chahar, but the General Staff, which was taking a nonexpansionist stance, did not approve this through the end of July. On August 7, however, in the face of the strong requests from the Guandong Army, the General Staff approved the Chahar military operation. This operation, whose aim was to clear out the Chinese forces in Chahar Province, had originally been the responsibility of the China Garrison Army, with the Guandong Army playing a subsidiary role, but with this decision the roles of the two armies were reversed, with the Guandong Army assuming the lead. The Mengjiang corps, which was dispatched to Chahar, pushed toward Zhangjiakou and occupied it at the end of August. The Guandong Army subsequently continued to advance southward, bringing both Chahar Province and Suiyuan Province under its control and setting up one puppet regime after another. The objective was to remove North China and Inner Mongolia from the influence of the Chinese government, secure the right to station forces in key locations, and undertake preferential development of important resources.

In North China, meanwhile, on August 31 the China Garrison Army was reorganized as the North China Area Army (commanded by Terauchi Hisaichi). With the addition of troops from the Japanese Korean Army and the home islands and made up of eight divisions, the NCAA was a major force; it was divided into two armies and advanced south, invading the provinces of Hebei, Shanxi, and Shandong. By the end of September it had occupied Baoding, but since the Chinese army was using the tactic of melting away, the operation did not accomplish its objective. However, even though the NCAA's area of operation had been indicated to be up to around Baoding and Cangzhou, the army took advantage of its own momentum and went beyond this line. The General Staff approved this after the fact, and the operation was extended to the Shijiazhuang–Dezhou line, but the NCAA ended up going way beyond this line as well. By mid-October it had occupied Shijiazhuang. The offensive, which was supposed to end with the Baoding operation, ended up being pushed forward by the NCAA to develop into the Shijiazhuang operation. The NCAA further came to judge that it was necessary to attack Xuzhou in order to break the Nanjing government's will to fight.

(3) Forces Dispatched to Shanghai

To turn to developments in the Navy, after the incident broke out, some within the Naval General Staff Office and the Third Fleet, which was responsible for patrol

¹² Usui Katsumi, "Shiryo kaidai Showa 12 nen 'Kantogun' no tai Chugoku seisaku ni tsuite" (Annotated Materials on the Policy of the "Guandong Army" toward China, Showa 12 [1937]), *Gaiko shiryo kanpo* 11 (June 1997), 64–65.

operations in China, argued for air raids as a stiff response, but Navy Minister Yonai Mitsumasa was looking for a diplomatic settlement, and he placed his hopes in the Funatsu peace initiative that was being conducted under wraps. The murder of Japanese naval personnel in Shanghai on August 9 (the Oyama Incident), however, aroused hard-line thinking within the Navy.¹³ The naval landing force standing by in Sasebo was hastily dispatched, and the situation in Shanghai became explosive.

On August 12 the standing committee of the Nationalist Party's Central Executive Committee decided secretly to plunge into a state of belligerence. At the break of dawn on August 14 the Chinese army launched a preemptive attack, and the Chinese air force bombed the *Izumo*, flagship of the Japanese Third Fleet, and the headquarters of the Japanese naval landing force. Chiang Kai-shek decided to wage an all-out counterattack to defend Shanghai in hopes of drawing the Soviet Union into the conflict and getting the Western powers to impose sanctions on Japan; he also hoped to split up the Japanese forces and derail the Japanese plan to occupy North China.¹⁴ The Nationalists sent their elite troops to take part in the defense of Shanghai; their total forces topped 700,000, and the number of combat deaths was tremendous.

At the cabinet meeting on August 13, the opinions of Operations Division chief Ishiwara and others who did not favor the dispatch of forces were overruled, and the dispatch of an additional army contingent to Shanghai was approved.¹⁵ Navy Minister Yonai was not actively in favor of the dispatch either. But the bombing of the flagship *Izumo* by the Chinese air force caused him to change his position sharply, and at the emergency cabinet meeting held on August 14 to draft a government statement, he argued for abandonment of the policy of nonexpansion and went so far as to propose the occupation of Nanjing. Because of the opinion of War Minister Sugiyama, who continued to favor a prompt settlement under the nonexpansionist policy out of consideration for the possibility of conflict with the Soviet Union, the government statement of August 15 did not explicitly declare abandonment of nonexpansion, insisting that the dispatch of forces was not for the overthrow of the Nanjing government but to "encourage it to repent."¹⁶ Yonai's

¹³ Aizawa Kiyoshi, *Kaigun no sentaku: Saiko Shinjuwan e no michi* (The Navy's Choice: Reconsidering the Road to Pearl Harbor) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2002), 104. Hosokawa Morisada, Oi Atsushi, Agawa Hiroyuki, and Toyota Kumao, eds., *Takamatsunomiya nikki* (Diary of Prince Takamatsu), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chuo Koron sha, 1995), 530 and 533.

¹⁴ Yang Tianshi, "1937, Chugoku gun tai-Nichi sakusen no daiichinen" (1937, First Year of the Chinese Army's Anti-Japanese Operations), trans. Chen Chunyuan, in Hatano Sumio and Tobe Ryoichi, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso no gunjiteki tenkai* (The Military Development of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2006), 99 and 108; Yang Tianshi, *Wo xun zhenshi de Jiang Jieshi* (My Search for the Real Chiang Kai-shek) (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 2008), 244.

¹⁵ "Chushi hahei no kettei" (The Decision to Dispatch Forces to Central China), in Kobayashi, Inaba, and Shimada, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso*, vol. 4, 364–94.

¹⁶ Aizawa, op. cit., 105–10; NIDS, *Daihon'ei Kaigunbu Daito Senso kaisen keii* (Imperial General Headquarters, Navy Department, Background to the Start of the Greater East Asia War), vol. 1,

shift to active support for the dispatch meant the loss of a check on the Navy's tilt toward a hard-line stance.

The Shanghai Expeditionary Army, which was ordered into action on August 15, was formed not as a purely operational force in the "order of battle" but as a "tactical grouping" for temporary dispatch. And its mission was limited to the protection of Japanese citizens in Shanghai.¹⁷ But the Battle of Shanghai, in which the Chinese forces put up a fierce defense, changed the incident from a localized conflict to a de facto all-out war.

At the end of September, Ishiwara Kanji was replaced by Major General Shimomura Sadamu as chief of the Operations Division. Like Ishiwara, Shimomura feared that prolongation of the war might lead to Soviet intervention, but his conclusion was that Japan needed to fight actively in a short, decisive engagement to demolish the enemy's principal forces, shifting the main battlefield from North to Central China.¹⁸ Lieutenant General Tada Hayao, who became vice chief of staff in August, also supported this view. The first step in this active fight was the surprise attack and landing in Hangzhou Bay by the Tenth Army on November 5. Immediately after this the Shanghai Expeditionary Army and the Tenth Army were merged, and the Central China Area Army was provisionally created, under the command of Matsui Iwane. The mission of the CCAA was not to protect Japanese residents but, like the NCAA, to break the enemy's will to fight. The success of the landing in Hangzhou Bay transformed the military situation in the Shanghai area: The Chinese forces started to withdraw, and in mid-November the Japanese forces were in control of all of Shanghai.

The Tenth Army, however, called for a further offensive to block the enemy's retreat. The Operations Division set the line from Suzhou to Jiaxing as the western perimeter for the operation (the "control order line"). The CCAA, after quickly advancing as far as this line, urged that the perimeter be removed, calling for an advance on Nanjing.¹⁹ Nanjing had been under heavy bombardment from Japanese Navy planes flying in from across the sea since August 15, and the indiscriminate bombing of not just Nanjing but also Shanghai, Hankou, and other cities had become the target of international criticism.

(4) The Taking of Nanjing and the Nanjing Massacre

At the Army General Staff Office, Operations Section chief Kawabe Torashiro, Deputy Chief of Staff Tada, and others opposed a further expansion of the zone of

Senshi Soshō (see note 1) 100 (1979), 214.

¹⁷ NIDS, *Shina Jihen Rikugun sakusen*, vol. 1, 266. The official "order of battle" was issued on September 11 (*ibid.*, 298).

¹⁸ "Shimomura Sadamu Taisho kaiso otoroku" (Interview Record of General Shimomura Sadamu's Reminiscences), in Usui and Inaba, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso*, vol. 2, 378–81.

¹⁹ Imoto Kumao, *Sakusen nisshi de tsuzuru Shina Jihen* (The China Incident as Told in Military Operation Diaries) (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo, 1978) reprinted as *Shina Jihen sakusen nisshi* (Military Operation Diaries of the China Incident) (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo Shuppan, 1998), 161–79.

operation. Within the office a fierce debate unfolded over whether to remove the control order line and head for Nanjing or not. In the end it was repeated requests from the CCAA that turned the Operations Division in favor of capturing Nanjing.²⁰

On November 15 the Tenth Army decided to carry out a “discretionary pursuit” and launched an offensive advance on Nanjing. CCAA commander Matsui agreed with this and pressed the Army General Staff [to issue a formal order]. Within the Army General Staff, Tada and Kawabe, bearing in mind the Trautmann operation, which was then still in progress, were aiming to resolve the conflict with China politically, through peace talks, before the capture of Nanjing. But it was difficult to stop the advance, and on December 1 the CCAA was given the order to take Nanjing. On December 10 Japanese forces launched an all-out attack on the city, and on December 12 the first unit broke through the walls and entered the walled city. On the following day, December 13, Japanese forces occupied the city.

During this period, senior officials of the Chinese government left Nanjing one after another, and many residents fled to the Nanking Safety Zone (“Refugee Zone”). Also, the Chinese military torched many buildings so that the Japanese forces could not use them.²¹

The Nationalist government had decided in mid-November to move the capital to Chongqing, but Chiang Kai-shek showed resistance to a withdrawal from Nanjing, the capital, and he decided upon a policy of stoutly defending the city for a certain period. Tang Shengzhi, who was placed in command of Nanjing’s defense, initially intended to defend the city to the death, and rejected Matsui’s call to open the city and surrender. However, upon receiving an order on December 11 from Chiang Kai-shek to retreat, on December 12 Tang ordered the officers directing Nanjing’s defense to break through the surrounding forces and withdraw.²² But only a very few units were able to withdraw as planned, and with their path blocked by

²⁰ Battle of Nanjing Editorial Committee, ed., *Nankin senshi* (History of the Battle of Nanjing) (Tokyo: Kaikoshu, enlarged and revised edition, 1993), 17–20.

²¹ Sun Zhaiwei, ed., *Nanjing da tu sha* (The Nanjing Massacre) (Beijing: Beijing Chuban She, 1997), 72–73 and 83; Kasahara Tokushi, *Nankin Jiken* (The Nanjing Incident) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 120. For reports in the American media, see Nanjing Incident Research and Study Association, ed. and trans., *Nankin Jiken shiryoshu 1, Amerika kankei shiryohen* (Materials on the Nanjing Incident, vol. 1, US-Related Materials) (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten Co., 1992), 387–88, 390, 394, 431–2, 473–5, etc.

²² Tang Shengzhi, “Nankin boei no keika” (The Course of the Defense of Nanjing), in Battle of Nanjing Editorial Committee, ed., *Nankin senshi shiryoshu* (Materials on the Battle of Nanjing), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kaikoshu, enlarged and revised edition, 1993), 623–26. Chiang Kai-shek’s decision to go ahead with the defense of Nanjing to the death has also been attributed to his hope for military intervention by the Soviet Union. Kasahara Tokushi, “Kokumin seifugun no kozo to sakusen” (The Structure and Operations of the Nationalist Government Army) in the Institute of Cultural Science, Chuo University, ed., *Minkoku koki Chugoku Kokuminto seiken no kenkyu* (Studies on the Chinese Nationalist Administration in the Latter Years of the Republic of China) (Tokyo: Chuo University Press, 2005), 281–82; Yang, “1937, Chugoku gun tai-Nichi sakusen no daiichinen,” 116–18; Yang, *Wo xun zhenshi de Jiang Jieshi*, 240–41.

the Yangzi River, the Chinese forces fell into disorder, and many stragglers changed into civilian clothes and fled into the “Refugee Zone.”²³

Because of the many breaches of discipline that had occurred since the Battle of Shanghai, the CCAA issued a set of strict restraints (“Guidelines for the Capture of Nanjing”) aimed at the units that would enter the walled city after Nanjing fell, calling for “especially strict observance of military discipline and moral order.” But there were cases of both mass and individual killings by Japanese soldiers of prisoners, stragglers, soldiers in civilian clothing, and some ordinary citizens, and there were also many cases of rape, pillage, and arson. The number of victims of massacre by the Japanese forces was said to be over 200,000 at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (over 100,000 in the sentence against commander Matsui) and over 300,000 at the 1947 Nanjing War Crimes Tribunal; the current Chinese view is based on the latter tribunal. Research by the Japanese side, by contrast, has come up with a variety of estimates, such as 40,000 and 20,000, with 200,000 as the highest estimate.²⁴ Behind these differing estimates of the number of victims lie differences with respect to the definition of “massacre” (illegal killing), the geographical area and time span involved, and the results of inspection of written materials, such as burial records and population statistics.²⁵

The violence of the Japanese troops was reported in the foreign media, and it was also brought to the attention of the Japanese Foreign Ministry through complaints lodged with the Japanese embassy by the International Committee for the Nanking Safety Zone;²⁶ reports also reached Army headquarters in Tokyo. This led to the issuance on January 4, 1938, of an exceptional request to commander Matsui in the name of Army Chief of Staff Prince Kan'in Kotohito: “[We] earnestly request enhancement of military discipline and public morals.”²⁷

²³ Commander Tang ordered his troops to defend their positions to the death and strictly forbade them to cross the Yangzi River without permission, using force to stop violators; as a result the Chinese started firing on each other and many soldiers perished in vain as they attempted to flee. Sun, *op. cit.*, 70–71, 76, and 78. Usui Katsumi, *Shimpan Nit-Chu Senso* (The Sino-Japanese War: New Edition) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2000), 83–85.

²⁴ Hata Ikuhiko, *Nankin Jiken* (The Nanjing Incident) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, enlarged edition, 2007), 317–19.

²⁵ The most extensive set of materials published in Japan is the Battle of Nanjing Editorial Committee, ed., *Nankin senshi shiryoshu* (Materials on the Battle of Nanjing), vols. 1 and 2 (Tokyo: Kaikoshu, enlarged and revised edition, 1993); this includes such materials as the diary of Nakajima Kesago, commander of the Sixteenth Division, the diary of Iinuma Mamoru, chief of staff of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army, the memos of Sasaki Toichi of the Thirtieth Infantry Brigade, and the campaign diary of Matsui Iwane, commander of the CCAA.

²⁶ In his diary for January 6, 1938, Ishii Itaro, head of the Foreign Ministry’s Bureau of Asiatic Affairs, wrote as follows: “Received cable from Shanghai, detailed reports on violence by our army in Nanjing. Looting, rapes, scenes too horrible to look at. Alas, is this the Imperial Army?” (Ito Takashi and Liu Jie, eds., *Ishii Itaro nikki* [The Diary of Ishii Itaro] [Tokyo: Chuo Koron sha, 1993], 240.)

²⁷ Battle of Nanjing Editorial Committee, ed., *Nankin Senshi* (enlarged and revised edition),

A variety of causes have been advanced as factors contributing to the killings and other breaches of discipline: For one thing, since the fighting against China was treated as an “incident” without a declaration of war, the Japanese side lacked guidelines for the treatment of captives and plans for military administration, including the protection of residents in occupied territories. In addition, there were few military police to enforce discipline, on top of which, since the capture of Nanjing was undertaken without regard to supplies of food and materiel, looting occurred, and this contributed to the loosening of discipline and occurrence of unlawful activities.²⁸ After the war, commander Matsui was charged with responsibility and sentenced to death by the Military Tribunal for the Far East, and Tani Hisao, commander of the Sixth Division, was similarly sentenced by the Nanjing War Crimes Tribunal. Secondary factors that expanded the scale of the tragedy included mistakes in the tactics of the Chinese defense of Nanjing and the concomitant collapse of Chinese military command and control, along with the lack of measures by the Chinese themselves to protect civilians.²⁹ John Rabe of the International Committee for the Nanking Safety Zone expressed his concern, declaring, “I fear that General Tang, who is defending the city, will ruthlessly sacrifice both his soldiers and the civilian population”; he criticized the irresponsible disregard of the Nationalist government and military leadership for the lives of Chinese citizens.³⁰

The occupation of Nanjing, the Chinese capital, caused the spread of a sense

398–99.

²⁸ Hata, *op. cit.*, 103–7. The treatment of prisoners—killed, freed, or pressed into forced labor—differed according to which unit they were captured by. See Hara Takeshi, “Twayuru ‘Nankin Jiken’ no fuho satsugai” (Illegal Killings in the So-called “Nanjing Incident”), in Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso sairon* (Reexamining the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 2008), 139–55; Kita Hiroaki, *Nit-Chu Kaisen* (The Start of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron sha, 1994), 54–68; Kasahara Tokushi, *Nankin Nanminku no hyakunichi* (One Hundred Days in the Nanjing Refugee Zone) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), 25–54.

²⁹ Sun Zhaiwei, “Nankin Boeigun to Tang Shengzhi” (The Nanjing Defense Army and Tang Shengzhi), trans. Kasahara Tokushi, in Hora Tomio, Fujiwara Akira, and Honda Katsuiichi, eds., *Nankin Jiken wo kangaeru* (Thinking about the Nanjing Incident) (Tokyo: Otsuki Shoten, 1987), 153–58; Yang, “1937, Chugoku gun tai-Nichi sakusen no daiichinen,” 113–22; Kasahara Tokushi, “Nankin Boeisen to Chugoku gun” (The Defense of Nanjing and the Chinese Army), in Hora Tomio, Fujiwara Akira, and Honda Katsuiichi, eds., *Nankin daigyakusatsu no kenkyu* (Research on the Nanjing Massacre) (Tokyo: Banseisha, 1992), 214–41.

³⁰ John Rabe, *Nankin no shinjitsu* (The Truth of Nanking), trans. Hirano Kyoko (Tokyo: Kodansha, Ltd., 1997), 83–90. Originally published in German as Erwin Wickert, ed., *Der gute Deutsche von Nanking* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt GmbH, 1997). The translation of the quote into English is from *Good Man of Nanking: The Diaries of John Rabe*, trans. John E. Wood (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998). Examples of studies looking at the incident from the perspectives of “constructive dialogue” and “shared understanding” include Yang Daqing, “Nankin atoroshitizu” (Nanjing Atrocities), in Liu Jie, Mitani Hiroshi, and Yang Daqing, eds., *Kokkyo o koeru rekishi ninshiki* (Cross-border Historical Recognition) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2006), 139–68.

of victory both in the government and among the general public in Japan, and this had a major impact on policies for settling the situation and conditions for peace. The “Guidelines for Dealing with the China Incident” adopted by the Konoe cabinet at the end of December also reflected this victor’s mind-set, calling for North China and the area around Shanghai to be placed under strong Japanese influence, both politically and economically.³¹

(5) Struggling over Peace: The Trautmann Operation³² and the Nine-Power Treaty Conference

The basic posture of the Japanese government regarding settlement of the incident was that it was a matter to be settled between Japan and China; Japan rejected the mediation or interference of third parties. But in September, as the situation took on the aspect of a long-term conflict, Japan began to consider the possibility of peace based on use of favorable intermediation by a third party in response to the achievement of its military objectives. The first country to speak up in this connection was Britain. In mid-September, Robert Craigie, the new British ambassador to Japan, approached Foreign Minister Hirota Koki regarding the possibility of intermediation, and Hirota indicated specific conditions for peace. These included the establishment of a demilitarized zone in North China; the control of anti-Japanese activities and cooperation in resisting the Communists, conditional on which Japan would dissolve the administration in North China and recognize administrative control by the Nationalist government; and acceptance that the status of Manchukuo was not to be questioned. These terms were conveyed to Chiang Kai-shek, but he was disinclined to accept them, since he was hoping for international pressure and sanctions against Japan.³³ In mid-September the League of Nations had started considering the Sino-Japanese conflict in response to a complaint lodged by the Chinese government.

