

Imperial Japan and English Language Press: An Analysis of the Manchurian Incident  
and Pan-Asianism

By

Garrett Weeden

A thesis submitted to the

Graduate School School-Newark

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Master of Arts

Graduate Program in World Comparative History

Written under the direction of

Daniel Asen

And approved by

---

---

---

---

Newark, New Jersey

January 2017

Copyright Page:

© 2017

Garrett Weeden

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Abstract of the Thesis

Imperial Japan and English Language Press: An Analysis of the Manchurian Incident  
and Pan-Asianism

By Garrett Weeden

Thesis Director:

Daniel Asen

**Abstract**

This thesis seeks to use English language publications to help shine a light on Pan-Asianism as an ideology in regards to Manchuria and the Empire as a whole. The Japanese Empire was a transnational one and one that existed during a time of increasing internationalism. In the field there has not been as much attention to the role that Pan-Asianism has played in the foreign relations of Japan. I will study this by using English language Pan-Asianist texts as well as Japanese governmental and semi-governmental publication cross-referenced with United States Department of State archive to see the effect of such texts on the ideology. The effect was usually negligible, but the reasons and avenue that it was pursued may be even more important and interesting. The focus is on the time period from 1931 until 1934 because that it when the massive changes occurred in Japan within a rapidly changing international environment. Manchuria and Manchukuo represented the point on which change was catalyzed. It was from this moment that captured world attention that a need to publish

English language texts became clear to the government and its allies. These publications would do the work of telling the story of Japan to the West and convince them of the Empire's righteousness. The direct appeal to the publics of foreign nations coincides with the beginning of central control of the mass media within Japan. The analysis of English language publications shows that they were part of a convergence of media, an ideology and the state. Pan-Asianism could be found in these documents that sought not only to convince Western audiences of the correctness of Japanese actions, but also to attract investment and interest in the new state. However, this would be on the terms of the Japanese government rather than an open door. Pan-Asianism and the Manchukuo were integral to the formation of imperialist Japanese state in the 1930's. Through looking at English language publications I seek to see through a new lens the foreign policy of Japan and how it viewed itself in these non-official channels of international interactions.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would first like to thank Dr. Daniel Asen of the Graduate School Federated Department of History at Rutgers-University Newark. Throughout this whole process he has been incredibly helpful in guiding my often scatterbrain ideas to an actual thesis. Whenever I encountered a mental block he was always there to help me out with interesting readings, authors or ideas. I also want to thank him for putting up with my insane schedule. Not only did he tolerate many Skype session and email exchanges, but he did so over the summer so I could go to Japan. Even here in Japan as I finalized my thesis he was patient and gave invaluable feedback that significantly improved my writing.

Secondly, I want to thank Dr. Susan Carruthers from whose class on the Post-World War 2 period gave me great interest in Japan and the Japanese Empire. It also showed me that there was a plethora of English language sources on Japan, they just needed to be found. Also, assisting her on her own book allowed me to see what a great author's book looks like. She was also an excellent mentor in general, if I needed anything she was always there for good chat. I am grateful for everything she did for me within class and outside of it.

Finally I want to thank Christina Strasburger who is always there for me when I have a question about anything, and I mean anything. This would range from the simple requirements of the program to the more philosophical. I have appreciated everything she has done for me since my first application until now. I cannot thank her enough for her patience and attentiveness to my needs.

## **Table of Contents**

Abstract . . . . .	ii
Acknowledgments . . . . .	iv
Table of Contents . . . . .	v
Introduction . . . . .	1
Chapter 1: Japan and the World from the 1850s to the 1930s . . . . .	11
Chapter 2: Japan and Pan-Asianism . . . . .	27
Chapter 3: At the Intersection of Media, Government and Corporation in 1930s Japan . . . . .	44
Chapter 4: <i>Cultural Nippon</i> and <i>Asiatic Asia</i> , Pan-Asianism in Print . . . . .	61
Conclusion . . . . .	74
Bibliography . . . . .	82