Addressing the League of Nations General Assembly, China’s representative, Gu Weijun (V. K. Wellington Koo), called for emergency international measures against Japan’s aggression, but the only member that supported this call was the Soviet Union, and the matter was entrusted to the Commission of Enquiry into the Sino-Japanese Dispute. This commission submitted a report to the General Assembly calling Japan’s actions a violation of the Nine-Power Treaty and recommending a meeting of the parties to this treaty. This was in response to a request from the United States, which was participating in the commission as a nonmember of the

³¹ Usui Katsumi, “Nit-Chu Senso to gunbu” (The Sino-Japanese War and the Military), in Miyake Masaki and Hata Ikuhiko, eds., *Showa shi no gunbu to seiji* (The Military and Politics in Showa History), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Dai-ichi Hoki Co., 1983), 74–5.

³² Concerning the Trautmann operation, see Tobe, op. cit., chaps. 2 and 3, and Liu Jie, *Nit-Chu Senso ka no Gaiko* (Diplomacy during the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1995), chap. 2.

³³ Tobe, op. cit., 67–71.

League. On October 6 the Assembly approved this report, and based on the League's recommendation, on October 15 the call was issued for a Nine-Party Treaty Conference (Brussels Conference) through an initiative centering on Belgium, the host country. Meanwhile, on October 5 US President Franklin Roosevelt, acting in concert with these moves in the League of Nations, announced with alacrity that the United States would participate in the conference and delivered his "quarantine" speech criticizing lawless states. But America's aim was to achieve a mediated settlement through group pressure, not to impose concrete sanctions.³⁴

Japan was leery of involvement in the incident by Western countries, and on October 22 the cabinet decided against participating in the conference. In the announcement of this decision, the government declared, "The action of Japan in China is one of self-defense . . . in the face of [China's] provocative acts," and reasserted its position that the matter "can be solved only through direct negotiations between the two [countries]."³⁵ And on October 27 Foreign Minister Hirota, while explaining Japan's decision not to participate to foreign ambassadors, reported Japan's readiness to accept "favorable mediation" by a third party in line with the cabinet decision, but it was only to Germany that the peace terms were actually revealed.

The Army General Staff eagerly pursued the possibility of mediation by Germany, and with the approval of Operations Division chief Ishiwara, personnel of the Intelligence Division were in frequent contact with the German embassy. As a result of these efforts, late in October Japan's peace terms were conveyed to Oskar Trautmann, Germany's ambassador to China, in Shanghai. In Tokyo, meanwhile, Foreign Minister Hirota, having accepted the wishes of the Army, asked German Ambassador to Japan Herbert von Dirksen to relay to China the same peace terms he had conveyed to British Ambassador Craigie (as decided on October 1 by the prime minister and the war, navy, and foreign ministers). Early in November Trautmann reported the Japanese terms to Chiang Kai-shek, but Chiang, who was hoping the nine-party conference then underway would adopt sanctions against Japan, rejected these terms.

At the Nine-Party Treaty Conference, Gu Weijun urged the adoption of concrete measures, such as economic sanctions and material assistance to allow China to keep up its resistance, but the participants, each with its own considerations, were hesitant to impose sanctions, and the majority of them were also reluctant to supply aid to China on the grounds that aid to one side would eliminate the possibility of a cease-fire. In the end, the general session of the conference effectively concluded on November 15 with the adoption of a statement

³⁴ Iriye Akira, *Taiheiyo Senso no kigen (The Origins of the Second World War in Asia and the Pacific)* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1991), 67–71; Uemura Shin'ichi, *Nik-Ka Jihen (The Sino-Japanese Incident)*, vol. 2, *Nihon Gaikoshi (The Diplomacy of Japan)* 20 (Tokyo: Kajima Publishing, 1971), 170–75.

³⁵ MoFA, *Nihon gaiko nenpyo narabi ni shuyo bunsho*, vol. 2, 372–75.

criticizing Japan.

The conclusion of the Nine-Party Treaty Conference late in November without taking any effective action, along with China's defeat in the Battle of Shanghai, changed Chiang Kai-shek's attitude. On December 7, via Ambassador Dirksen, he conveyed his readiness to enter into negotiations based on the Japanese peace terms, but Hirota refrained from replying immediately, judging that the recent change in circumstances required a change in the terms for making peace. This was because the capture of Nanjing was imminent.

In Japan, however, both in the government and among the public, a sense of victory was widespread; people thought that the fall of Nanjing would lead to the collapse of the Nationalist government, and so the Chiang administration was no longer a counterpart for a peace settlement. There came to be growing support, particularly in the CCAA and the Guandong Army, for the idea that, if the Chiang administration refused to surrender, its legitimacy should be denied and a new central government should be fostered. The Army General Staff, meanwhile, considering that the fall of Nanjing would not cause the Chiang administration to surrender or collapse but would lead only to prolongation of the war, thought that peace should be concluded on relatively generous terms on this occasion, and this thinking supported the Trautmann operation. But the opinions among senior members of the government coalesced into two positions: either to demand harsh peace conditions predicated on the weakening or collapse of the Chiang administration or to cease recognizing the Chiang administration and reject the need for peace talks themselves.

Opinion was also split within the Nationalist government about making peace with Japan, but in the end Chiang Kai-shek decided on January 2, 1938, to reject Germany's peacemaking and continue to resist.³⁶

On January 11, at the request of the Army General Staff, an imperial conference was held for the first time since the Russo-Japanese War. The General Staff explained that the holding of the imperial conference was intended to warn against the victor forcing overly harsh conditions on the defeated country. This indicates that the leaders were wrapped up in victorious euphoria and the peace terms had become ones that it was hard for China to accept.³⁷ The General Staff pushed till the end for a negotiated peace, but ultimately the government decided on January 15 to cut off negotiations.

The ideal opportunity presented by the fall of Nanjing for making peace between Japan and China was thus lost. The January 11 imperial conference decided that if peace were not achieved with the Nationalist government, Japan would cease

³⁶ Yang Tianshi, "1937, Chugoku gun tai-Nichi sakusen no daiichinen," 118–19.

³⁷ "Showa 13 nen 1 gatsu 11 nichi gozen kaigi ni okeru sanbo socho, Gunreibu socho, Sufu gicho no setsumei yoshi" (Outline of Explanations by the Army Chief of Staff, Navy Chief of Staff, and Privy Council President at the Imperial Conference of January 11, Showa 13 [1938]), in Kobayashi, Inaba, and Shimada, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso*, vol. 4, 395–98.

to place its expectations in it as a counterpart for settlement of the incident and would promote the establishment of a new Chinese government; the aim would be either to destroy the Nationalist government or to absorb it within the new government. On January 16, in keeping with this policy, the *aite to sezu*, or “cease to deal [with the Nationalist government],” statement (First Konoe Statement) was issued.³⁸

2. Expansion of the War Front and Prolongation of the Conflict

(1) Difficulty in Finding a Solution for the Incident

a. The Xuzhou operation and the new Chinese administrations

Following the occupation of Nanjing, the Army General Staff Office firmed up a policy of conducting no new military operations until the summer of 1938 (nonexpansion of the area of conflict). However, the North China Area Army was insistent on conducting an operation to surround and smash the main Chinese force in the vicinity of Xuzhou, and it kept pressing its case. So Operations Section chief Kawabe went to Beijing and attempted to convince the commanders of the various Japanese forces in North China of the urgency of achieving a solid hold on the already-occupied areas because of the need to strengthen the guard against Soviet intervention, but the forces there did not accept his argument.³⁹ The Xuzhou operation was launched early in April 1938, and by late May Xuzhou had been occupied. But the Chinese forces adopted the tactic of withdrawing before the Japanese forces surrounded them completely, and so the operation did not accomplish the objective of surrounding and destroying the main Chinese force.

After Xuzhou was occupied, Prime Minister Konoe reshuffled his cabinet, appointing Ugaki Kazushige foreign minister and Itagaki Seishiro army minister. On June 10 the new Konoe cabinet established the Five Ministers' Conference (consisting of the prime minister and the finance, foreign, war, and navy ministers) in place of the dormant Imperial General Headquarters–Government Liaison Conference and once again deliberated measures for an early settlement of the incident.

The China policy premised on the policy of nonrecognition of Chiang Kai-shek aimed to foster the new administrations established one after another under the direction of local Japanese forces in the occupied areas of North and Central China and turn them into a central administration to replace the Nationalist

³⁸ According to a supplementary explanation provided several days later, the meaning of “cease to deal” was that Japan would “not recognize the Nationalist government” and would “seek to eliminate it.” MoFA, *Nihon gaiko nenpyo narabi ni shuyo bunsho*, vol. 2, 387.

³⁹ NIDS, *Shina Jihen Rikugun sakusen*, vol. 1, 483–87. Kawabe was soon to be transferred away from his post as chief of the Operations Section, and with his departure, the nonexpansion camp was said to have been completely eliminated from the Operations Division. Imoto, *op. cit.*, 202–03.

(Kuomintang) government; the plan was either to destroy the Nationalist government or to absorb it into this new administration.

The problem was that there was no change to be seen in the Chiang administration even after the fall of Nanjing. Within the Japanese government and military were a considerable number of leaders who wished to avoid the early establishment of a new central administration and stressed direct negotiations with the Nationalist government. Foreign Minister Ugaki took this sort of stance. Other leaders, sympathizing with the arguments of the forces in the field, continued to hope for the destruction of the Nationalist government through military pressure or the ouster of Chiang Kai-shek from power through plot operations. Army Minister Itagaki was the representative of this group. Meanwhile, the Guandong Army, which took a hard line on nonrecognition of Chiang, did not immediately go along with the establishment of a new central administration. This army placed priority on the establishment of autonomous administrations in North China and Inner Mongolia and insisted on the need for “integration through divided rule” rather than early merger of the pro-Japanese administrations into a central authority.⁴⁰ The Five Ministers’ Conference initially came out with a policy of willingness to let the Chiang administration become one element of a new central administration provided it “yielded” (meaning Chiang’s ouster or transfer); this gave rise to the possibility, albeit limited, of peace talks, but the biggest problem was the weakness of the foundations of the newly formed Chinese administrations. This phenomenon was also seen in the Reformed Government of the Republic of China established in Nanjing by the Central China Area Army in March 1938.

b. The Ugaki Operation and the Idea of Anglo-Japanese Cooperation

Meanwhile, in June 1938 Ishii Itaro, head of the Foreign Ministry's Bureau of Asiatic Affairs, sent a written opinion to the foreign minister in favor of dealing with the Nationalist government. Ishii argued that it was unrealistic to try to establish a new central administration by merging the new administrations established in occupied areas or by absorbing the Nationalist government through merger into the Provisional Government or the Reformed Government of the Republic of China, because these approaches were premised on Chiang’s ouster; instead he recommended recognizing the legitimacy of the Nationalist government and starting peace talks with it before the taking of Hankou.⁴¹

Foreign Minister Ugaki agreed with Ishii’s argument, and that same month he made an earnest effort to achieve a peace conference with the Nationalist government through contacts between Qiao Fusan, secretary to President of the

⁴⁰ Tobe, op. cit., 168–88; Hata Shunroku, *Rikugun: Hata Shunroku nisshi* (The Diary of Hata Shunroku), *Zoku Gendaishi shiryō* (Materials on Modern History, Continued) 4 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1983), 148–49.

⁴¹ MoFA, ed., *Gaimusho no hyaku nen* (A Hundred Years of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1969), 315–37.

Executive Yuan (Premier) Kong Xiangxi (H. H. Kung) and Nakamura Toyochi, Japan's consul general in Hongkong (the Ugaki–Kong Xiangxi operation). Nakamura and Qiao met six times in June and July, and Qiao showed a positive posture, presenting peace terms that he said Kong had discussed with Chiang Kai-shek. The talks ran into rough going because of the Japanese side's insistence on Chiang's being removed from power, but Nakamura, based on his reading of Ugaki's intentions, showed flexibility, including the presentation of a plan that would effectively shelve Chiang's ouster. Ugaki also showed interest in other routes; in particular he sought to contact the same Qiao through Kayano Nagatomo, but then late in September he suddenly resigned, and peace operations ran aground. It is not clear what caused his resignation, but one factor was his inability to win the backing of Prime Minister Konoe or others in Japan for his peace initiatives based on negotiations with the Nationalist government.⁴²

Aside from the above moves, under Ugaki there were also diplomatic attempts to enter into cooperation with Britain regarding China. The initiative centered on Ikeda Shigeaki, who became minister of finance in Konoe's reshuffled cabinet. It aimed to settle the outstanding problems through Anglo-Japanese cooperation, push China to make peace under conditions favorable to Japan, and also conduct postwar management of Chinese affairs based on cooperation between Japan and Britain. It was backed by members of the Anglophile camp among business leaders and *genro* (elder statesmen), and it came to form a part of Ugaki's diplomatic efforts. On the British side, "moderates" were in favor of repairing relations with Japan and had an eye on making peace between Japan and China, and on this basis British Ambassador Craigie pursued talks with Ugaki. The foreign minister, however, was cool to the British initiative, being more interested in direct negotiations with China, and so the talks between the two did not move forward.⁴³

(2) The Shift to a Long-Term Endurance Contest: War at the Confrontation Stage

a. The Taking of Wuhan and Guangdong and a Setup for Long-Term Endurance

Following the Xuzhou operation, the Army General Staff approved operations directed at Wuhan and Guangdong. These two major operations had been under study by the Operations Division and the forces in the field since the capture of Nanjing, and the success of the Xuzhou operation encouraged the decision to approve them. The expectation was that taking Hankou and Guangdong would put Japan in effective control of the principal portion of China and deal a blow to the supply routes for aid from the Western powers to China, thereby making possible a

⁴² Tobe, *op. cit.*, 213–52.

⁴³ Matsuura Masataka, *Nit-Chu Senso ki ni okeru keizai to seiji* (The Economy and Politics during the Sino-Japanese War Period) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995), chap. 3; Hata Shunroku, *op. cit.*, 157; Anthony Best, *Britain, Japan, and Pearl Harbor: Avoiding War in East Asia, 1936–1941* (London: Routledge, 1995), 55–60.

military solution to the incident.⁴⁴

Starting late in August 1938, the Central China Area Army mobilized 300,000 troops and engaged in a campaign to take the three districts of Wuhan (Wuchang, Hankou, and Hanyang), the site of the nucleus of the Chiang administration, and at the end of October the Japanese forces occupied Hankou. In addition, starting in late September the CCAA undertook a number of operations in South China, including one against Guangdong, which was occupied with almost no resistance. The number of troops sent to the Chinese front reached one million; even some of the forces directed at the Soviet Union were reassigned, and Japan's military capabilities were stretched close to the limit. But the Chiang administration showed no sign of yielding; it moved its capital inland to Chongqing (Chungking) and scaled down its frontal campaign to an endurance contest holed up in and around Sichuan. Incidentally the effects of poison gas were tested in the Wuhan and Guangdong operations, and in December 1938 the Army General Staff issued Army Directive 345 authorizing the use of what was called "special smoke" (red tubes, red balls, green tubes). It is said that the use of poison gas on the Chinese front became common as a result.⁴⁵

In mid-November 1938, following the Hankou and Guangdong operations, the War Ministry and Army General Staff decided jointly on a new basic policy for direction of the war, which was approved by the emperor and put into effect early in December. This policy called for limiting the area of operations and reducing the forces committed to the field, accompanied by the establishment of stability and restoration of order in occupied areas, along with the securing of resources; the aim was to shift to a setup for long-term endurance. This brought the first change in the mission of the NCAA and CCAA, which had been charged since before the outbreak of the incident with the operational objective of breaking the will of the Chinese army to wage war and grasp an opportunity to end the fighting.⁴⁶ With this the incident entered a new stage.

Under the endurance-contest setup the Japanese forces stressed a strategy of waves of bombing from airplanes aimed at Chongqing and other key cities in the interior and at cutting the supply routes for aid to Chiang, which extended into the interior. The bombing of the interior from Hankou Airport, which started in December 1938, included bombardment of the urban districts of Chongqing and other major cities, causing many civilian casualties; in Chongqing the bombing is

⁴⁴ NIDS, *Shina Jihen rikugun sakusen* (Army Operations in the China Incident), vol. 2, Senshi Sosho (see note 1) 89 (1976), 109–12; NIDS, *Daihon'ei Rikugunbu* (Imperial General Headquarters, Army Department), vol. 1, Senshi Sosho (see note 1) 8 (1967), 542–53.

⁴⁵ Lethal gas ("yellow agent" [blister agent]) was authorized for experimental use in Shanxi Province in May 1939, reportedly the first such authorization. Yoshimi Yoshiaki and Matsuno Seiya, eds., *Dokugasusen kankei shiryō* (Materials Concerning Poison Gas Warfare), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997), 9–39.

⁴⁶ Imoto, *op. cit.*, 306–08.

said to have caused 11,000 Chinese deaths over the course of the entire period.⁴⁷ But even the frequent air raids on the interior were incapable of dealing a major blow to the Nationalist government because of factors including a lack of airplanes and the absence of a knock-out target.

b. Chinese Resistance

When the Japanese military completed one round of its large-scale offensive, Chinese popular nationalism had spread on a scale that made it impossible for the Chiang Kai-shek administration to seek peace with Japan or yield. The spread of the occupied areas and areas of military operations served as a catalyst that turned the nationalist movement, which up to then had been limited to students, urban residents, and soldiers, into a mass movement that also included tens of millions of peasants. Chiang Kai-shek had no way of responding to this mass nationalism, but the Communist Party of China matched its ambitions well and rapidly expanded its support, particularly among the peasant masses.⁴⁸

In the autumn of 1938, the CPC judged that the war against Japan had entered the “confrontation stage” with the fall of Wuhan and decided to fight to the end in a long-term conflict while preserving the united front with the Nationalists. The party also decided on a policy of staging its main activities behind enemy lines; the Communist forces unfolded a guerrilla campaign by infiltrating rural villages behind the Japanese army lines and conducting guerrilla warfare by arming the masses, thereby building bases of resistance against the Japanese in various locations. These bases spread across the entire country, but they were particularly strong in North China.

In December 1938 the Army General Staff ordered the field forces in North and Central China to secure the occupied areas and major transportation lines. In North China forces were stationed in what was called “highly dispersed deployment,” which meant dividing up units among posts in cities and towns, so as to counter the guerrilla activities of the Communist forces. This form of deployment was also suited to the effort to shut out guerrilla tactics and stabilize the civilian sector by organizing and conciliating residents.⁴⁹ And starting early in 1939 the NCAA undertook “pacification and cleanup” operations against bases of anti-Japanese resistance; these produced some positive results.

⁴⁷ For recent studies including the Chinese view of the bombing of Chongqing, see Senso to Kubaku Mondai Kenkyukai, ed., *Jukei bakugeki to wa nan datta no ka: Mo hitotsu no Nit-Chu Senso* (What Was the Bombing of Chongqing? Another Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Kobunken, 2009).

⁴⁸ In war-torn China people were pressed into service and food was requisitioned mercilessly, and social chaos and upheaval resulted; these developments led to the formation of a social foundation for expansion of the Communists’ support. Sasagawa Yuji and Okumura Satoshi, *Jugo no Chugoku shakai* (Chinese Society behind the Guns) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007).

⁴⁹ NIDS, *Hokushi no Chiansen* (The Fight to Pacify North China), vol. 1, Senshi Soshō (see note 1) 18 (1968), 114–47; Yamamoto Masahiro, “Kahoku no tai gerira sen, 1939–1945” (Anti-guerrilla Warfare in North China, 1939–45), in Hatano and Tobe, *op. cit.*, 189–218.

However, the Communist forces (Eighth Route Army) that had expanded their power in North China launched a major offensive, the Hundred Regiments Offensive, from late August through the end of 1940, a campaign comparable in scale to the Tet Offensive during the Vietnam War. Centering on the Shitai Line, this offensive thoroughly destroyed bridges and communication facilities and rattled the leadership of the NCAA. The main reason for the Eighth Route Army's ability to catch the Japanese forces unprepared was the lack of information about the Communist forces and of intelligence activities.⁵⁰ The Communist offensive also revealed the weak point of the highly dispersed deployment approach. Japanese units stationed in dispersed posts were overwhelmed by the Communists' human wave tactics. In addition, the Hundred Regiments Offensive is said to have played the role of stiffening the resolve of the Nationalist government, which had been starting to incline toward making peace with Japan, shaken by the pressure of developments like the Japanese capture of Yichang.⁵¹

Shocked by this offensive, the NCAA undertook retaliatory cleanup operations (the first and second Jinzhong operations), and in June 1941 it carried out the large-scale Chungyuan operation aimed at stabilizing public order in North China. This operation achieved major results, and it was followed in July by the formulation of a "Three-Year Cleanup and Construction Plan" aimed at turning "Unpacified Zones" ([what the Chinese Communists considered] liberated zones) into "Semi-Pacified Zones" (guerrilla-campaign zones) and "Semi-Pacified Zones" into "Pacified Zones." Starting in March 1941, the NCAA, in cooperation with the Wang Jingwei government, implemented a "Campaign for Strengthening of Public Order," including strengthening of anti-Communist operations by the Xinmin Hui; this was a movement that combined military, political, and economic aspects into a single whole. The main focus of these moves to strengthen public order came to be directed at the economic blockading of liberated zones, in addition to which there was a strengthening of demands for forces to live off the land; as a result, the cleanup operations conducted by the Japanese forces to counter the Communists' guerrilla campaign turned harsh, resulting in massacres of residents and looting (which the Chinese referred to as *sanguang zhengce* [the "three alls" policy]).⁵²

(3) The "New Order in East Asia" Declaration and Recognition of the Wang Jingwei Administration

a. The "New Order in East Asia" Declaration and Wang Jingwei's Defection from Chongqing

On November 3, 1938, the Kono cabinet released the "New Order in East Asia"

⁵⁰ The Japanese Army at the time was able to decipher 80% of the Nationalist forces' code but virtually none of the Communists'. Yamamoto, *op. cit.*, 200; NIDS, *Hokushi no Chiansen*, vol. 1, 382–83.

⁵¹ Ishijima, *op. cit.*, 131–33.

⁵² NIDS, *Hokushi no Chiansen*, vol. 1, 494–97, 528–37.

Declaration (Second Konoe Statement), calling the new international order defined by Japan for East Asia the “New Order in East Asia,” positioning the promotion of joint construction by Japan, Manchukuo, and China as the “unshakable policy of the Empire,” and declaring that the three countries would undertake economic cooperation and anti-Communist measures from a position of mutual benefit and equality. A month before this, early in October 1938, the US government issued a long memorandum setting forth the discriminatory treatment that Americans had suffered in China and the monopolization of markets since the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and demanding prompt rectification of such violations of the open-door and equal-opportunity principles (the Nine-Power Treaty). Arita Hachiro, Ugaki’s successor as foreign minister, replied that the concepts and principles that had been appropriate to the situation before the incident could not regulate the current or future situations in East Asia; with this he officially rejected the international principles of the Nine-Power Treaty and the like.⁵³ The “New Order in East Asia” Declaration set forth new principles to replace those of the international order built by the West.

This declaration modified the earlier *aite to sezu* (no dealings with the Nationalist government) statement, noting that Japan would not reject contacts with the Nationalist government if the latter changed its anti-Japanese, Communist-accommodating policies and makeup. This was not a call for peace, though, but rather part of an attempt to break the Chiang administration apart.⁵⁴ The efforts to establish a new central administration that would work alongside Japan in building the New Order in East Asia became increasingly bogged down, and it continued to be difficult to find a way of making the Chiang administration yield by putting together anti-Chiang forces. However, around this time Foreign Ministry Asian Bureau chief Gao Zongwu came up with the idea of forcing Chiang out of power and pushing for a shift to a policy of seeking peace with Japan by placing Wang Jingwei (also known as Wang Zhaoming; J: O Chomei) at the head of a united central administration for the occupied territories and getting members of the peace camp to quit the Chiang administration and carry out a drive for peace with Japan from outside that administration.⁵⁵ This Gao Zongwu operation centered on Colonel Kagesa Sadaaki, who headed the Army General Staff’s Eighth Section (Propaganda Strategy), and Lieutenant Colonel Imai Takeo, and on the Chinese side, in addition to Gao it involved Zhou Fohai (former deputy head of the Kuomintang’s propaganda department) and Mei Siping, who were seen as being confederates of Wang Jingwei.

⁵³ MoFA, *Nihon gaiko nenpyo narabini shuyo bunsho*, vol. 2, 393–99.

⁵⁴ Tobe, *op. cit.*, 306–09.

⁵⁵ Kagesa Sadaaki, “Sozorongaki” (Random Reminiscences), in Usui Katsumi, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso*, vol. 5, *Gendaishi shiryō* (see note 6) 13 (1966), 349–98. Nishi Yoshiaki, *Higeki no Shonin: Nik-Ka wahei kosaku hishi* (Witness to Tragedy: Secret History of the Sino-Japanese Peace Operations) (Tokyo: Bunkensha, 1962), 195–98.

In mid-November 1938 Gao Zongwu entered into talks with representatives of the Japanese side concerning a scheme by Wang—a plan for him to slip out of Chongqing—and conditions for peace. On November 20 he signed a Record of Japan-China Discussions. Early in December Wang and his band, following guidance from Kagesa and others, made their way out of Chongqing and, traveling via Kunming, arrived in Hanoi on December 19. In concert with this development, the Japanese government issued a statement from Prime Minister Konoe (the Third Konoe Statement) on December 22. This recapitulated the contents of the Record of Japan-China Discussions: Japan's demands included Chinese recognition of Manchukuo, the conclusion of an anti-Communist treaty, the stationing of Japanese forces to fight the Communists, and favorable arrangements for resource development in North China and Inner Mongolia. In return, Japan would not seek war reparations and would consider doing away with extraterritorial rights and returning the foreign concessions to China. As demanded by the Army, though, the areas for the stationing of forces to fight the Communists were given as "specially designated locations"; the provisions concerning withdrawal of the Japanese forces were omitted.⁵⁶

On December 29 in Hanoi, Wang issued a call for peace with Japan and a "love call" encouraging leading members of the Kuomintang to quit the Chiang administration, but among the conditions for peace, in addition to noting the need for a quick general withdrawal of Japanese forces, he stressed that the area in which remaining forces were to be stationed must be limited to the vicinity of Inner Mongolia. In other words, he sought reconfirmation of the portion of the Record of Japan-China Discussions that had been omitted from the Third Konoe Statement.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, the Army General staff continued with the drafting of peace terms with a view to the period after the Hankou operation, and the "Policy for Adjustment of a New Japan-China Relationship" that was adopted at the imperial conference in November 1938 listed a number of demands not found in the Third Konoe Statement or the Record of Japan-China Discussions, such as the adoption of a form of government based on a combination of local administrations, the stationing of Japanese security forces in the Nanjing-Shanghai-Hangzhou triangle, the firm binding of the lower Yangzi Valley as an economic region, and the dispatch of Japanese advisors. The terms ended up being "even harsher than the Twenty-One Demands,"⁵⁸ but they were not presented to Wang until the autumn of 1939.

In January 1939, after confirming Wang Jingwei's defection from Chongqing, Prime Minister Konoe and his cabinet resigned. But since no leading members of the Kuomintang or anti-Chiang military factions acted in concert with Wang's move, the leaders of the government and military turned negative toward the establishment of a central administration under Wang, and some in the Army went so far as to refloat

⁵⁶ Liu Jie, *op. cit.*, 342–50. Tobe, *op. cit.*, 310–25.

⁵⁷ Liu Jie, *op. cit.*, 352–53.

⁵⁸ Tobe, *op. cit.*, 280–96; Usui, *op. cit.*, 83.

the idea of a new central administration headed by Wu Peifu. It continued to be impossible to find a way toward settlement of the incident.

b. Restraining Britain and the Soviet Union: The Alliance with Germany and the Blockade of the Tianjin Concessions

As measures to settle the incident came to an impasse, one method that came to the fore was an external approach taking advantage of Germany's rise and the resulting destabilization of the situation in Europe. The idea was to combine efforts to improve Japan-US relations with a move to restrain Britain and the Soviet Union in Europe by strengthening the anticommunist pact with Germany and Italy as an alliance against Britain and the Soviet Union, which were seen as the biggest obstacles to the conduct of the incident and construction of the New Order in East Asia.⁵⁹ Starting in the summer of 1938, efforts were made to strengthen relations with Germany as the first step toward realization of this concept, which became central to the Army's foreign policy strategy.

In Germany, meanwhile, Joachim von Ribbentrop became foreign minister in February 1938, and the country was shifting from a pro-Chinese to a pro-Japanese line in its Far Eastern policy. This was seen in such developments as its May 1938 recognition of Manchukuo and repatriation of the corps of German military advisors in China.⁶⁰ The move toward closer ties between Germany and Japan started early in 1938 with contacts between Ribbentrop and Japanese military attache Oshima Hiroshi. Upon learning of this development in July, Japanese Ambassador to Germany Togo Shigenori asked Foreign Minister Ugaki to halt the talks, arguing that an alliance with Germany, far from contributing to settlement of the Japan-China incident, was liable to cause Japan to get drawn into a war in Europe. But this request had no effect. The Army provided the impetus for negotiations on an Axis partnership aimed at forming an alliance against the Soviet Union, the idea being to use diplomacy to make up for the inferiority of Japan's ground force strength relative to the Soviet army in the Far East.

For Germany, however, the hope was to form an alliance directed not so much against the Soviet Union as against Britain, its main foe. The Japanese leadership got tangled up in the issue of whether to add Britain and France as a target alongside the Soviet Union, and this was one factor behind the resignation of the Kono cabinet en masse in January 1939. The subsequent cabinet, headed by Hiranuma Kiichiro, also had a hard time settling the dispute between the Foreign

⁵⁹ At the Five Ministers' Conference in May 1938, Army Minister Itagaki declared: "Now it is Britain and the Soviet Union that are supporting Chiang; concluding this treaty will serve to divert them in Europe." Tsunota Jun, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso* (The Sino-Japanese War), vol. 3, Gendaishi shiryō (see note 6) 10 (1964), 271.

⁶⁰ Concerning Germany's pro-Chinese line in the 1930s, see Tajima Nobuo, "Kaisetsu II: 1930 nendai no Doitsu gaiko to Chugoku" (Commentary II: German Diplomacy and China in the 1930s), in Ishida Yuji, ed., *Shiryō Doitsu gaikokan no mita Nankin Jiken* (Materials on a German Diplomat's View of the Nanjing Incident) (Tokyo: Otsuki Shoten, 2001), 309–24.

Ministry, which wanted to limit the target to the Soviet Union, and the Army, which wanted Britain and France to be included. The matter was settled by the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of August 23, 1939. While Japan and Germany had been conducting their drawn-out negotiations, the Soviet Union moved to avoid the danger of war on two fronts, Europe and the Far East, by settling the clash that occurred with Japanese forces on the Soviet-Manchukuo border (the Nomonhan Incident) and, in Europe, seeking a rapprochement with Germany; this led to the German-Soviet pact. This bilateral pact derailed the negotiations that Japan had been conducting with Germany aiming for a military alliance targeting the Soviet Union. Prime Minister Hiranuma declared, "Europe's heaven and earth are complicated and inscrutable," and his cabinet resigned en masse.

Another opportunity for the Army to realize its diplomatic strategy was in June 1939, when the NCAA blockaded the British and French concessions in Tianjin. The assassination of a pro-Japanese figure in the British concession provided the occasion for this blockade of the concessions, which had served as financial and economic centers in North China. The move had been planned since the summer of 1938, and the assassination occurred just as the blockade net was being strengthened. The aim of the local Japanese forces was to exclude the British by securing the return of their concession, but for the Army in Tokyo the aim was to push Britain to accept the New Order in East Asia policy and settlement of the incident.⁶¹

This affair led to the reemergence within the British government of the issue of imposing sanctions on Japan, but Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain chose settlement through diplomatic negotiations over sanctions. Amid a fierce anti-British popular movement in Japan, talks in Tokyo between Arita and Craigie led to an agreement in July 1939 based on yielding and compromise by the British. The British agreed (1) to recognize the actual state of affairs (the existence of a state of war) in China and (2) not to interfere with the Japanese forces' presence and activities to maintain order in China. The Chinese harshly criticized (1), which they took as a posture of appeasement toward Japan comparable to the Munich Pact. Prime Minister Hiranuma was pleased with the agreement, seeing it as a blow against the Chiang administration. But the notification by the US government immediately after this that it was canceling the US-Japan Treaty of Commerce and Navigation aroused the British. Japan's diplomatic victory was dimmed, and the position of the British in local negotiations was strengthened; the agreement reached in Tokyo became a dead letter.⁶² Having secured powerful backing from the United States, Britain no longer had any basis for choosing to accommodate Japan.

⁶¹ Nagai Kazu, "Nit-Chu Senso to Nichi-Ei tairitsu" (The Sino-Japanese War and Anglo-Japanese Confrontation), in Furuya Tetsuo, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso shi kenkyu* (Studies on the History of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1984), 237–362.

⁶² Nagai Kazu, "Nichi-Ei kankei to gunbu" (Anglo-Japanese Relations and the Military), in Miyake and Hata, eds., *Showa shi no gunbu to seiji*, vol. 2, 184–87.

(4) Establishment of the Wang Administration and Peace Operations toward Chongqing

The defection of Wang Jingwei from Chongqing did not shake the Chiang administration, but even so Gao Zhongwu pushed ahead with the idea of setting up a new central government headed by Wang in Nanjing. And in May 1939 Wang himself spoke to Kagesa and others of his determination to set up a central administration.⁶³ Moves to form such an administration then got into full swing, but the Japanese government and military were not in the mood to put their unified support behind this initiative.

The Army General Staff in particular was skeptical of the effective strength of a Wang administration, and when Sawada Shigeru assumed the post of deputy chief of staff in October, it had come to a fork in the road, having to decide “whether we should back up this operation of establishing [a Wang administration] or abandon it and deal with the situation through direct negotiations with Chongqing.” It decided not to stand in the way of the establishment of this administration, but it accepted it after concluding a treaty with the government providing that the Army’s political strategy would not be influenced by this.⁶⁴ In November 1939 negotiations on the adjustment of diplomatic relations predicated on the establishment of a Wang administration finally started, based on the “Policy for Adjustment of a New Japan-China Relationship” adopted a year earlier. In the negotiations with Japan, Wang resisted in connection with the withdrawal of forces and demands for the right to station forces, but in the end he accepted the harsh Japanese conditions, and a new central government was established in Nanjing in March 1940.

Meanwhile, the Army General Staff was hoping for a merger of the Wang and Chiang administrations, and it sent out feelers through various routes concerning the possibility of direct negotiations with Chongqing; after the start of 1940 a route to peace opened through a person named Song Ziliang. This “Kiri Operation,” as it was called, led to a promise of three-way cease-fire talks among representatives of Chiang, Wang, and the Japanese side in June 1940. One of the purposes of the Yichang operation launched in mid-June was to promote these talks. The Army General Staff, which held to a policy of nonexpansion of the fighting, was hesitant about launching this operation, but it granted permission on the condition that the forces would withdraw immediately after the attack. But after advancing on Yichang, the Eleventh Army did not withdraw. This was because, on the basis of information from the Kiri Operation, it had been ordered to secure Yichang in order to push the Chiang administration to make its final decision to participate in peace talks. And in fact, the occupation of Yichang is said to have placed the greatest sense

⁶³ Tobe Ryoidi, “O Chomei no Hanoi dasshutsu o megutte” (Relating to the Escape of Wang Jingwei from Hanoi), *Gaiko shiryō kanpō* 19 (September 2005).

⁶⁴ Sawada Shigeru, “Kioku o tadorite” (Retracing Memories) in Morimatsu Toshio, ed., *Sanbo jicho Sawada Shigeru kaisoroku* (Memoirs of Vice Chief of Staff Sawada Shigeru) (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo1982), 168–69.

of pressure on Chongqing of any development during the entire Sino-Japanese War.⁶⁵

When suspicions deepened that the Kiri Operation was a Chinese plot to confuse the Wang administration, however, hopes for a cease-fire and peace rapidly withered. Under Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yosuke, an operation aimed at peace was conducted through Zhejiang tycoon Qian Yongming, with contacts undertaken while delaying recognition of the Wang administration, but no progress was made. On November 30, 1940, the Japanese government, with no more way of achieving a cease-fire with the Chiang administration, officially recognized the Wang Jingwei administration as the Nationalist government in Nanjing and concluded a Sino-Japanese Basic Treaty. This was based on the aforesaid “Policy for Adjustment of a New Japan-China Relationship”; it called for “good-neighborly friendship,” respect for sovereignty and territory, and reciprocity and equality, but it also provided for the stationing of Japanese anti-Communist forces in Inner Mongolia and North China, cooperation by the Japanese military in maintaining order, joint development of the national-defense-related resources of Inner Mongolia and North China, and the preferential supply of these resources to Japan. In the Japan-Manchukuo-China joint declaration that was issued the same day, the Wang administration officially recognized Manchukuo. Japan’s recognition of the weakly based Wang administration and the latter’s recognition of Manchukuo, far from contributing to settlement of the incident, ended up solidifying the confrontation with the Chiang administration and closing the path to peace.

3. The Sino-Japanese War and International Relations

(1) The Western Powers’ Aid to China and Sanctions against Japan

The Soviet Union was the quickest to extend aid to China as a result of the outbreak of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. In August 1937 the Soviet Union concluded a nonaggression pact with the Nationalist government; at the same time it promised to provide lending for the purchase of materiel, including weapons, ammunition, and aircraft, and it moved immediately to implement this pledge. The Soviet Union also dispatched volunteer fighters and a corps of military advisors. This aid was extremely important for China until the United States and Britain started providing aid on a full-fledged basis in 1940.⁶⁶

The United States was slower than the Soviet Union in extending direct aid

⁶⁵ Hatano Sumio, “Nanshin e no senkai: 1940 nen” (The Swing to a Southward Advance: 1940), *Ajia Keizai* 26, 5 (May 1985), 30–33; Sawada, op. cit., 57, 177–8.

⁶⁶ According to Arthur N. Young, up to 1939 the Soviet Union’s credits to the Nationalist government were more than three times the amount of those from the United States and Britain. Arthur N. Young, *China and the Helping Hand, 1937–1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 441.

to China, but even before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident it had been continuing a policy of buying Chinese silver. At first these purchases were limited to funds for exchange-rate stabilization, but then this limitation was lifted, and China was able to use the money it got from sales of silver to purchase military goods. As the supply of silver for sale dwindled, though, direct aid became necessary, and in December 1938 a loan agreement (export credit) worth \$25 million was approved. This marked the start of full-fledged aid from the United States to China, and from 1940 on the United States became China's biggest aid donor.⁶⁷

Britain, meanwhile, was seen as the biggest obstacle to Japan's pursuit of its objectives in the incident and its construction of the New Order in East Asia. But the supply of military goods to aid Chiang Kai-shek's government via the Hongkong route and the Burma route was far smaller than the supply of such aid from the Soviet Union. China repeatedly asked Britain for supplies of arms and for loans, but the British, concerned lest they irritate Japan, limited themselves to providing moral support. The first concrete aid measure Britain undertook was the construction of the Burma route, which was completed in December 1938. Next the British moved to lend funds in response to China's request, supplying 5 million pounds for currency stabilization in March 1939. However, because of Japan's intensive currency manipulations, these funds failed to produce the desired effect.⁶⁸

Starting late in 1938, aid to China from Britain and the United States got into full swing, but this did not signify a shift in these countries' policies toward Japan. In fact, the economic sanctions imposed on Japan by the United States consisted of trifling measures, such as a "moral" embargo on exports of aircraft and related parts and a ban on the provision of credit. The July 1939 announcement by the United States that it was abrogating the US-Japan Treaty of Commerce and Navigation was intended to restrain the British, who had been forced to yield in the face of the blockade of their concession in Tianjin, and to forestall moves by the US Congress seeking an embargo on exports to Japan. Secretary of State Cordell Hull's policy toward Japan—not to confront Japan, not to withdraw from Asia, and not to approve of Japan's actions—remained in effect.⁶⁹ Britain deepened its dependence on the United States with respect to the East Asia problem, and this tendency increased in strength after the war in Europe broke out and defense of the homeland became its prime concern.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 61–86, 206–7, 441–42; Suzuki Akira, "Amerika no taio: Senso ni itarazaru shudan no koshi" (America's Response: Implementation of Means Short of War), in Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso no Shoso* (Aspects of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 1997), 319–37.