## **Introduction**

The growth of mass media from the late 19th century due to the high volume rotary presses of the newspaper allowed information to be disseminated to all people of varying degrees of education and classes. The wide reach of newspapers as the 1900s progressed was only enhanced through technologies that allowed for information to be gathered from greater and greater distances at increasingly shorter periods of time. The telegraph, telephone and finally radio were becoming ways to easily reach the public and present information. The power of these instruments to shape policy was realized by governments across the world and none more than the Japanese Empire. This included not only the media at home but in foreign nations. The competition for attention and mindshare was incredibly important in attempts to sway the public to press certain agendas. This meant increasingly sensationalist headlines or the pandering to base interest of the populace to drum up support for a cause. The Japanese government saw this first hand following the stunning victory in the Sino-Japanese War. The Western presses, led by Germany and Russia stirred up fears of a “Yellow Peril” which had real consequences.<sup>1</sup> The Triple Intervention stripped Japan of the spoils of war, the Liaodong peninsula, and effectively placed it under Russian influence. This incident saw the government place emphasis on influencing foreign press in order to get their message to foreign public audiences. Although the program would only last for a few years, the lessons would be learned for later. That later would be during the Manchurian crisis

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert B. Valliant, “The Selling of Japan. Japanese Manipulation of Western Opinion, 1900-1905,” *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol 29, Iss 4 (1974): 420-21.

where a wealth of publications coming from intellectuals in Japan would be written in English or other European languages.

The thesis seeks to analyze the texts of four of these English publications and analyze the relations to both the Manchurian Incident, the beginning of the 1931 Japanese invasion of northeast China, and Pan-Asianism as a general ideology. Pan-Asianism, in its most basic form, can be explained from Okakura Tenshin's declaration that "Asia is One."<sup>2</sup> It is an all encompassing ideology that was resistance to the West and some kind of unity among states in Asia to do so. The publications that will be looked at are *Cultural Nippon*, *Asiatic Asia*, *Manchukuo: The Founding of a New State in Manchuria*, and *Economic Construction Program for Manchukuo*. These will be cross referenced to points in history as they relate to the United States' State Department Papers to see the influence on either the American government or its people. These papers are part of the Foreign Relations of the United States series compiled by the State Department and housed online by the University of Wisconsin. The United States was the major target for such media influence due to its rivalry in the Pacific with the Japanese Empire. This was the case in the early 1900s as well as in the 1930s. The Japanese Foreign Ministry even asked the State Department about what it could do to influence the American public better through "educating" them on Japan and its point of view. How and why the Japanese attempted to influence may be just as important as the question of whether there was any real influence. Although that question will be explored as well and become more important as the decade wore on and the two great Pacific empires headed towards a seemingly inevitable collision course. The language

---

<sup>2</sup> Brij Tankha, "Okakura Tenshin: 'Asia Is One.' 1903," in *Pan-Asianism; A Documentary History, Volume 1: 1850-1920*, eds Sven Saaler and Christopher W. A. Szpilman (Lanham, MD, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011), 95-96.

There are many citations from the *Pan-Asianism* volumes. Due to their nature of being both somewhat primary and secondary the citation can become quite long. Henceforth, the sources will be cited as "*Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*" or "*Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*."



employed, especially the Pan-Asianist rhetoric, as well as the analysis of this ideology to the West will be important to how the publications place Japan in the world and its current posture towards the Asian continent.

The explosion of nationalism in Japanese media can almost be described as in a direct response to the Manchurian Incident which also was the turning point of the relationship of the West and Japan.<sup>3</sup> Manchuria was central to both the Japanese state and the challengers to Japan's role in the region, including the United States. The turn to a China-centric policy was not spontaneous but a carefully planted seed in the psyche of the Japanese public through decades of rhetorical and intellectual extension of the Japanese "divine mission." Pan-Asianist writers, whether by genuine want of a united Asia, or nationalistic imperialism, had imagined "Asia as One." Tokutomi Sohō and the Genyōsha organization both saw China or Manchuria as the next object of Japanese enlightenment very early in the movement. This stream of thought of creating a new Manchurian state or China as a target continued throughout the Taisho Democracy of the 1920s eventually coming to head due to the actions of the Kwantung Army in the Japanese sphere of influence in the region. The obscurity of events during the Manchurian Incident worked to the Army's favor and whipped up nationalistic fervor that forced the government's hand in supporting the actions of the rogue Kwantung Army.<sup>4</sup> The justification came afterwards and the Japanese position was solidified and the Manchurian Incident became a rallying cry for the media and the narrative of the soul of the mission of the Empire. This combined with the widespread condemnation of the action led to a need to explain Japan and convince foreign audiences of its difference and also special purpose.

---

<sup>3</sup> Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1998), 13, 26.

<sup>4</sup> Young, *Total Empire*, 40-41.