⁶⁸ Tobe Ryoichi, "Bei Ei Doku So nado no Chugoku Enjo" (Aid to China from the United States, Britain, Germany, the Soviet Union, and others), in Kono Shu, ed., *Kindai Nihon sensoshi*, vol. 3 (History of the Wars of Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Dodai Keizai Konwakai, 1995), 340–44.

⁶⁹ Jonathan G. Utley, *Going to War with Japan, 1937–1941* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 9–10.

(2) Japan's Nonintervention in the War in Europe and the Southward Advance Policy

World War II broke out in September 1939, just after Prime Minister Hiranuma's cabinet resigned and General Abe Nobuyuki formed a new one. The start of the war in Europe forced Britain, France, and the Netherlands, countries with colonies in Southeast Asia, to focus their attention on Europe, thereby presenting Japan with a good chance to actively pursue a southward advance policy. Calls for a shift to a bold advance to the south as Japan's national policy were in fact heard from mid-level naval officers, but it was impossible for this to become the consensus view in the government and military, whose top priority was settlement of the Sino-Japanese War; the Abe cabinet adopted a policy of nonintervention in the war in Europe and declared it would not commit itself to any of the European belligerents.

Following the outbreak of war in Europe and Japan's decision not to get involved in it, cutting the routes for material aid from Western powers like Britain, France, and the Soviet Union to the Chiang administration was thought to be an effective means of settling the incident. In particular, after the closing of the Hongkong–Guangdong route with Japan's occupation of Guangdong, the French Indochina routes were seen as the ones with the greatest transportation capacity.⁷⁰

One route went from Haiphong via Hanoi to Kunming; the other went from Hanoi to Longzhou and Nanning. The Japanese Twenty-first Army, which had occupied Guangdong, led the operation to close the latter route. Immediately after taking Guangdong, the Twenty-first Army had gathered on Hainan Island, and late in November it occupied Nanning. But in December the Nationalist government mounted a large-scale winter campaign, forcing the Twenty-first Army to endure rough going on into the following year, and the occupation of Nanning was not completed until February 1940. The Fifth Division of the South China Area Army was stationed in Nanning, but even diplomatic efforts backed up by military pressure were unable to get the French to indicate willingness to comply with the demand for closing of the supply route for aid to Chiang's administration.

The French Indochina impasse was broken by the German army's blitzkrieg in Western Europe. During the period from the autumn of 1939 on, what was called a "Phony War" continued, with virtually no fighting on the western front in Europe. But starting in the spring of 1940 the German army conducted a blitzkrieg, overrunning Belgium and the Netherlands, and in June France surrendered. Germany's taking of Europe by storm brought progress in the stalled efforts to close the supply routes of aid to the Chiang administration. In mid-June Britain acceded to Japan's demand to cut the Burma route, agreeing to close it for a three-month period, and the authorities in French Indochina halted the transport of aid supplies on the

⁷⁰ Tachikawa Kyoichi, *Dainiji Sekai Taisen to Furansuryo Indoshina* (World War II and French Indochina) (Tokyo: Sairyusha, 2000), 28. The references to French Indochina are based mainly on this work.

French Indochina routes. France's surrender to Germany also answered the question of whether the idle Fifth Division should be shifted to use elsewhere in China or sent to invade French Indochina. At the end of September the northern part of French Indochina was occupied.

Meanwhile, within Japan there were loud calls from members of the "renovation" camp both inside and outside the government for an alliance with Germany and an advance to the south, based on the viewpoint that Japan should undertake the construction of a "new world order" alongside Germany. With France and the Netherlands having fallen under German control and even Britain in peril, it looked like a good chance to advance into the "power vacuum" that had arisen in the European colonies of Southeast Asia.

However, the cabinet of Prime Minister Yonai Mitsumasa, which continued to uphold the policy of nonintervention, was seen as being negative toward both a southward advance and an alliance with Germany, and it came under harsh attack from the Army and the renovation camp; the cabinet was driven to resign en masse in July 1940. With a strong push from the Army, Konoë became prime minister again, and two national policies adopted late in July (the "Outline of Basic National Policy" adopted by the cabinet and the "Outline of Japan's Policy in Coping with Changing World Conditions" approved by the Imperial General Headquarters-Government Liaison Conference) incorporated substantial portions of the renovation camp's agenda. Based on a recognition that the world was now at a "major historical turning point," the Outline of Basic National Policy declared that Japan's national mission was the construction of the New Order in East Asia, and it adopted national policies including the comprehensive reform of domestic politics, establishment of a self-sufficient economy, and establishment of a "national defense state" setup. Early in August, Matsuoka Yosuke, who had newly entered the cabinet as foreign minister, officially used the phrase "construction of a Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere," and he defined the sphere as including not just Japan, Manchuria, and China but also Southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, starting late in June, the Army General Staff and others had begun drafting the "Outline of Japan's Policy in Coping with Changing World Conditions" premised on Germany's taking control of Europe and the replacement of the Yonai cabinet with a new one. The main pillar of this new outline was to attack Britain's possessions in the Far East; this was based on the expectation that the fall of France and the Netherlands would be followed by the defeat of the British homeland. But the war in the European theater showed signs of dragging on as a result of Britain's tenacious defense, and the prospect of moving in concert with Germany by attacking Hongkong and Singapore receded.

Though the connection between a policy of advancing by force to the south and moves to conclude the Sino-Japanese War was not clearly set forth in the above outline, there was a vague expectation that coordinating Japan's advance by force to the south with Germany's offensive in Europe would make it possible to settle the incident in a favorable manner. For example, starting from around the spring of 1940

Deputy Army Chief of Staff Sawada presented this argument to other insiders: “The China Incident should share its fate with that of the war in Europe. . . . Pressing ahead with a southern operation, if possible, is the way to a favorable settlement of the China Incident, is it not?”⁷¹ And this line of thought gained cogency. Settling the incident changed from being a matter between Japan and China to being linked to movements of international relations in Europe. The “Outline for Treating the China Incident” of November 1940 (approved at an imperial conference), which determined the measures for settling matters following recognition of the Wang administration, merely confirmed that the basic element of policy toward China was to secure stability in the occupied territories.

In this way, establishing a self-sufficient zone—establishing a long-term setup of self-sufficiency—by advancing to the south by force, even at the cost of clashing with the Western powers, came to be seen by the Army as a method for settlement of the incident. But in the context of the strengthening of Anglo-American solidarity and completion of the ABCD (American, British, Chinese, and Dutch) encirclement of Japan, it was necessary to refrain from invading Southeast Asia for the time being, and priority was placed on diplomatic negotiations to secure resources from the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina and expand Japan’s influence there. However, this southward advance through peaceful, diplomatic means did not progress as hoped, partly because of British and American support and restraining moves directed at the Dutch East Indies and Thailand (Siam).

(3) Tripartite Pact between Japan, Germany, and Italy; Neutrality Pact with the Soviet Union⁷²

The concept of a three-way alliance with Germany and Italy was in line with the external measures set forth in the Outline of Japan’s Policy in Coping with Changing World Conditions, which called for the strengthening of political solidarity with those two countries, but it also sought to keep Germany’s influence from extending over the resource belt of Southeast Asia; the basic content of the Tripartite Pact was the mutual recognition of Japanese hegemony in Asia and German hegemony in Europe. The question for Japan was how much cooperation to pledge for Germany as it waged war with Britain. The Army draft in particular promised to “respond in principle” to a request to take part in the war against Britain, such as by attacking Singapore. But Foreign Minister Matsuoka tried to change the draft into a proposal that would include not just Britain but also the United States as a target, turning it into a military alliance against those two countries; his idea, however, ran into stiff resistance, particularly from the Navy and within the Foreign Ministry. Matsuoka’s

⁷¹ Sawada, *op. cit.*, 172.

⁷² Hosoya Chihiro, “Sangoku domei to Nis-So Churitsu Joyaku” (The Tripartite Pact and the Japan-Soviet Neutrality Pact), in Japan Association of International Relations, ed., *Taiheiyo Senso e no michi* (Road to the Pacific War), vol. 5 (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, renovated edition, 1987), 159–331, and other sources.

aim was to use the power of the alliance to avert war with the United States; Germany also hoped its alliance with Japan would keep the United States from participating in the war in Europe. Both sides understood that the main objective of the alliance was to restrain the United States from intervening in the war in Europe or the fighting in Asia. The Navy opposed the pact to the end, but it switched to support based on arrangements including an exchange of notes that left room for Japan to make an autonomous decision on the issue of participating in fighting against Britain and the United States. Thus it was that the Tripartite Pact was signed late in September. Matsuoka forcefully argued that the purpose of the pact was to prevent war between Japan and the United States, but it ended up only strengthening the British and US policies of support for the Chiang administration.

In the course of putting together the Tripartite Pact, the Army came up with the idea of inviting the Soviet Union to join, making it a four-party alliance. Foreign Minister Matsuoka, who hoped to adjust Japan's relations with the Soviet Union by taking advantage of Germany's influence on that country, actively promoted this concept. The adjustment of relations with the Soviet Union was something that had been pursued ever since the settlement of the Nomonhan Incident (September 1939) so as to restrain the Soviets from supporting the Chongqing administration, but the emergence of the southward advance policy in the summer of 1940 made it an even more important agenda item, since this added another consideration: the assurance of safety in the north in preparation for an advance by Japanese forces to the south.

Negotiations with the Soviet Union ran into rough going, however. The Army in particular hoped to provide for a relationship comparable to that of the German-Soviet nonaggression pact, but with little concrete to offer, Japan found all of its feelers concerning a nonaggression pact starting in the autumn of 1940 rejected by the Soviet Union. In March 1941 Matsuoka set out on a trip to Moscow and Berlin, carrying in his mind a proposal for a four-way alliance, and in April he and Joseph Stalin signed a Japanese-Soviet neutrality pact. To Matsuoka the conclusion of this pact represented the establishment of a four-party alliance among Japan, Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union. But at this point Adolf Hitler had already decided to attack the Soviet Union; the state of German-Soviet relations was more severe than Matsuoka's subjective assessment indicated.

(4) Japan-US Negotiations and the China Issue

a. Settlement of the Incident and Japan-US Negotiations

Direct negotiations with the United States were undertaken in hopes of US mediation for peace, seen as the final remaining diplomatic means of settling the incident; preparatory operations by private citizens in both countries started in the autumn of 1940. Figures including Army Ministry Military Affairs Bureau head Muto Akira, Japanese Ambassador to the United States Nomura Kichisaburo, and US Secretary of State Hull were also involved in these operations, and in mid-April 1941 a "proposal for understanding," setting forth an unofficial basic set of ideas for

bilateral talks, was presented to the Japanese government.⁷³

The proposal for understanding suggested effectively nullifying the Tripartite Pact and called for peace mediation under certain conditions and bilateral cooperation in securing resources from Southeast Asia. In Japan, both the government and the military welcomed it. As a prerequisite for mediation, the proposal also called on Japan to accept Hull's Four Principles (respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all nations, noninterference in the affairs of other countries, equality of opportunity, and maintenance of the status quo in the Pacific unless changed by peaceful means), but the Japanese side did not focus on these principles.⁷⁴

The main points of contention in Japan-US negotiations were (1) the application of the Tripartite Pact's provisions obligating participation in belligerency and (2) settlement of the Sino-Japanese War through American intermediation. It seemed possible to reach compromise on the former point by treating it as an issue of interpretation and implementation of the pact. But with respect to peace mediation, which was Japan's greatest expectation, the United States was not interested in being a mere mediator; it wanted Japan to accept Hull's Four Principles, and in particular it sought the unconditional application to China of the open-door policy and the principle of equal opportunity in trade. Japan, however, demanded the modification of these principles and sought to assure this through the continued stationing of troops in China.

Foreign Minister Matsuoka in particular, seeking to pursue negotiations with the United States on favorable terms based on the diplomatic successes of the neutrality pact with the Soviet Union and the Tripartite Pact, ended up modifying the "proposal for understanding" substantially in connection with Japan's obligations under the Tripartite Pact and clarification of the peace terms for settlement of the Sino-Japanese War. In the revised draft reflecting Matsuoka's opinions (presented to the United States on May 12), the portion concerning the Sino-Japanese War demanded that the United States accept the principles of the

⁷³ Shiozaki Hiroaki, *Nichi-Ei-Bei Senso no kiro* (The Crossroads of Japan's War with Britain and the United States) (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1984), part 2, chaps. 3 and 4. The following references to the course of Japan-US negotiations are based mainly on MoFA, ed., *Nihon gaiko bunsho, Nichi-Bei kosho: 1941 nen* (Japanese Diplomatic Papers: Japan-US Negotiations, 1941), vols. 1 and 2 (Tokyo: MoFA, 1989 and 1990).

⁷⁴ Ambassador Nomura did not report to the Japanese government that acceptance of Hull's Four Principles was a prerequisite for the start of bilateral negotiations (Sudo Shinji, *Nichi-Bei kaisen gaiko no kenkyu* [Studies on the Diplomacy of the Start of War between Japan and the United States] [Tokyo: Keio Tsushin, 1986], 60). Secretary of State Hull was thinking of starting negotiations with Japan on the basis of the "proposal for understanding" if the Japanese government officially made this proposal, with acceptance of his Four Principles as a precondition. Hosoya Chihiro, "'Nichi-Bei kosho' oyobi sono kiroku bunsho o meguru jakkan no mondaiten ni tsuite" (Some Issues Relating to the "Japan-US Negotiations" and the Documentary Records Thereof), *Gaiko shiryō kampo* 2 (March 1989).

Sino-Japanese Basic Treaty that Japan concluded with the Wang Jingwei administration in November 1940 and the Japan-Manchukuo-China joint declaration, and that it push the Chiang administration to seek peace. The Sino-Japanese Basic Treaty, even in the portions that had been made public at the time, called for the stationing of Japanese troops in Inner Mongolia and North China for joint defense against the Communists and the maintenance of order, along with cooperation in the development of defense resources. And the three-party joint declaration confirmed that China would respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Manchukuo.

The American reply (the June 21 US proposal) rejected almost the entire Japanese proposal, refusing to recognize the Wang administration, calling for the restoration of Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria and the unconditional withdrawal of Japanese forces, rejecting the stationing of anti-Communist forces, and demanding nondiscriminatory treatment in trade. The United States did not retreat from these conditions in subsequent negotiations either. Matsuoka was enraged by this reply, which he took as treating Japan like a “weak country or a dependent state,” and he called for an end to negotiations, but Prime Minister Konoe sought to keep the talks going by replacing Matsuoka as foreign minister.

b. The Issue of Stationing Forces in China and the Failure of Negotiations

The outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union on June 23 meant that the latter was clearly a member of the anti-Axis camp, destroying Matsuoka’s idea of a four-way alliance among Japan, Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union. The United States stepped up its aid to the Soviets, and the Chinese Communists shifted their domestic and external strategies. They pulled back from their view of the world war as a war among imperialist countries and revived their idea of an “anti-Fascist united front.” And domestically they came to place more emphasis on the “united national front” against Japan and the United Front with the Nationalists. The relationship between the Nationalists and Communists, which deteriorated in the wake of the Wannan Incident (New Fourth Army Incident), was repaired, and in the Battle of Changsha (1941) the Nationalist and Communist armies achieved a certain degree of operational cooperation.⁷⁵

Within the Army in Japan the idea of a “northern war” emerged, and the Army General Staff and Foreign Minister Matsuoka called for Japan to attack the Soviet Union in concert with Germany’s attack on that country. After a debate between this idea and that of a southward advance, the national policy that emerged was that of a “combined southward and northward advance,” but an attack on the Soviet Union was to be made if and when the war between Germany and the Soviet Union proceeded in Germany’s favor; moves were taken to strengthen the Guandong Army in preparation for this, but on top of Siberia’s climate, the receding of the prospect of a quick end to the German-Soviet conflict led to the abandonment

⁷⁵ Ishijima, op. cit., 137.

of this plan early in August.⁷⁶

Under the southward advance policy, meanwhile, in line with the existing policy to strengthen the military union with French Indochina, Japan went ahead with the occupation of southern French Indochina late in July. One objective was to apply pressure on the Dutch East Indies, with which negotiations on the supply of resources had ended in discord; another was to set up air bases in the newly occupied area. The United States responded to this move with highly severe economic sanctions, freezing Japanese assets and imposing a total embargo on oil exports, and the British and Dutch followed suit. But neither Japan nor the United States decided to go to war. For the United States, Germany continued to be the prime threat; US-German relations had deteriorated to an extreme degree, and the US government had already frozen German and Italian assets in June. The United States' hard line against Japan was aimed at forcing Japan to yield and to restrain it from advancing further to the south without going to war.⁷⁷

From Japan's perspective, the severe economic sanctions meant that the "ABCD encirclement" had reached a level difficult to bear in terms of national defense, but the leaders of the government and military still pursued the possibility of avoiding war with the United States. One such prospect was the idea of a direct meeting between Prime Minister Konoe and President Roosevelt. Once again consideration was given to a proposal to be made to the United States for this purpose. The Foreign Ministry tried to include provisions limiting the area and period of stationing of Japanese forces in China, based on the principle that the forces were to be withdrawn promptly. But the Army insisted in particular on the stationing of troops in Inner Mongolia and North China. The September 25 proposal to the United States yielded on such issues as the open-door policy and equal opportunity in trade, recognizing freedom of economic activity in principle, but it did not yield on the issue of stationing forces in China.

The October 2 reply from the United States was negative, rejecting the Japanese proposal and declaring that progress in discussions concerning the basic issues was a prerequisite for a summit meeting. Prime Minister Konoe attempted to reach a settlement by proposing a partial withdrawal of troops with a view to avoiding war, but Army Minister Tojo Hideki, representing the Army's position, opposed this firmly, and the cabinet collapsed. The Tojo cabinet that was formed on October 18, under instructions from the emperor, pursued the possibility of not going to war starting from a "fresh slate." At the imperial conference on November 5, it was decided that negotiations with the United States and preparations for a campaign would be pursued in tandem through the end of November and that, if a settlement were not reached, military action would be launched in the first part of

⁷⁶ Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Daihon'ei Rikugunbu senso shidohan kimitsu senso nisshi* (Secret War Diaries of the War Leadership Team, Imperial General Headquarters, Army Department) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 1998), vol. 1, 144–45 (entry for August 9, 1941).

⁷⁷ Utley, *op. cit.*, 151–55.

December. At the same time, two final negotiating proposals, A and B, were approved. Proposal B, which was presented to the US government on November 20, called for a provisional agreement to avert the crisis at hand, offering to move the Japanese forces in southern French Indochina to northern French Indochina in return for an American pledge to supply oil to Japan.

The US government also considered a provisional agreement draft and came up with one whose contents were close to those of Japan's proposal B, which it shared confidentially with the British, Dutch, and Chinese (Chongqing) governments. But Chiang Kai-shek, who was being compelled to wage a bitter war with Japan, hoped for US entry into the fight against Japan; compromise between Japan and the United States under a provisional agreement would mean prolongation of China's war with Japan. From the Chinese viewpoint, the United States was sacrificing China to appease Japan. Britain was also negative toward the offering of a provisional agreement draft, fearing the impact that US concessions on the China issue would have on the morale of the Chinese government and people. Winston Churchill's concern was that China's collapse would make it that much easier for Japan to attack Southeast Asia.⁷⁸

With the rejection of proposal B, the tentative agreement draft was also withdrawn, and the United States' reply to Japan took the form of the so-called Hull Note of November 26. The Hull Note included demands for the withdrawal of Japanese forces from all of China and all of French Indochina and nonrecognition of all administrations other than the one in Chongqing. This was tantamount to returning Japan to its state before the Manchurian Incident. The Japanese government took this as a de facto ultimatum, and at an imperial conference on December 1, the final decision was made to go to war with Britain and the United States.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Ishii Akiho, who as a member of the Army Ministry's Military Affairs Bureau was responsible for drafting the portions of the proposals to the United States concerning the China issue, the insistence on stationing troops in Inner Mongolia and North China was not aimed at derailing the negotiations with the United States but was the result of an expectation that the United States would understand the critical threat of communization of North China.⁷⁹ This and war with the United States were the outcomes that the Army most wanted to avoid, but ironically the insistence on stationing troops to prevent China's communization ended up inviting war with the United States.

Meanwhile, at the final stage of bilateral negotiations, the United States was

⁷⁸ US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1941 IV, 651–54, 660–61, 665–67; Anthony Best, "Nit-Chu kankei to Nichi-Ei kankei: 1937–1941" (Sino-Japanese and Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1937–41), trans. Aizawa Kiyoshi, in Military History Society of Japan, *Nit-Chu Senso no Shoso*, 354.

⁷⁹ Hatano Sumio, *Bakuryotachi no Shinju Wan* (The General Staff Officers' Pearl Harbor) (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1991), 143.

unable to accept conditions that would violate China's sovereignty for the sake of stability in the Pacific, and the position that the China issue required multilateral negotiations with Britain, the Netherlands, China, and other countries became clearer. The issue of the stationing of Japanese troops in China was no longer a bilateral issue but became an issue inseparable from the stability of the Pacific.

CHAPTER 3 THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE PACIFIC WAR

Hatano Sumio

Introduction: Outbreak of War and the China Front

At the outbreak of war with the United States, the Japanese Army had deployed 20 divisions and 21 independent mixed brigades to the China front, but this does not mean that Japan had resolved to intensify its operations on this front. Immediately before war broke out, the Japanese government had confirmed that in the event of war with the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands, “We should avoid losses in China as much as possible, to maintain the overall fighting power of the Empire for long-term global conflict.”¹ Although campaigns such as Operation Number Five, which posited an invasion of Sichuan, were planned in the early stages of the war, following repeated demands from the Army stationed in China, overall there were only a limited number of large-scale military campaigns on the China front throughout the course of the Pacific War, with the exception of Operation Number One (*Ichigo sakusen*) in the later stages of the war. On the other hand, with the loss of diplomatic and political means to bring an end to the conflict between China and Japan, and no military or political solution in sight, plans were made for elite troops to be diverted toward the south.

Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek’s Chongqing-based government declared war on Japan on December 9, and signed the Declaration of United Nations in January 1942 as one of the Big Four. In the declaration of war, Chiang Kai-shek said “The present conflict is one we must resolve together,” signifying that China was now one of the “big four” Allied powers alongside the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union.² Immediately after the opening of hostilities, the Chinese Communist Party also underlined the need for a united international front against Japan in the party newspaper *Jiefang ribao* (Liberation Daily) and called for stronger cooperation with Britain and the United States.³ Chiang Kai-shek’s hopes that the Soviet Union would join the war against Japan were rebuffed,⁴ however, and lacking modern military firepower, China had no choice but to rely economically and militarily on assistance

¹ “Tai-Bei, Ei, Ran kaisen no baai ni okeru teikoku no tai-Shi hosaku” (The Empire’s China Strategy in the Event of War with the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands) (November 10, 1941), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Records A7.0.0.9–51. *Daitoa Senso kankei ikken: Kaisen kankei juyojiko shu* (Incidents Relating to the Greater East Asia War: A Collection of Important Documents Relating to the Outbreak of Hostilities).

² Iechika Ryoko, “Sho Kaiseki to Nichi-Bei kaisen” (Chiang Kai-shek and the Outbreak of War Between Japan and the United States), in *Higashi Ajia kindaiishi* 12 (March 2009).

³ The Japan Institute of International Affairs, *Chugoku Kyosanto shi shiryoshu* (Materials on the History of the Communist Party of China), vol. 10, documents 84, 85, 87.

⁴ US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941*, vol. 4, 747.

from the United States if it were to stand any chance of fighting effectively against Japan.

For the United States, the China front had two main significances. First, tying up Japan's ground forces on the continent, strengthening the US position in the conflict in the Pacific; and second, building airbases in Chongqing-controlled territory from which to carry out strategic bombing of the Japanese home islands and occupied territories. This second factor was particularly important, with the Soviet Union maintaining its neutrality with Japan and unlikely to permit the United States to build airbases in the Primorsky Krai or the Kamchatka Peninsula. Providing effective support to China in order to achieve these two objectives was a major concern for the United States.⁵

1. China as a Battleground During the Pacific War

(1) The Collapse of Plans to Attack Chongqing and the Zhejiang-Jiangxi Campaign

At the beginning of the war, the Japanese expeditionary army in China entered foreign settlements in Shanghai, Hankou, Guangdong, and Tianjin, disarming British and US forces and confiscating foreign-owned assets. The Twenty-third Army assigned to the invasion of Hong Kong crossed the border on December 8, [1941], and had completed mopping-up operations on the Kowloon Peninsula by December 13. When the British Army refused Japanese demands for the surrender of the garrison, the army occupied Hong Kong Island on December 18.

To support the Hong Kong operation and divert the Chinese Army that had been deployed to Guangdong, the Wuhan-based Eleventh Army launched the Battle of Changsha. The Eleventh Army began its attack with three divisions and roughly 60,000 men in late December, fighting fiercely with approximately 190,000 soldiers from 22 divisions of the Chinese Ninth Military Region Army. The Japanese entered Changsha in early January 1942, but soon had to abandon the city and withdrew to Hankou. The Japanese lost around 1,500 men, with 4,400 wounded; the Chinese sustained more than 28,000 casualties.⁶ Chiang Kai-shek claimed a Chinese victory, declaring, "All nations will recognize the contribution our resistance has made to the world," with the Chinese being the only ones to foil a Japanese attack at a time when the Allies were suffering a series of defeats.⁷

⁵ Tomatsu Haruo, "Nit-Chu Senso to Taiheiyō Senso no senryakuteki kankei" (Strategic Relations in the Sino-Japanese War and Pacific War), in Hatano Sumio and Tobe Ryoichi, eds., *Nit-Chu Senso no gunjiteki tenkai* (The Military Development of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2006), 391–92.

⁶ Office of War History, National Defense College (now National Institute for Defense Studies), *Honkon, Chosa sakusen* (Hong Kong/Changsha Campaign), *Senshi soshō* (War History Series) 47 (Tokyo: Asagumo Shimbunsha, 1971), 535.

⁷ Jiang Zhongzheng (Chiang Kai-shek), *Zhongguo zhi mingyun* (China's Destiny) (Chongqing:

In the spring of 1942, once the Japanese invasions of Southeast Asia had settled down, the Imperial Army General Staff Office responded to demands from the army in China by starting studies for a large-scale military operation in China. In early April, Army Chief of Staff Sugiyama Hajime instructed Hata Shunroku, commander-in-chief of the China Expeditionary Army, to look for a suitable opportunity for an attack on Chongqing.

On April 18, however, US planes carried out a bombing mission on the Japanese mainland, crash-landing on US-occupied airfields in Zhejiang Province. This led to the hurried launch of the Zhejiang-Jiangxi (Zhegan) Campaign. It was thought that air raids on the Japanese home islands might have a negative impact on the morale of soldiers and the general population. Beginning in mid-May, the Shanghai-based Thirteenth Army moved west along the Zhejiang-Jiangxi Railway with forces from Central and North China. Part of the Eleventh Army moved east from Hankou at the same time, with the two armies successfully making contact in early July. But the Japanese had failed to make adequate plans for replenishing their supplies, and the campaign led to more than 4,000 casualties before the Japanese withdrew without securing the railway line. One reason for the retreat was a decision to make preparations for attacking Chongqing a priority. The campaign did result in the destruction of several airfields, but the United States successfully built replacement airbases in various parts of China later in the war, rendering the significance of the campaign doubtful.⁸

In the meantime, preparations were underway for an attack on Chongqing. On September 3, Army Chief of Office Sugiyama gave instructions to the armies in China on preparations for Operation Number Five (the Sichuan Operation). The purpose of the campaign was to create conditions in which men and materiel could be moved from the continent and put in a position to withstand the anticipated Allied counteroffensive in the Pacific. Japan's relationship with the Soviet Union made removing military facilities from Manchuria impossible, and so China proper became the focus of the campaign, whose aim was to "destroy the Chongqing government's ability to resist," prior to a subsequent reduction in Japanese military strength in the area. Politically, it was hoped that bringing overwhelming military

Zhengzhong shuju, 1943), p. 96 of the Japanese translation.

⁸ In the attack on Quzhou that took place as part of the Zhejiang-Jiangxi Campaign, the command of the Thirteenth Army encouraged the use of chemical weapons, and the Twenty-second Division in early June 1942 in guerilla warfare near the town of Dazhou used canister bombs of "red balls." Reports stated that the effect of gas seemed considerable. (Headquarters of the Thirteenth Army, "Sego sakusen keika gaiyo" (An Outline of the Zhejiang-Jiangxi Campaign), and Narashino Army School, "Shina jihen ni okeru kagakusen reishoshu" (Collected Examples of Chemical Warfare during the Sino-Japanese War), in Awaya Kentaro, *Miketsu no senso sekinin* (The Unresolved Question of War Responsibility) (Tokyo: Kashiwashobo, 1994), 122, 148. Yoshimi Yoshiaki and Matsuno Seiya, eds., *Dokugasusen kankei shiryō* (Materials Concerning Poison Gas Warfare), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1989), document 56.

force to bear against the Nationalists' power base in Sichuan could force the Chongqing government to accept a humiliating peace.⁹

The plan was to send reinforcements of 60,000 men from the south, 120,000 from Japan, and 180,000 from Manchuria and Korea; an invasion of Sichuan would then follow, with the main force coming from Xi'an, supported by forces from Wuhan. But fierce fighting at Guadalcanal in the southeast Pacific from August 1942 deprived Operation Number Five of the equipment and forces it needed. The operation required more than 300,000 tons of shipping. Negotiations began on securing the necessary support, but the Navy, whose main priority was the Pacific, insisted that all available resources should be used to secure air supremacy in the South Pacific; the Navy's losses were greater than expected.¹⁰ For this reason, in early November 1942, it was unofficially announced that for practical purposes the plan was cancelled (i.e. would not take place in 1943). The reason given was "a lack of sufficient shipping, mainly for transport."¹¹ This made it impossible to boost the strength of Japan's forces in China from the mainland, and on December 10 the operation was cancelled.

The loss of shipping at Guadalcanal and the abandonment of Operation Number Five forced a fundamental reexamination of Japanese strategy for resolving the Sino-Japanese War. A decision was taken to postpone large-scale military operations and to prioritize political maneuvers and stratagems instead. According to Colonel Kotani Etsuo, "It has become clear that the national strength at present makes an aggressive strategic approach unlikely, and that the government and command headquarters hope to achieve a major turnabout in the war situation by actively pursuing a politically motivated strategy."¹² An important part of this strategy would be the New Policy for China (discussed below).

(2) The Burma Campaign and the China-Burma-India Theater

In the early stages of the war, the biggest threat to China came not from the interior but from the west. In addition to the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, there was a risk that the Japanese Army would invade Burma and cut off China's access to supplies along the Burma Road, as well as the danger of advances on Kunming and Chongqing. Having moved into Thailand in January 1942, the Japanese crossed the border into Burma on January 20 with the aim of attacking Rangoon and blocking the supply of aid to China. Rangoon was occupied on March 7.

⁹ "Kotani Etsuo taisa kaiso-roku" (Memoirs of Colonel Kotani Etsuo), adjusted by Repatriate Relief Bureau, Ministry of Health and Welfare, in 1954. Ito Takashi et al., eds., *Rikugun: Hata Shunroku nisshi* (Army: Diary of Hata Shunroku), *Zoku Gendaishi shiryō* (Materials on Modern History, Continued) 4 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1974), entries for 1942, September 6, November 15, 1942.

¹⁰ "Kotani Etsuo taisa kaiso-roku" op. cit., *Daihon'ei rikugun-bu* (Imperial General Headquarters, Army Department), vol. 5, *Senshi sosho* (see note 6) 63 (1973), 76–80, 185–92, 419–27.

¹¹ Ito et al., op. cit., entries for September 23, October 5, November 9, and December 13, 1942.

¹² "Kotani Etsuo taisa kaiso-roku" op. cit.

British forces in Burma were ill-equipped and low on morale, and Britain was forced to ask China to send troops. Under the command of US Lieutenant General Joseph W. Stilwell, the highest-ranking US officer in China and Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-shek, Chinese troops from in western Yunnan Province were assembled into an expeditionary army and assigned to joint operations with the British Army. In late March, there was heavy fighting between the Japanese Fifteenth Army and the elite Chinese Fifth Army south of Toungoo (Tonggu). Toward the end of the month, the city fell, and by the end of May the Japanese had occupied northern Burma and completely cut off the Burma Road. Retreating Chinese troops dispersed in the direction of India and Yunnan Province.

In addition to interrupting supplies to China by land, Japan's occupation of northern and central Burma also had a significant impact on air supply routes. The Japanese established Eighteenth Division headquarters at Myitkyina in northern Burma as well as airfields for patrol and fighter planes that limited Allied air access to China considerably. The Allies were forced to provide supplies to China by flying over the Himalayas, an extremely challenging route known as "the Hump."¹³

In March 1942, Stilwell proposed to the US and Chinese governments a plan for modernizing the Chinese Army. In addition to reorganizing the army and reducing the number of divisions (which at the time numbered more than 300), he started work on regrouping the remnants of the Chinese army that had fled to Ramgarh, India, after defeat in Burma, and reorganizing the Chinese troops gathered in Yunnan Province. To achieve these aims and keep China supplied with military supplies for retaking Burma, the Allies needed a supply route from India to China, but this had been severed by the Japanese. The CBI (China, Burma, India) front was formed primarily in order to open up a land route connecting Yunnan and northern Burma with India.

Responsibility for retaking Burma was assigned to Britain, but with Britain inevitably prioritizing the European and Middle-Eastern theaters and the defense of India, it could hardly afford to divert precious military resources to the Burma campaign. Likewise for the United States, preparing to counterattack in the Pacific and providing support for Britain and the Soviet Union were the main priorities, with the CBI theater and the effort to recapture Burma given relatively little importance. Chiang Kai-shek was also less than enthusiastic about the campaign to retake Burma, instead supporting the plans put forward by US Air Force Major General Claire L. Chennault, hired by Chiang Kai-shek to train the Chinese air force. This led to frictions with Stilwell, and relations between the two men started to deteriorate from the middle of 1942.

¹³ The volume of supplies sent over the Hump far outnumbered the amount sent by the Burma Road, and supplies sent by this route continued to support the US Air Force in China until 1945. Nishizawa Atsushi, "Tai-Chu gunji enjo to Himaraya-goe kuyu sakusen" (Military Support for China and the Trans-Himalayan Air Supply Campaign), in Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso sairon* (Reexamining the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 2008), 275–95.

Stilwell, however, pushed aside the objections of China and Britain, and in summer 1942 began training a new Chinese army using American-style facilities and methods at Ramgarh, India. The aim was to open up the Ledo Road through northern Burma. An additional 32,000 Chinese troops were flown in from Yunnan in the fall. In April 1943, in Kunming, Yunnan Province, the new army was placed under the command of General Chen Cheng, and by August reorganization into five army corps totaling 15 divisions was complete.

During this time, the United States had shifted the focus of its China-based activities from modernizing the Chinese Army to strategic bombing. Behind this change of strategy was the development of the high-performance Boeing B-29 bomber. It was believed that systematic bombing of industrial production centers on the Japanese home islands represented the most effective means of destroying Japan's capacity to wage war. Following discussions at the Trident joint meeting of US and British leaders and staff officers in Washington in May 1943, in November a decision was taken at the Anglo-US-China summit in Cairo to make a strategic bombing campaign the focus of the Allies' strategy against Japan on the China front. Chiang Kai-shek was initially enthusiastic about modernizing China's army, but he was eventually persuaded by US President [Franklin D.] Roosevelt to allow the Allies to use China as a base for strategic bombing against Japan. The deterioration of his relationship with Stilwell, who was demanding control over the Chinese army as well as US forces in China, and the stubborn resistance of warlords to the consolidation and reorganization of the Chinese Army were among the reasons why Chiang became less enthusiastic about Stilwell's modernization plans.¹⁴

Another decision taken at Cairo was to make the Burma campaign a priority in the fight against Japan. Chiang Kai-shek agreed to allow the Chinese expeditionary army based in Ramgarh and Yunnan to be used in an attack on northern Burma. But at the Tehran Conference held in November 1943, Stalin's promise to join the war against Japan lessened the significance of the Burma campaign. Based on information from the Tehran Conference, Chiang Kai-shek refused to allow the new army in Yunnan to be used in the Burma campaign, instead allowing Stilwell to take command of China's Ramgarh-based army. Given what had happened in the Zhejiang-Jiangxi Campaign the year before, Stilwell argued that a strong Chinese ground force was essential to counter the risk that airfields in China might be lost to a Japanese ground attack. But with Japanese forces struggling in the Pacific, it was thought there was little likelihood of Japan's launching a major new offensive on the China front.¹⁵

In December 1943, Stilwell led the new Chinese army from India in an invasion of the Hukawng Valley, the gateway to northern Burma. But in early May 1944, the Allies began a comprehensive counteroffensive in northern Burma and Yunnan, where Japanese defenses had been weakened by developments in the Battle of

¹⁴ Tomatsu, *op. cit.*, 396–400.

¹⁵ Tang Tsou, *American Failure in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 82.

Imphal. Crushing the Japanese Eighteenth Division with superior firepower, the Allies had occupied Hukawng by July. The Allies also launched a surprise sudden attack on Myitkyina, a vital strategic point in northern Burma, and in August regained control of the airfields there. Around the same time, the Chinese army forced its way across the Salween (Nujiang) River on the Burmese border. But while the reorganized modern Chinese Army was winning victories in northern Burma and Yunnan, in China proper, the Nationalist army was struggling to cope with Operation Number One, the Japanese Army's campaign to carve a passage across the continent.¹⁶

(3) The North China Campaign

The Hundred Regiments Offensive that was fought over the second half of 1940 made the Japanese Army realize the true nature of the threat posed by the Chinese Communist forces, based in the anti-Japanese resistance zone in North China. Accordingly, the Japanese Army shifted tactics in its pacification and purging offensive in North China. Although the Japanese continued to demand submission and surrender from the Nationalist forces, this stopped at warning and surveillance and the Japanese made no deliberate attempt to launch an attack. Instead, the Japanese now made the struggle against the Communists their number-one priority.¹⁷ Between March 1941 and the end of 1942, the Japanese North China Area Army divided North China into three districts: "pacified zones" (occupied territory); "semipacified zones" (guerilla campaign zones); and "unpacified zones" (the bases of anti-Japanese resistance). As well as beginning a systematic mopping-up campaign in the unpacified zones, the Japanese also launched a law and order campaign in cooperation with the North China Political Council (launched in March 1940) led by Wang Kemin and other members of the prewar military cliques. In the pacified zones, this included the "clean fields" pacification campaign using propaganda issued by the North China Political Council, forced removal to the pacified zones of populations in regions affected by guerilla warfare, and the building of barriers and walls to establish population-free areas. In the unpacified zones, the army carried out an economic blockade and obstructed the passage of goods. Economic pressure was also brought to bear on areas of the semipacified zones where there was Communist support. These economic sanctions included attacks on markets in the unpacified zones, confiscation of grain and crops, and the forcible purchase of agricultural produce. These measures intensified steadily as the

¹⁶ On the connections between Operation Number One and the campaign in northern Burma and Yunnan, see Asano Toyomi, "Kita Biruma-Uunnan sakusen to Nit-Chu Senso" (The Northern Burma/Yunnan Campaign and the Sino-Japanese War) in Hatano and Tobe, op. cit., 297–338.

¹⁷ "Daiichi gun sakusen keika no gaiyo" (Summary of the Progress of the First Army's Combat Operations), First Army Chief of Staff (January 15, 1942), in *Taiheiyo Senso* (The Pacific War), vol. 4, Gendaishi shiryō (Materials on Modern History) 38 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1974), 177. Baba Takeshi, "Kahoku ni okeru Chukyo no gunji katsudo, 1939–1945" (Military Activities of the Chinese Communist Party in North China, 1939–45), in Hatano and Tobe, op. cit., 232–34.

war went on.

These twin operations dealt a heavy blow to the anti-Japanese resistance, reducing the size of the resistance's bases. But this unprecedented crisis was overcome by the widespread success of Communist-led efforts to put the peasant masses on a secure financial footing, such as the movement to reduce land rents and interest rates and the movement to increase production. Beginning in 1943, the Communists' bases gradually started to revitalize and expand again.¹⁸

In order to put an end to expanding Communist power and influence in North China, the Japanese North China Area Army set up the North China Special Operations Force in September 1943, made up of specialists in anti-guerrilla warfare. Ultimately, however, this unit only really produced tangible results in the cities. The purpose of the special forces was to expand the scope of the pacified zones as much as possible, but according to the forces' own records, precisely the opposite happened and by the second half of 1943 the Communists had begun to infiltrate the pacified zones as well.¹⁹ In this context, the Communist forces rebuilt its strength, and by the end of 1944 the bases were back to the same extent as in 1940, and by June 1945 the Communists were able to launch widespread major attacks in Hebei Province.

At a joint meeting of administrative officers in early 1942 a staff officer of the North China Area Army stressed the urgent importance of securing provisions and supplies. He argued that "operations to secure supplies should be carried out on the same scale as punitive operations, or alternatively even more severe punitive measures should be conducted in order to secure supplies." He called for greater "originality and ingenuity."²⁰ With increasing demands for greater autonomy from forces on the ground, the ruthless campaign to secure provisions and supplies became a factor behind illegal actions perpetrated by the Japanese Army and referred to in Chinese as *sanguang zhengze* (the "three alls" policy).²¹ As early as autumn 1940 the "Burn to Ash" strategy was used in a counteroffensive in central Shanxi Province as retribution for the Hundred Regiments Offensive. Villages suspected of harboring Communist supporters were burned to the ground.²² One of

¹⁸ Nishimura Shigeo, *Nijusseiki Chugoku no seiji kukan* (Political Space in Twentieth-Century China) (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 2004), 135–77.

¹⁹ Yamamoto Masahiro, "Kahoku no tai gerira sen, 1939–1945" (Anti-guerrilla Warfare in North China, 1939–45), in Hatano and Tobe, *op. cit.*, 209–11.

²⁰ "Seimu kankei shoko kaido sekijo homengun sanbo fukucho koen yoshi" (Summary of remarks made by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Japanese North China Area Army at a Meeting of Administrative Officers) (January 15th, 1942), *Nit-Chu Senso* (The Pacific War), vol. 5, Gendaishi shiryō (see note 17) 13 (1966), 524.

²¹ Yamamoto, *op. cit.*, 204–05. The "three alls" policy stands for "kill all, burn all, loot all."

²² In the First Shinchu Campaign (August 30–September 8, 1940), orders were given to exterminate "all males between the ages of 15 and 60 deemed to be enemies," and "enemy villages" were burned to the ground in their entirety, according to a strategy aimed at "reducing to ashes the base of enemy activity and thoroughly eradicating insurgent activity, so as to

the methods used involved poison gas. According to *Shukusei tobatsu no sanko* (Considerations on Pacification and Purging Strategy) (May 1943), distributed to all units by the North China Area Army headquarters, the use of canister bombs containing chemical weapons was recommended as an effective means of combating Communist guerrilla forces. The chief reason for unlawful actions in the unpacified zones was an increase in the number of new troops sent as reinforcements following reorganization and redeployment to other fronts, leading to an overall decline in the standard of the soldiers.²³

Additionally, since 1942 the local population in North China had been mobilized to provide forced labor in Manchuria and Japan. Recruiting was contracted solely by the North China Labor and Industry Association, under the control of the Japanese Army and the North China Political Council. More than two million people were sent as laborers from North China to Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. From 1944, the North China Political Council came to the forefront of these activities, and under a secret order for the urgent mobilization of vital labor, the Japanese Army started to arrest members of the “vagrant population” and ship them to Japan and Manchuria. Transportation for forced labor in various parts of Japan began on an experimental basis in September 1943; by May 1945 some 39,000 Chinese were working in harsh and cruel conditions, sparking large-scale protests by Chinese laborers such as the Hanaoka Incident at a mine in Akita Prefecture.²⁴

(4) Operation Number One (Battle of Henan-Hunan-Guangxi)

In September 1943, weakened by considerable losses in the southeast Pacific, Japan made plans for a change of strategy, setting up a defensive line linking Burma, the Dutch East Indies, Western New Guinea, the Marianas, the Kuril Islands, and Manchuria, and defining everything within this line as an “Absolute Defense Zone.” In order to strengthen defenses within the zone, a plan was put in place to redeploy ten divisions (15,000 men), 15,000 horses, and 2,000 vehicles from China. The emergence of plans for Operation Number One, however, which called for plans to transect the continent, led to major reductions in the scale of this plan.²⁵

permanently removing the enemy’s ability to resist in the future” (Independent Mixed Brigade No. 4, “Detailed Report on the Conflict in the First Shinchu Campaign,” in Yoshimi and Matsuno, op. cit., documents 53, 54).

²³ See, for example, Division 36 Headquarters, “Showa 17-nendo shukusei kensetsu keikaku” (Pacification and Rebuilding Plan for Fiscal 1942) (April 15, 1942), in Gendaishi shiryō (see note 17), vol. 13 (1966), 572–88. Yamamoto, op. cit., 209–11.

²⁴ As studies based on “Kajin romusha shuro tenmatsu hokokusho” (A Comprehensive Report on Work by Chinese Laborers), see, for example, Nishinarita Yutaka, *Chugokujin kyosei renko* (Forced Transportation of Chinese Nationals) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press), 2002. Also Usui Katsumi *Shimpan: Nit-Chu Senso* (The Sino-Japanese War: New Edition) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2000), 207–10. On the Hanaoka Incident, see Nishinarita, op. cit., 363–402.

²⁵ *Daihon’ei rikugun-bu* (Imperial General Headquarters, Army Department), vol. 7, *Senshi soshō* (see note 6) 67 (1973), 179–215. On the withdrawal of troops from the China front, see 545–48.

Fought from mid-April 1944 to the beginning of February 1945 along the railway lines from Beijing to Hankou, from Hankou to Guangzhou, and from Guilin to Hengyang, Operation Number One was the biggest campaign in the history of the Japanese Army, mobilizing some 500,000 men (totaling 20 divisions and making up roughly 80% of the total strength of the expeditionary army). The purpose of this massive operation, fought over 1,500 kilometers from the Yellow River in Henan Province to Guangdong and the border with French Indochina, was to capture the airbases in the southwest of the country (Guilin and Liuzhou), which posed the threat of air raids on the Japanese home islands; to prevent Allied counteroffensives from India, Burma, and Yunnan; and to secure transport routes for resources in the south from French Indochina into China and Korea.²⁶

The most important roles in the planning and execution of Operation Number One were played by Major General Sanada Joichiro and Colonel Hattori Takushiro. Sanada was appointed Operations Section chief in December 1942 and became chief of the Operations Division in October 1943. While a colonel, Sanada had played a key role in the decision to retreat from Guadalcanal; he was adamant that linking the expeditionary army in China with the Southern Expeditionary Army stationed in Southeast Asia was essential in order to put Japan back on the front foot in the Pacific theater and to put a strategic system in place to withstand the rigors of a long-term conflict. Hattori became Operations Section chief in July 1941, and was in that position when the war began. He was a central figure in putting forward plans for Operation Number Five, described above, and had been looking for an opportunity for an attacking campaign in China since plans for that operation were cancelled.²⁷ Hattori was appointed secretary to the Army Minister in December 1942, and when he became Operations Section chief in October 1943, he began implementing Operation Number One with Sanada, chief of the Operations Division. Both men shared a conviction that Japan should aim to compensate for its weakened position in the Pacific by means of a campaign on the continent.²⁸

The first proposal put forward by the Operations Division involved multiple objectives, including the total destruction of enemy airbases, securing a land link with the Southern Expeditionary Army, and the destruction of the Chongqing government. Army Minister Tojo [Hideki] approved the plan, with the proviso that the objectives be limited to the single aim of destroying enemy airbases, and the emperor gave his assent to this revised version of the plan.²⁹

But when outline plans for the operation were issued by Army Chief of Staff Sugiyama to the expeditionary army in China on January 24, 1944, the objectives had

²⁶ Hara Takeshi, "Ichigo sakusen: Jisshi ni itaru kei to jisshi seika" (Operation Number One: The Route to Implementation and the Results of the Campaign), in Hatano and Tobe, op. cit., 283–95.

²⁷ *Daihon'ei rikugun-bu*, vol. 7, op. cit., 548–53.

²⁸ Imoto Kumao, *Sakusen nisshi de tsuzuru Daitoa Senso* (An Account of the Greater East Asia War, Based on Campaign Diaries) (Tokyo: Fuyo Shobo, 1978), 499.

²⁹ Hara, op. cit., 287–88.

been broadened to include opening a link with the Southern Expeditionary Army and destroying the Chongqing government's will to fight.³⁰ It is likely that this turn of events was brought about by the determination of Sanada and Hattori and the eagerness of the expeditionary army. The aggressive approach taken by the General Staff Office to Operation Number One helped to energize staff officers in the expeditionary army in China, whose morale had begun to dip.³¹

The first stage of the operation in Hunan-Guangxi, known as Operation Togo, went according to plan, but with the attack on Hengyang, the Chongqing Army began to put up fierce resistance. In addition, Japanese supply lines came under attack from US planes, and the Japanese Army struggled before eventually occupying Hengyang in early August. The occupation of Hengyang marked a major turning point in the course of Operation Number One.

The situation in the Pacific was also approaching a turning point. With the fall of Saipan in the Central Pacific at the end of June 1944, the Japanese military had lost control of part of its "Absolute Defense Zone." The Japanese were also sustaining heavy losses in the Imphal Campaign, an attempt to invade India from northern Burma. These setbacks strengthened the hand of an anti-Tojo faction led by Kono Fumimaro and other influential elders. This eventually brought about the resignation of the entire Tojo cabinet in July.

The Army General Staff Office reexamined overall strategy. It was decided that Japanese forces would henceforth defend a line linking the Japanese home islands, Okinawa, Taiwan, and the Philippines, engaging the enemy and counterattacking from behind this defensive line. The strategy was named Operation Shogo. The problem was how to position the ongoing Operation Number One in relation to Operation Shogo. In concrete terms, this came down to a choice between going ahead with the planned attacks on Guilin and Liuzhou, and cancelling them.³²

The leadership within the Army Ministry and the Chief of the Army General Staff Office believed that the campaign should be cancelled, fearing interruptions to the Japanese supply lines such as had occurred in the Imphal Campaign. The Operations Division, however, was insistent that Operation Number One should proceed according to plan, a position supported by the expeditionary army in China. Sanada and Hattori were particularly adamant that the campaign in the Philippines and Operation Number One were two sides of the one coin, and that Operation Number One was essential in order to prevent the transportation links between the Japanese

³⁰ According to the plans, "There is a high probability that US and British forces will use chemical weapons in the near future," and troops were ordered to avoid using chemical weapons in the vicinity of US airbases located in Guilin and Liuzhou. In fact, the use of chemical weapons on the China front was outlawed from the middle of 1944 (Yoshimi and Matsuno, *op. cit.*, 30–31). Although the incidence of use declined, however, the use of poison gas was not abandoned altogether.

³¹ *Ichigo sakusen (1) Kanan kaisen* (War History Documents 4: Operation Number One, vol. 1: Battle of Henan), Senshi soshō (see note 6) 4 (1967), 16–39

³² Imoto, *op. cit.*, 570–72.

home islands and Southeast Asia being cut off.³³ In September 1944 vice Army Minister Shibayama Kenshiro gave his opinion to commander-in-chief Hata [Shunroku], as representative of the army's upper echelon officers, but Hata, though he promised to reexamine supplies, did not agree to the cancellation of the scheduled campaign.³⁴

The campaign proceeded according to plan, and by November 1944 the Japanese had occupied the airbases at Guilin and Liuzhou. In January 1945 Japanese forces had more or less secured a transportation line running the length of the continent, but already the original thinking behind the strategy had lost much of its significance. Bombing runs on Kyushu using B-29 heavy bombers had already started flying out of Chengdu in Sichuan, and when a new base was completed in the Marianas in late 1944, US forces were able to use it for bombing missions on Tokyo and other cities on the Japanese mainland. The importance of China in the Asia-Pacific theater for the United States was dwindling. Nevertheless, the US Army leadership agreed to requests from Chiang Kai-shek and Stilwell, concerned by the crisis on the China front, for bombing of the major cities, and on December 18, 1944, B-29 bombers bombed Hankou, the main headquarters of the Japanese Army in Central China, reducing 90% of the city to ashes and dealing a heavy blow to the expeditionary army.

Reasons for the Nationalist forces' defeat in Operation Number One included extremely low morale caused by poor treatment of the soldiers and corruption among officers, confusion in the chain of command, and a lack of intelligence. Chinese losses were extremely high, with some 600,000–700,000 soldiers losing their lives in the campaign, as well as substantial territorial losses in Henan, Hunan, Guangxi, Guangdong, and Fujian. On the other hand, the losses sustained by the Nationalist forces created favorable conditions for the Communist resistance against Japan. Since 1944, the Communists had acted out of their main bases of support in North and Central China. Japan's mobilization of large numbers of troops for Operation Number One reduced its ability to enforce law and order in North China dramatically, strengthening the hand of Communist forces and allowing them to insinuate themselves into areas previously occupied by the Japanese Army.³⁵

At the end of 1944, the expeditionary army's newly appointed commander-in-chief General Okamura Yasuji proposed to the General Staff Office a plan to build on the success of Operation Number One by attacking Chongqing, but the deteriorating position in the Pacific meant that this plan was not approved.³⁶ The

³³ Hara, *op. cit.*, 290–91. Ito et al., *op. cit.*, entry for October 6, 1944.

³⁴ Ito et al., *op. cit.*, entry for November 13, 1944.

³⁵ Ishijima Noriyuki, *Chugoku konichi sensoshi* (History of China's War of Resistance against Japan) (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1984), 182–85.

³⁶ Military History Society of Japan, ed., *Daihon'ei rikugunbu senso shidohan kimitsu senso nisshi* (Secret War Diaries of the War Leadership Team, Imperial General Headquarters, Army Department), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kinseisha, 1998), 643–44.

Laohekou and Zhijiang Campaigns emerged as an alternative. Since losing airbases to the Japanese during the course of Operation Number One, the US Air Force in China had built airbases in Laohekou and Zhijiang for the use of fighter aircraft and medium-sized bombers. In March and April 1945, 60,000 men from three divisions of the Twelfth Army of the China Expeditionary Army succeeded in destroying the base at Raohekou.³⁷ However, the attack by some 50,000 men of the Twentieth Army on Zhijiang was repulsed by 600,000 troops from the Chinese Army and US Air Force aircraft. The Chinese Army was boosted by the inclusion of modernized divisions that had trained under Stilwell's successor in China, Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer. This final major engagement ended in humiliating defeat for the Japanese forces, and the Twentieth Army withdrew in late May 1945.³⁸

2. Conditions in Occupied China

(1) Politics and the Economy under the Wang Regime

In March 1940, having broken away from Chongqing, Wang Jingwei established a "Republic of China" government in Nanjing. This was presented as an official transfer of the capital from Chongqing. In November 1940, Japan recognized the new government as having sovereignty over all Chinese territory except Manchukuo. Large numbers of Japanese "advisors" were appointed against Wang's wishes, however, and in reality the government was under Japanese control, run according to the "direction from within" approach developed in Manchukuo. It was assumed that this control would continue after the war, and in a meeting with Hata [Shunroku], commander-in-chief of the China Expeditionary Army, Wang lamented becoming "a second Manchukuo."³⁹ Influential members of the anti-Chiang Kai-shek faction within the KMT [Kuomintang: Chinese Nationalist Party] declined to participate in the government, which lacked a strong military base. The government's pacification troops were "an army in name only, and really more like a group of local bandits."⁴⁰

Economically, Japan's tight controls on the flow of goods and an economic blockade brought about a severe industrial downturn and inflation of prices. Under the Wang regime, key industries operated under the umbrella of the Central China Revitalization Corporation, a joint venture in which the Chinese formally held 51% of the shares but that was in reality under Japanese control. Wang requested the return of more than 200 military-controlled factories in three Chinese provinces, among them Jiangsu, which included the Shanghai and Nanjing regions. Following

³⁷ Tomatsu, op. cit., 406–07. *Showa 20-nen no Shina hakengun* (War History Documents 64: The China Expeditionary Army of 1945), vol. 2, Senshi sosho (see note 6) 64 (1973), 379–432.

³⁸ *Showa 20-nen no Shina hakengun*, op. cit., 353–78.

³⁹ Ito et al., op. cit., entry for April 19, 1941.

⁴⁰ *Nit-Chu Senso*, op. cit., 39.

negotiations, the Japanese Army agreed to return several small-scale factories, but for the rest it insisted on a takeover or Sino-Japanese joint ownership. According to Zhou Fohai, “theoretically, they have given up control, but the innumerable restrictions make the situation the same as if they hadn’t returned the factories at all.”⁴¹ Even commodities with no military relevance were subject to strict controls, crippling commerce and industry in the pacified zones and causing rampant inflation that threatened to exhaust the government’s financial resources. In August 1941, Japan set up central and regional commodity control committees and relaxed restrictions on the movement of goods within occupied territory, but this failed to produce any effect.

(2) Currency Wars

Throughout the period of the Sino-Japanese War, with the aim of ensuring a stable supply of goods and materials, Japan established the Federal Reserve Bank of China and the Central Reserve Bank of China (launched in January 1941) in occupied territory. These issued their own banknotes and were responsible for waging currency war against the old *fabi* currency issued by the KMT government. In 1939, under the secret “Sugi Agency,” the Army started a series of plots against the Chinese currency, including counterfeiting the *fabi* and investing in securing supplies and goods, and the military yen currency put considerable pressure on the Nationalist Government’s currency. With the outbreak of the Pacific War and the occupation of the foreign settlements, the Shanghai *fabi* currency weakened. The Wang regime halted new issues of the military yen, stopped the circulation of the old *fabi*, and in 1943 unified the currency under the banknotes issued by the Central Reserve Bank. This became a major bank, with 38 branches, including in Tokyo.

Although the old *fabi* fell dramatically in value, the unified bonds issued by Chiang Kai-shek’s government continued to trade in Shanghai after the outbreak of war. In January 1942 they surpassed their prewar market price, and when they were denominated in the new *fabi* by exchange between the old and new currencies, their value increased even more. The fact that government bonds issued by Chongqing circulated within occupied territory and traded at more than face value shows that public faith in Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT government remained steady.

Originally, Japanese-issued currency circulated only in the cities and in occupied areas along the railway lines. As the Communist forces occupied areas where the Japanese had driven out the Chongqing Army and secured their position in North and Central China by practicing so-called “upright government,” the extent of the area within which the Federal Reserve Bank of China and Central Reserve Bank of China banknotes circulated shrank even further. Excessive issuing of the currency also led to vicious inflation. Escalating prices in the occupied area were the result of irresponsible printing of money in an attempt to acquire goods and supplies, and

⁴¹ Cai Dejin, ed. (Murata Tadayoshi, trans.), *Shu Futsukai nikki* (Diaries of Zhou Fohai) (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1992), entry for May 5, 1940.

this meant a fall in the value of the military yen. This led to a situation in which “totally different price systems exist outside the community of 600,000 Japanese resident in China.”⁴²

The Central Reserve Bank of China currency (new *fabi*) issued by the Nanjing government failed to overcome its weakness relative to the old *fabi* in the areas of Central and North China under the control of the Nanjing government. Together with reckless printing of military yen by the Japanese Army, this caused currency confusion, inflation, and severe shortages, making it impossible to respond to requests from Japan. Bringing inflation under control and establishing a higher position for its own currency than that issued by China (the old *fabi*) proved impossible, and the Nanjing government was never able to stabilize its currency as the means of purchase.

(3) Japan’s New China Policy and its Collapse

In December 1942, with fighting for Guadalcanal in the southeastern Pacific entering a critical phase, an imperial conference agreed a new strategy on China (the Basic Strategy for Dealing with China and Resolving the Greater East Asian War). At the heart of the new strategy were plans to grant greater autonomy to the Nanjing regime, to correct the policy of direct military control and establishment of “Special Areas” in Inner Mongolia and North China, to abandon extraterritoriality and settlements, and to revise the Japan-China Basic Treaty (of November 1940). There was also an economic package to improve the political strength of the Nationalist government in Nanjing by relaxing Japanese monopoly on the economy.⁴³ These moves represented a radical shift from previous policy, as outlined in the Guideline for Dealing with the China Incident of November 1940.

In the background to the new strategy was the horrendous war of attrition Japan had been fighting in the Pacific since the second half of 1942. This had weakened Japan economically, leading it to relax its control and allow greater autonomy to the Nanjing government in order to reduce the burden of administration in China. Another factor was the decision by Britain and the United States to inform the Chongqing government on October 10, 1942 (National Day of the Republic of China), that they would renounce extraterritoriality. The two powers had already announced that they would make this change after the war, but the improving military situation in Asia and the Pacific and the strong wishes of the Chongqing government led to the change being implemented sooner than planned.⁴⁴ The Chinese Communist Party welcomed the move as marking the end of a century-long struggle for

⁴² *Senryochi tsuka kosaku* (Currency Operations in the Occupied Territories), *Zoku Gendaishi shiryō* (see note 9) 11 (1983), 937, 836.

⁴³ Army General Staff Office, ed., *Sugiyama memo* (The Sugiyama Memoranda), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1989), 321–23.

⁴⁴ Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War against Japan, 1941–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 178–79, 195–97.

independence and liberation, declaring that it marked the start of “a new relationship and new partnership with Britain and the United States.”⁴⁵ Japan and the Allies both regarded renouncing extraterritoriality and repealing the unequal treaties as effective ways of winning hearts and minds and ensuring Chinese cooperation, and they hurried to be the first to implement the changes.

Deciding on and implementing this new policy, which entailed the loss of numerous interests in China, required a substantial force to push it ahead. The central figure in this was Shigemitsu Mamoru (ambassador to the Wang-led Republic of China from January 1942, foreign minister from April 1943). For Shigemitsu, the new policy marked a “fundamental renewal” of Japan’s China policy, redressing the “plots and machinations of the military, which have led the country in the wrong direction,” and a “demonstration of Japanese fair-mindedness to the people of China.”⁴⁶ Shigemitsu worked hard to persuade the emperor and the political and military leadership of the need to restore Chinese sovereignty through a fundamental revision of the Japan-China Basic Treaty and endeavored to rein in military objections.

With the new strategy was in place, Japan gave up its extraterritoriality and returned its settlements, and in August 1943 the Japan-China Alliance Treaty was signed to replace the Japan-China Basic Treaty. With this, the Wang government entered a relationship of equality with Japan, albeit one that was only formally so.

Essential to the new policy, however, was the aim of securing the necessary supplies to prosecute the war. Economically, the truth was that “the leadership was controlled by the Japanese military, while businesses continued to be dominated by Japanese traders. The policy of special rights and privileges continued until Japan lost the war.”⁴⁷ For people living under Nanjing rule, the most pressing issue was resolving the economic crisis caused by inflation, and there was little sign of welcome for the new policy.⁴⁸ In an attempt to revive the economy, Japan stopped issuing military currency bills and switched to the currency issued by the Central Reserve Bank of China, and even did away with the Japanese Army’s control over the distribution of goods, shifting responsibility for this to the General Assembly for the Control of National Commerce established in March 1943 under the control of the Nanjing government. These measures were presented as efforts to encourage the autonomy of the Nanjing government, but in fact their real purpose was to secure vital goods to send to mainland Japan.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ The Japan Institute of International Affairs, op. cit., vol. 11, document 46.

⁴⁶ Shigemitsu Mamoru, *Showa no doran* (Upheaval of Showa), vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Sha, 1952), 167, 172.

⁴⁷ Chen Gongbo (Okada Yuji, trans.), *Chugoku kokuminto hishi: Kushoroku, hachinenrai no kaiko* (Secret History of Chinese Nationalist Party: Recollection of Eight Years of Bitter Smiles) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1980), 334.

⁴⁸ Cai, op. cit., entry for February 23, 1943.

⁴⁹ Furumaya Tadao, “Nit-Chu Senso to senryochi keizai” (Sino-Japanese War and the Economy in Occupied Areas), in Institute of Cultural Science, Chuo University, ed., *Nit-Chu Senso: Nihon,*

The Nanjing government shared the Japanese view that inflation might be brought under control by establishing the General Assembly for the Control of National Commerce, returning control to China, and relaxing regulations. In fact, however, the General Assembly was weak, and there was widespread hoarding and concealment, particularly in Shanghai. By the summer of 1943 inflation had begun to reach “catastrophic proportions.” People’s confidence in the Nanjing government and Japan had been shaken and there were now doubts about the value of the currency issued by the Central Reserve Bank of China. The Nanjing government responded by issuing legislation regarding concealment of goods (April 1943), but with little success.⁵⁰

The Japanese government could no longer afford to ignore the potentially catastrophic state of affairs. At a joint meeting of the Imperial General Headquarters–Government Liaison Conference in July 1943 a series of emergency measures were approved, including sending 25 tons of gold bullion into Central and North China and carrying out a currency recall by disposing of this on the market, as well forcing obligatory sales of cotton yarn and cloth, of which there was rampant hoarding. These measures did serve to control inflation and hoarding for a short while, but the improvement did not last long.⁵¹

After the outbreak of war, in December 1943, Watanabe Makoto of the Japanese vice minister of finance’s Shanghai bureau proposed three bold measures for overcoming the difficulties the new policy was encountering: (1) deal directly with Chinese business leaders without depending on the Nationalist government; (2) abolish the system of government control; and (3) avoid military interference in economic issues. According to Watanabe, instead of looking the Wang government to implement the new policy when it had lost the faith of the Shanghai business community and the Chinese masses, Japan should provide direct support for the autonomous activities of economic figures in Shanghai. Watanabe believed that the true aim of the new policy was to merge the Japanese and Chinese economies to build a new, self-supporting economic order. According to Watanabe, the cause of the troubles was the use of the new policy by the Japanese as a convenient way of meeting military demand. But Watanabe’s proposal, which understood clearly the true nature of the relationship between the Wang regime and Japan, was not considered.⁵²

Through its resistance to Japanese invasion, China spread the idea of nationalism into rural villages and the interior of the country, building a strong foundation for

Chugoku, Amerika (The Sino-Japanese War: Japan, China, and the United States) (Tokyo: Chuo University Press, 1993), 344–59.

⁵⁰ Okada Yuji, *Nit-chu Senso urakata ki* (A Behind-the-Scenes Account of the Sino-Japanese War) (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai, 1974), 261–67.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 267–68.

⁵² “Tai-Ka shin seisaku no keizaimen ni kansuru kanken” (A Personal Opinion on the Economic Aspects of the New China Policy), December 20, 1943, in *Senryochi tsuka kosaku*, op. cit., document 46, 829–37.

social reform and national unity when it came to nation-building after the war. Throughout the war, Japan aimed at collaboration and cooperation with China and building a new order, occupying economically developed regions and establishing a new government. But its new policy, which had military matters as its primary concern, failed to inspire trust from the people and contributed nothing to the construction of wartime China.

3. The Japanese Surrender

(1) The Greater East Asia Conference and Allied Thinking on the Postwar World

In November 1943, representatives of the “independent states” Japan had established in its occupied territories throughout Asia met in Tokyo for the Greater East Asia Conference. In attendance were representatives of Manchukuo, the Wang Jingwei government in Nanjing, Burma, the Philippines, and Thailand, as well as representatives of the Provisional Government of Free India,” who were present as an observer. The aim of Prime Minister Tojo [Hideki] was to gather together the leaders of the occupied territories and issue a joint declaration to demonstrate Asian solidarity in preparation for the major Allied counterattack expected that fall. But Foreign Minister Shigemitsu and bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tasked with drafting the joint declaration tried to use it as an opportunity to issue new war objectives. Their aim was to secure postwar influence for Japan by including universal, international ideals in the joint declaration in place of the previous exclusionary war aims of establishing a Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, which stressed Japan’s predominant position within the alliance. These ideals included appeals to independence, equality, mutual benefit, the eradication of racial discrimination, and fairer access to natural resources. Initial steps in this direction were taken in August 1943 at a Ministry of Foreign Affairs meeting to prepare for the joint declaration, using as a reference point the Atlantic Charter that encapsulated Allied war aims.⁵³ Shigemitsu hoped to use the joint declaration as a statement of shared ideals the independent nations of Asia could use as a blueprint for building a framework for a Greater East Asia organization from a position of equality. However, criticisms from the Army Ministry and the Army General Staff Office of the plan’s “League of Nations tendencies” and objections that allowing each country to participate equally would endanger Japan’s position of superiority within the alliance ensured that the plan never got off the ground.⁵⁴ Ultimately, changes imposed by the Ministry of Greater East Asia, the Army Ministry, and the Army

⁵³ Hatano Sumio, *Taiheiyo Senso to Ajia gaiko* (Japan’s Asia Policy during the Pacific War) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1996), 161–73, 278–84. Ito Takashi and Watanabe Yukio, eds., *Shigemitsu Mamoru shuki* (Memoranda of Shigemitsu Mamoru) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Sha, 1986), 155–56.

⁵⁴ *Sugiyama memo*, op. cit., 440–41.

General Staff Office diluted the intentions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to use the joint declaration to redefine Japan's war aims, rendering the eventual statement a vague and ambiguous document that the Allies were able to regard as nothing more than wartime propaganda.

Nevertheless, from the Japanese perspective the Greater East Asia Conference was one of a number of measures implemented as part of a new policy on Greater East Asia. These included the granting of "independence" to the Philippines and Burma according to Japan's treaties of alliance with those countries, and the signing of an equal treaty of alliance with Wang Jingwei's Nanjing government (August 1943). Aware of the significance of the Atlantic Charter, diplomatic authorities in Japan tried to demonstrate a new Japanese approach to the structure of power in postwar Asia that differed from the thinking behind the Greater East Asian Coprosperity Sphere. A major aim of Japan's new Greater East Asia policy, including the Greater East Asia Conference, was to separate the Nationalist Government in Chongqing from the Allied camp, but Japan was unable to attract either Chiang Kai-shek or the Chinese people.⁵⁵

Around the same time as the Greater East Asian Conference, the Allies' diplomatic offensive was entering an active phase, with a number of important conferences held, including the Third Moscow Conference of foreign ministers, the Cairo Conference, and the Tehran Conference. Particularly significant was the Cairo Conference, at which Chiang Kai-shek was present along with Roosevelt and Churchill. In addition to discussions of military strategy against Japan, the three leaders also considered a basic framework for postwar international order in Asia, based on the premise of Japanese withdrawal from its occupied territories. The results of the conference were made public as the Cairo Declaration (November 27, 1943). The Cairo Declaration, which later served as the foundation for the Potsdam Declaration, represented the first time since the war started that the Allies had made a statement regarding the disposition of Japanese territory. The declaration stated that Taiwan and the Pescadores Islands would be returned to China, while the islands that Japan had held since 1914 would be confiscated and Korea would become independent. Aware of the significance of Chiang Kai-shek's signature on the Cairo Declaration, Ambassador Ishii Itaro, who was awaiting orders at the time, lamented that "the prospects for overall peace have slipped a thousand miles into the distance."⁵⁶ But the Japanese government, distracted by the Greater East Asia Conference and its own new China policy, saw the declaration as designed to prevent Chiang Kai-shek's weakened government from quitting the Allied camp,

⁵⁵ On the intentions behind the Greater East Asia Conference and the Joint Declaration, see Hatano, *op. cit.* as well as Irie Akira, "Sengo Ajia e no senji Nihon no koso" (Japanese Wartime Thinking on Postwar Asia," in Hosoya Chihiro et al., eds. *Nichi-Ei kankei-shi, 1917-1949* (Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1917-49) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1982).

⁵⁶ Ito Takashi, ed., *Ishii Itaro nikki* (The Diary of Ishii Itaro) (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Sha, 1989), entry for December 3, 1943.

and did not give much importance to the international significance of the declaration. What Japan abhorred more than anything was the fact that the Allies had guaranteed that Taiwan would be seized from Japan and Korea granted independence. Accordingly, the Japanese government did not allow media reports on the Cairo Declaration to mention concrete details of the territorial issues involved.⁵⁷

Ishibashi Tanzan and Kiyosawa Kiyoshi were two figures who continued to discuss concrete measures for an institutional framework based on the Greater East Asia Declaration, paying close attention to Allied thinking on postwar management. Not long after the Greater East Asia Conference, Kiyosawa and Ishibashi urged Aoki [Kazuo], minister for Greater East Asia, to involve the government in efforts to put together a proposal for a concrete postwar structure based on the Greater East Asia Declaration. They were disappointed to find that the government had no intention of doing any such thing.⁵⁸ As late as the end of 1944, the two men were still arguing the necessity for a new world order based on the principles of the Greater East Asia Declaration, while continuing to keep a close eye on Allied plans on postwar administration.⁵⁹

(2) Peace Initiatives

Since the outbreak of war between Japan and the United States, Japanese policy had been to leave responsibility for peace overtures to Chongqing in the hands of the Nanjing government, without any direct involvement on the part of the Japanese government. The Nanjing government attempted to approach Chongqing through Zhou Fohai, who had close connections within the Chongqing government's intelligence agencies and secret services, but this approach failed to produce results. After taking office in August 1944, the Koiso cabinet decided at meetings of the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War in late August and September to restore control for peace initiatives to the prime minister and made finding an opportunity for direct discussions on ending the war with China a chief priority.⁶⁰ Koiso was persuaded to prioritize overtures to Chongqing by Ogata Taketora, who had joined the cabinet after serving as vice president of the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper company.⁶¹

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs played the central role in coming up with the terms for peace. Based on the idea that for outward purposes peace terms should be agreed on conditions of absolute equality, a plan was agreed at a meeting of the

⁵⁷ Publication Society for the Papers of Amo Eiji, ed., *Amo Eiji nikki* (Diaries of Amo Eiji), vol. 4 (Tokyo: Publication Society for the Papers of Amo Eiji, 1982), 884–85.

⁵⁸ Kiyosawa Kiyoshi, *Ankoku nikki* (Diary of Darkness) (Tokyo: Hyoronsha, 1979), entry for November 25, 1943.

⁵⁹ Hatano, *op. cit.*, 200–05.

⁶⁰ Records of the Army General Staff Office, *Haisen no kiroku* (Records Relating to Defeat in the War) (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1967), 163.

⁶¹ Ito et al., *op. cit.*, entry for September 4, 1944.

Supreme Council for the Direction of the War on September 5, which included the following “epoch-making peace terms”: (1) peace will be agreed from a position of absolute equality; (2) Chinese wishes will be respected as much as possible in terms of relations between Chongqing and the United States and Britain; (3) relations between Wang Jingwei and Chiang Kai-shek will be treated as a domestic issue; and (4) Japan will withdraw all its troops if the United States and Britain withdraw theirs, and Hong Kong will be handed over to China.⁶² If such terms had been on offer when the war started, peace with China might have been a possibility.

Ultimately, in the “Summary of Communications to be Made to the Nationalist Government” of September 9, it was decided to go ahead with the new strategy put forward by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that acknowledged Manchukuo as Chinese territory, and to “carry out discussions while respecting the wishes of the Chinese side” on issues regarding Hong Kong, Inner Mongolia, and rights and privileges in the South.⁶³

These conditions were presented to the Nanjing government to be communicated to Chongqing as peace terms, but Zhou Fohai and other leading figures in the Wang government hesitated to negotiate with the Chongqing government, balking at the lack of clarity over whether Manchuria would be returned to China (dissolving the state of Manchukuo), something that went against the long-standing principle of strengthening the position of the Wang government.⁶⁴ In Japan, the emperor and Foreign Minister Shigemitsu were also critical of the plan, considering it to undermine the position of the Wang regime.⁶⁵ Ultimately, the decision taken at the Supreme Council in September was illustrative of the position into which Japan had fallen: it was obliged to promise to allow Chiang Kai-shek to return to Nanjing, to establish a unified government, and to withdraw troops from China—what amounted in practical terms to an admission of defeat. And yet it was almost a whole year before Japan actually surrendered.

Backed by Koiso’s enthusiasm for peace with Chongqing, Ugaki Kazushige’s visit to China was attracting attention in the political world. Ugaki argued that Japan should wind up the Wang regime, recognize Chongqing as the legitimate government of China, and offer full-scale peace negotiations.⁶⁶ He arrived in Beijing in late September, and in early October had meetings in Shanghai with Zhou Yifu and others who claimed to have been sent as delegates from the Chongqing government. But in the end he was unable to make any real progress and he returned to Japan on October 13. Foreign Minister Shigemitsu, who put priority on

⁶² Military History Society of Japan, *op. cit.*, entry for September 5, 1944.

⁶³ Records of the Army General Staff Office, *op. cit.*, 175–76.

⁶⁴ Cai, *op. cit.*, entries for October 17 and November 4, 1944.

⁶⁵ Military History Society of Japan, *op. cit.*, entry for September 6, 1944. Records of the Army General Staff Office, *op. cit.*, 165–66.

⁶⁶ Watanabe Wataru, “Kanso nisshi” (Diary of Impressions), vol. 7 (possession of the Library of the National Institute for Defense Studies), entries for October 2 and 3, 1944.

international loyalty, remained resolutely opposed to the Chongqing approaches of Koiso and the Ugaki group that supported him, describing it as a “plan to dissolve the Nanjing government.”⁶⁷

In mid-October, immediately after Ugaki’s trip to China, there was a visit to Japan by Jiang Kanghu, head of the Examination Yuan within the Nanjing government, in order to ascertain Japanese intentions regarding a comprehensive peace. Jiang explained to several high-level leaders that without a clear indication that Japan intended to dissolve the Nanjing government, there was no possibility of peace with Chongqing. Behind this initiative were Miao Bin (deputy head of the Examination Yuan), who had contacts with the inner circle of Chiang Kai-shek, and the leadership of the Chinese Youth Party and the Chinese National Socialist Party, who had contacts with the military leaders in southwest China.⁶⁸

Shigemitsu and Koiso differed in their reactions to Jiang’s arguments. Koiso was prepared to consider abandoning Manchukuo if the views of the Nanjing government as set out by Jiang became solidified and an opportunity arose to build momentum toward a comprehensive peace. Shigemitsu, on the other hand, believed that any peace negotiations should be based on the Japan-recognized Nanjing government, and he did everything he could to ensure that Japan did not abandon Nanjing.

Jiang brought letters from his deputy Miao Bin to Ogata Taketora, director general of the Japanese Information Bureau, and Tanaka Takeo, the chief cabinet secretary (the content of the letters remains unclear). After Jiang returned home, however, Koiso became skeptical about the prospects of making overtures to Chongqing through the Wang government and grew enthusiastic about Miao Bin’s bid. Miao Bin had served as a member the Central Committee of the Kuomintang and as head of the Jiangsu Province Civil Affairs Department, but had come under suspicion of corruption and gradually distanced himself from the Kuomintang, rising to become deputy head of the Legislative Yuan in the Nanjing government. After war broke out, however, it was discovered that he was secretly in communication with Chongqing and he was demoted to deputy head of the Examination Yuan. As well as Ogata, Koiso’s other sources of information and cooperation included such figures as the Shanghai correspondent Tamura Shinsaku, who had worked under Ogata during the latter’s time as managing editor at the *Asahi Shimbun*, the *Asahi Shimbun* journalist Ota Teruhiko, and Yamagata Hatsuo, a former army colonel who enjoyed Koiso’s confidence. Together, these men convinced

⁶⁷ Ito and Watanabe, *op. cit.*, 436, 486–87.

⁶⁸ On the visit of Jiang Kanghu, see “Shigemitsu daijin Ko Koko koshiincho daiichiji kaidan yoryo” (Summary of the First Meeting between Minister Shigemitsu and Jiang Kanghu, head of the Chinese Examination Yuan”, October 17, and “Shigemitsu daijin Ko Koko koshiincho daiiniji kaidan yoryo” (Summary of the Second Meeting between Minister Shigemitsu and Jiang Kanghu, head of the Chinese Examination Yuan” October 19, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Records A7. 0. 0. 9–61.

him that Miao Bin represented the best way of getting in touch with Chiang Kai-shek. Ignoring the objections of Shigemitsu and others, he made Miao's visit to Japan a reality in mid-March 1945. The proposal put forward by Miao Bin for "comprehensive peace between China and Japan" involved: (1) dissolving the Nanjing government; (2) putting together a temporary government authority with the approval of Chongqing; and (3) opening negotiations via this temporary government on a ceasefire and withdrawal of troops.⁶⁹

Before discussions on these conditions could begin, however, Shigemitsu, Navy Minister Yonai [Mitsumasa], and Army Minister Sugiyama [Hajime] submitted objections to the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War regarding the personal reliability of Miao Bin, claiming that he and his clique were planning to bring about the collapse of the Nanjing government, and refusing to accept the peace proposal. Shigemitsu remained staunchly opposed to the idea, believing that a decision to end hostilities was necessary before discussion could begin on issues such as dismantling the Nanjing government and withdrawing troops on all fronts.⁷⁰ In the absence of a decision to end the war with Britain and the United States, he believed it was unacceptable to enter into a peace initiative with Chongqing that ignored the existence of the Nanjing government. On April 1, 1945, Koiso recommended the emperor to go ahead with Miao Bin's plan, but the emperor, acknowledging opposition from his Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministers, ordered Koiso to send Miao Bin back to China instead.⁷¹ The Miao Bin Operation collapsed. Partly as a result of this, the Koiso cabinet resigned en masse.

One view of the Miao Bin Operation sees it as an attempt to put distance between the Nanjing regime and Japan and to create fissures among the Japanese leadership. Given the fact that the initiative did indeed widen the gulf between Shigemitsu and Koiso, it was perhaps a success in these terms.⁷² But at present it is difficult to say for certain whether Chiang Kai-shek really did harbor any such intentions or why he should have waited until the final stages of the war to put the plan into action. Proceeding in parallel with Miao Bin's proposal was a peace initiative put forward by He Shizhen. He Shizhen had been involved in intelligence operations for Chongqing side even while taking part in Wang Jingwei's peace movement, and in October 1944, he informed Miyagawa Tadamaro, younger brother of Konoe Fumimaro, of the Chongqing side's conditions for peace, including direct rule by the emperor, punishment of those responsible for the war, and a withdrawal of Japanese forces. Miyagawa communicated the terms to Konoe and Foreign Minister

⁶⁹ Tamura Shinsaku, *Myohin kosaku* (The Miao Bin Operation) (Tokyo: San'ei Shuppansha, 1953) 175–76. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Shusen shiroku* (Records of the Ending of the War), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shimbun Gekkansha, 1952), 220.

⁷⁰ Ito and Watanabe, *op. cit.*, 470–71.

⁷¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, 217–20.

⁷² Tobe Ryoichi, "Nihon no tai-Chugoku wahei kosaku" (Japanese Peace Negotiations with China," in Hosoya et al., *op. cit.*, 43.

Shigemitsu, but the government did not move to take up the initiative.⁷³

(3) The Crisis in KMT Control and the Yalta Agreement

The United States was concerned about corruption in the Chinese Nationalist government and the collapse on the China front that resulted from the Japanese offensive. In July 1944, President Roosevelt asked Chiang Kai-shek to put the Nationalist and Communist forces under the command of General Stilwell. Worried that Communist forces would drift away from Nationalist command and that the system of one-party rule by the KMT would collapse, Chiang Kai-shek refused Roosevelt's demand and demanded that Stilwell be replaced. This led to a crisis in US-China relations. In October, however, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff abandoned plans to approach Japan through the Taiwan/Amoy (Xiamen) route and chose to attack via Iwo Jima and Okinawa instead, reducing the significance of the China front.⁷⁴ Roosevelt agreed to Chiang Kai-shek's request and a crisis between the United States and China was averted. This allowed Chiang Kai-shek to demonstrate leadership and make moves toward national unity against the criticisms from the Communist Party and democratic forces and from within his own party. For Roosevelt, excluding the Communists by strengthening Chiang Kai-shek was a bigger priority than ensuring Communist support for a democratic coalition government, and his China policy therefore leaned in the direction of providing support for Chiang Kai-shek and opposing the Communists.

From the second half of 1944, the war situation on both the European and Asia-Pacific fronts turned overwhelmingly in favor of the Allies, and intense maneuvering broke out between the United States and the Soviet Union to attempt to influence the balance of power after the war. In Europe, the focus was on Eastern Europe; in Asia, on what would happen in Manchuria after Japanese troops withdrew. Stalin had already promised to join the war against Japan at the Tehran Conference in November 1943. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945 he demanded in return that Dalian be made into an international port, in which the

⁷³ It is likely that the military wing of the intelligence agency connected to the Chinese Blue Shirts society under the leadership of Dai Li was involved in the peace overtures made by both Miao Bin and He Shizhen (see Tobe, op. cit., 38–42). According to Wang Xi, there were at least 29 attempts, direct and indirect, by both Japan and China to negotiate peace terms during the course of the Sino-Japanese War. According to Wang's study, the intentions on the Chinese side included trying to weaken the attacks from the Japanese Army, getting information on the cards in the enemy's hand, and obtaining material for dealing with Britain and the United States for assistance aid (see Wang Xi, "Taiheiyo Senso to Chugoku" (The Pacific War and China), in Hosoya Chihiro et al., eds., *Taiheiyo Senso* (The Pacific War) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1993), 90–98.

⁷⁴ Kato Koichi, "'Sutiruweru jiken' to Jukei kokumin seifu" (The "Stilwell Incident" and the Chongqing Nationalist Government), in Ishijima Noriyuki and Kubo Toru, *Jukei kokumin seifu-shi no kenkyu* (Research into the History of the Chongqing Nationalist Government) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2004), 147–67.

Soviet Union would have priority, that Port Arthur (Lushun) be made a Soviet concession, and that the Chinese Eastern and South Manchuria railways be administered as a joint enterprise between China and the Soviet Union. Britain and the United States accepted these demands. Roosevelt insisted on Sino-Soviet negotiations on Chinese sovereignty; Stalin accepted this, and negotiations got underway in June 1945. The Chinese Nationalist government objected strongly to the idea of a Soviet concession in Port Arthur and proposed joint use as a military base. The Soviets agreed to the proposal, but in fact ended up making sole use of Port Arthur as a military base. The Soviet declaration of war against Japan on August 9 served to speed up negotiations, and the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance was signed on August 14. The Nationalists agreed to most of the clauses regarding China in the Yalta Agreement, winning Soviet promises that assistance to China would be given via the Nationalist government and that Soviet troops would begin to withdraw from the northeast China within three weeks of the Japanese surrender. This was an arrangement that suited China, which was looking to contain Soviet support for the Communists after the Soviet Union entered the war and block interference in its domestic affairs.⁷⁵

From late April to June 1945, the Communist Party held its Seventh National Congress, the first national congress for 17 years, at which leadership and authority of Mao Zedong were confirmed. With important areas in South and Central China still under Japanese occupation, and with frequent provocations from the Nationalist armies in the civil war, Mao claimed that the Chinese Communist forces, commanding 910,000 regular troops and a militia numbering 2.2 million, were the dominant force in the war against Japan. He criticized Chiang Kai-shek's passive approach to prosecuting the war against Japan, calling on the KMT to abandon its one-party dictatorship and join in forming a democratic coalition government. Keenly aware of the KMT's one-party dictatorship, the Communists sought to combine various forces powers together to resist the KMT. There were movements demanding democratization and a coalition government even within KMT territory, along with increasing demands for wider political participation, and the position of political supremacy that the KMT had enjoyed early in the war came under increasing threat. It was in this context that the Nationalists held their sixth National Congress from early to late May, at which the party unveiled a political framework for postwar China that would fundamentally exclude other political parties and secure the KMT's monopoly on power. As Japan's defeat drew imminent, the differences between the Nationalists' and the Communists' arguments for a democratic coalition government were drawing close to a breaking point.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Ishii Akira, "Chu-So kankei ni okeru Ryojun-Dairen mondai" (The Port-Arthur-Dalian Issue in Sino-Soviet Relations), in Japan Association of International Relations, ed., *Kokusai seiji* 95 (1990), 46–62.

⁷⁶ Yamada Tatsuo, *Chugoku kindai seiji shi* (China: A Modern Political History) (Tokyo: Society for the Promotion of the Open University of Japan, 2002), 189–92. Ishijima, op. cit., 200–02.

(4) Japan's Surrender

When the Zhijiang Campaign (Battle of West Hunan), the last major battle of the Sino-Japanese war, ended in a Japanese defeat in late May 1945, the Army General Staff Office decided to withdraw Japanese forces from South China and concentrate them in North and Central China, with the China Expeditionary Army withdrawing troops from occupied territories along the Xianggui and Yuehan railways in Hunan, Guangxi, and Jiangxi provinces and diverting them to Central and North China as it switched to a strategy of retreat. Before the retreat of the major armies was complete, however, the leaders of Britain, the United States, and China issued the Potsdam Declaration on July 27, calling on Japan to surrender. The Chinese newspaper *Dagongbao* was disappointed that the declaration did not call for the abolition of the emperor system, but argued in favor of approval for the other clauses, which made clear the Allies' intentions of carrying out the terms of the Cairo Declaration. Japan essentially rejected the Declaration, until in the face of "external pressure," with the Soviet entry into the war on August 9 in the wake of the atomic attacks, a decision was taken at an imperial conference in the presence of the emperor on August 9 to accept the Potsdam Declaration, subject to a condition that the emperor system would be allowed to continue. The Allied reply on August 12 did not give a clear guarantee of this, but the Japanese government believed that a guarantee had been given, and at a second imperial conference on August 14, a decision was taken to accept the Allies' terms.

Beginning on August 10, when Japan announced its intention to accept the Potsdam Declaration, the Chinese Nationalist and Communist forces started competing to demobilize the Japanese Army. Zhu De, commander-in-chief of the Communist Red Army in Yan'an, issued orders to his troops to disarm Japanese and puppet regime armies, and gave instructions for troops throughout the country to advance and accept the Japanese surrender. Chiang Kai-shek on the other hand suggested on August 11 that the Japanese troops be allowed to maintain their arms and equipment for the time being to assist in maintaining law and order and keeping roads open, and appealed to the Japanese to await the orders of He Yingqin, commander-in-chief of the Chinese Army. In a radio speech given to mark victory, Chiang Kai-shek called on the Chinese people not to "repay violence with violence," and said that although the military clique should be made to accept responsibility for the war, the Chinese should not seek retribution or look to humiliate the Japanese people.

Encouraged by this conciliatory attitude, the Japanese government decided on August 16 to encourage entrepreneurs, technicians, and businesses to stay on in China "in order to do away with the circumstances between Japan and China, to contribute to the future development of the empire, and to revitalize East Asia through strong support for China," in the hopes that they would "dedicate themselves to helping to rebuild and revitalize China and to encourage cooperation between Japan and China." This was communicated to Japan's diplomatic mission in

China in the name of Foreign Minister Shigemitsu on August 21.⁷⁷ The effect of this communication is unclear, but it is a fact that several thousand Japanese did stay on in China and were put to work in technology and rebuilding assistance.

On August 15, Chiang Kai-shek issued instructions to the Chinese members of the Nanjing collaborationist army, calling on them to work toward maintaining local law and order and to seek opportunity to atone for having collaborating with the enemy. Chen Gongbo, president of the Nationalist government in Nanjing, gathered 360,000 members of the army in Nanjing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou and ordered them to wait to be disarmed by the KMT Nationalist army. On the following day, the Nanjing government was formally wound up.

On the Communist side, meanwhile, commander of the Communist forces Zhu De claimed to the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union that the Nationalist government was not qualified to represent the liberated parts of the country and that the anti-Japanese resistance armies in the liberated zones had the right to elect a representative to the peace conference with Japan. He ordered Japanese forces in the liberated zones to surrender to the Communist forces. Chiang Kai-shek had appointed He Yingqin to deal with the surrender of all enemy troops throughout China, and told Communist forces to remain where they were stationed and await orders, but Communist forces did not comply. The unavoidable conflict between the Nationalist and Communist forces had already started to appear.

At the end of the war, there were roughly 1.05 million Japanese army troops fighting on the Chinese mainland. At the time of surrender, the Japanese Army in China had a full complement of men, weapons, and supplies, with a chain of command still in place, and morale still high among officers and men. On August 15, Commander-in-Chief Okamura [Yasuji] submitted a report saying that “although we have been defeated, we have won overwhelming victories in our campaigns, and it ought to be unthinkable for such a superior force to submit to being disarmed by a weaker enemy like the Chongqing army.”⁷⁸ The Japanese Army still occupied the whole of North China and major cities along the middle and lower reaches of the Yangzi River, along with the railways connecting them. The Communist formed a ring around the Japanese Army in the anti-Japanese base areas, while regions like Sichuan and Yunnan in the interior were under KMT control.

In this context, it was the Chinese Communist forces that were able to move fastest to disarm the Japanese. The Japanese surrender had come more quickly than expected, and the Nationalist government was not able to gather together the troops retreating into the interior and set them to work demobilizing the Japanese troops. From around August 16, the Communists demanded that the Japanese Army throughout North China and northern Jiangsu hand over their weapons, but the general headquarters of the China Expeditionary Army warned that “we regard

⁷⁷ Eto Jun, ed., *Senryo shiroku* (Historical Records of the Occupation), vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1995), 524–31.

⁷⁸ *Taiheiyo Senso*, op. cit., 403.

these groups as outlaws and disturbers of the peace who are not under the command of Chiang Kai-shek, and will have no alternative but to take strong measures in self defense.”⁷⁹ The orders approving these “self-defensive” actions were supported by the Nationalist government army during the surrender negotiations that started on August 21, and the ground was laid for both armies to cooperate to carry out “self-defensive” actions against the Communists.⁸⁰ Aside from a few cases in which they were forcefully disarmed, therefore, the Japanese did not surrender to the Communist forces on the Chinese mainland, and some 7,000 people lost their lives in self-defensive actions against the Communists in northern China and the northern parts of Jiangsu Province. In Central and South China, on the other hand (with the exception of northern Jiangsu), there was almost no fighting after the formal end of hostilities.

The Chinese Communist forces were hesitant to advance into territory occupied by the Japanese Army because of the terms of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance. This treaty, which promised Soviet assistance for the Chongqing government, meant that the Chinese Communists could not rely on the Soviets’ support if they did attack. The Communists were forced to change their strategy. On August 22, the Communists gave up on occupying the major cities and important junction lines in North China and started to secure small towns and rural farming villages instead, moving their major concentration of forces into Manchuria.⁸¹

After victory over Japan, the United States sent KMT troops into major cities in Central and North China including Shanghai, Nanjing, and Beijing, and gave support to the KMT troops as they took over the major cities. The troops ordered to take Nanjing arrived steadily by air from September 5, when the KMT forces entered the capital after an interval of eight years. On September 9, Okamura Yasuji signed the surrender document at the Central Military Academy in Nanjing and surrendered formally to He Yingqin, commander-in-chief of the Chinese Army. In Taiwan, a surrender ceremony was held in late October, and Japanese control of the island, which had lasted 50 years, came to an end.

But surrender and disarmament of the Japanese Army on the Chinese mainland varied according to the pace at which the KMT forces advanced north, and the process was far from smooth. In Central and South China, the disarmament was mostly complete by October 1945, but in North China the arrival of the KMT forces was delayed, and disarmament was not completed until January 1946.

In Shanxi Province, troops from the Japanese Army joined Yan Xishan’s troops

⁷⁹ Okamura Yasuji, *Okamura Yasuji taisho shiryō: Senjo kaiso hen* (Materials on General Okamura Yasuji: Recollections of the Battlefield) (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1970), 10.

⁸⁰ *Taiheiyo Senso*, op. cit., 340, 346–48.

⁸¹ Monma Rira, “Riyo sareta haisha: Nihongun buso kaijo o meguru kokkyo ryoto no kakehiki” (The Use of the Defeated: Maneuverings Between the Nationalist and Communist Parties Regarding Japanese Disarmament), in Hatano and Tobe, op. cit., 67–83.

and fought with them against the Communists, to the surprise of both the Expeditionary Army and the Chinese Nationalist government.

The Nationalist government ordered Yan Xishan to stop accepting requests from Japanese officers and men who wanted to join Yan's army, but even after the arrival of the KMT forces, some 2,600 Japanese soldiers and officers of the First Army chose to remain in Shanxi Province to fight with Yan's army against the Communists.⁸² Of these, around 1,600 were repatriated to Japan by 1948 immediately before the Communists took Shanxi Province. But around 1,000 stayed on in Shanxi Province and took part in the Civil War, ending up being captured by the Communists.⁸³

Conclusion

Approximately 420,000 Japanese soldiers and civilians attached to the military died in Northeast China (Manchuria) in the years following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, in addition to some 920,000 sick and wounded. Of this total, 230,000 deaths (and 500,000 wounded) are estimated to have occurred after the beginning of the Pacific War. This number, larger than the corresponding figure for casualties sustained between the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the beginning of the Pacific War, shows that for the Japanese army the fight against the Chinese Communists in the second half of the war was even harsher than the fighting that took place during the major advances earlier in the war. The Nationalist forces suffered approximately 1,320,000 dead and 1,800,000 wounded, but in both cases the figures decline after the beginning of the Pacific War. This suggests that the Nationalists were saving their military strength for the decisive battle with the Communists, and indicates the decline in the strength of the Japanese Army following repeated reassignment of forces to Southeast Asia and the Pacific. However, in 1944 the numbers of both dead and wounded were over 100,000, figures that speak of the high toll extracted by Operation Number One. It is estimated that the Chinese Communist forces lost approximately 580,000 (including those missing in action).⁸⁴

In addition to soldiers on both sides, the Sino-Japanese war claimed numerous victims among non-combatants, particularly on the Chinese side. The large number of civilian victims and the "illegal actions" carried out by Japanese troops left deep wounds among both the Chinese and Japanese peoples that made it difficult to build a new relationship after the war. Although China renounced the right to demand reparations in the China-Japan Joint Communiqué issued when the two countries resumed diplomatic relations in 1972, the wounds of the war years can still be seen

⁸² *Taiheiyo Senso*, op. cit., 367, 510–12.

⁸³ Repatriate Relief Bureau, Ministry of Health and Welfare, ed., *Hikiage engo no kiroku* (Records of Repatriates Relief), vol. 3 (Tokyo: Kuresu Shuppan, 2000), 327.

⁸⁴ Figures for Japanese losses are based on figures from the Social Welfare and War Victims' Bureau, Ministry of Health and Welfare, ed., *Engo 50 nen shi* (50 Years of War Victims Relief), and records of Yasukuni Shrine (number of deities enshrined); the statistics for losses on the Chinese side are taken from Usui, op. cit., 207–11.

today in the movements demanding reparations across several generations and ongoing trials involving the Japanese government and concerning Japanese war crimes, including the use of bacillus gas, comfort women, abandoned weapons, and the forced transportation and labor of Chinese workers.