The history of Manchuria and its role in Japanese history is important, explaining the confluence of imperialist aims with Pan-Asianist dreams. This confluence seen through the lens of what can be described as propagandistic writings, *Cultural Nippon* and the other documents being examined, show this convergence of an ideology and reality. The first chapter in this thesis will delve into the history of Japan from the Meiji Restoration to the beginning of World War 2. This will place Japanese actions in the context of growing movements that included nationalism and Pan-Asianism as well as explicitly racial politics in international bilateral and multilateral relations. The 1930s were the pivotal moment for the turn towards aggressive imperialism with Manchuria as the first target in this period. The intertwining of the history of Japan and Northeast China was one that started long before the “Manchurian Incident.” Competition over the Three Northeastern Provinces began with the Triple Intervention and was a site of tensions leading up to the Russo-Japanese War. Once the Japanese sphere of influence was created in the region Pan-Asianists began using Manchuria as a separate entity from China, often referring to Japan, China, Manchuria and Korea as those in East Asia that needed to be united. This list would eventually not include Korea due to its inclusion into the Japanese Empire, but Manchuria still stood apart from China proper. Understanding the proper context that Manchuria plays in the creation of an expansive Japanese Empire is important to the story of where the publications of the 1930s would focus their attention. Manchuria was an object of imperial desire created by Pan-Asianists and nationalists. The role of Manchukuo in pushing Japan into an international pariah makes it the obvious place to examine the background of Japan and Pan-Asianism due to its central role in 1930s publications such as *Cultural Nippon* and *Asiatic Asia*.

The second chapter of this thesis will deal with the ideology that dominates many of the intellectual, governmental and journalistic writings of the 1930s, Pan-Asianism. This term has had a very negative connotation due to its extensive use by the Japanese

Empire in propaganda throughout the Greater East Asian War or Pacific War. The origins, however, are not as sinister. It was coming out of a time when the Western Powers were carving up China, conquering Annam and putting pressure on Japan. This was a Sinocentric and uplifting philosophy meant to defend Asia and maintain its independence. China was the head of the Confucian family, as it had been for millennia, and it would under its leadership that the ship would be righted. It was also one espoused by many throughout the continent, from Japan and China to Korea, Vietnam, India and even the Ottoman Empire. Broadly speaking it was a resistance to the status quo that privileged the imperialists Europeans. In one account the idea of the defense of Asia included Russia, Germany and the Balkans meant to broadly include groups that were traditionally excluded by those in power in western Europe. The Sino-Japanese War would change all of that, making Pan-Asianism relate more to Japan than to any other single East Asian nation. It would be Japan, through its cultural, economic and military modernization that would show Asia the way to independence. The power of Japan would only increase relative to the rest of the region and the grand proclamations of “Asia Rising” began to see more nationalist undertones. The annexation of Korea was the first great abridgement of that idealist ideology now turned imperialist propaganda. This new form of Pan-Asianism still appealed to many throughout Asia until the 1930s when it was used to justify the expansion of the Japanese Empire. The Manchurian Incident would see these ideas come to the forefront of mass media and government public statements. The epitome of the internalization of Pan-Asianist value in the imperial project was Yosuke Matsuoka, the Foreign Minister of Japan, and his famous declaration of the “Greater East Asian Prosperity Sphere.” The publications, *Cultural Nippon* and *Asiatic Asia*, give insight into the changing views of Pan-Asianism new and creative ways to build up the actions of the government and the military. This chapter is

seeking to give the philosophical and ideological background for the ideas expressed in these journals from the 1930s-1940s.

In the third chapter the publication themselves will be analyzed as documents. The government and mass media, reacting to events in Manchuria, created a narrative of Chinese aggression and Japanese defense of the peoples of the region. This is echoed in the Pan-Asianist writing in the writings in *Cultural Nippon* and *Asiatic Asia*. *Cultural Nippon*, published in Tokyo, had many authors who explained the actions of the Japanese government and gave a good history of the nation. *Asiatic Asia* was published in Shanghai and had a plethora of different ethnicities contribute. They discussed the future of an Asia without the West and the righteousness of their cause. The publications that featured more foreign policy realism and economic justification were *Manchukuo: The Founding of a New State in Manchuria*, and *Economic Construction Program for Manchukuo*. I will examine *Manchukuo: The Founding of a New State in Manchuria*, that was published by The Japanese Chamber of Commerce in New York and was an model on following government actions and words through explanatory means. I will also examine *Economic Construction Program for Manchukuo*, published by the South Manchuria Railway Company's New York Office, was a document that assuaged fears of American businessmen and celebrated the achievements of the new state. The changing justifications and methods to do so will be investigated, especially in relation to other currents events, particularly international ones.

The attempts to shape a foreign narrative by the publication of such journals in English was the main objective of *Cultural Nippon* and an objective of *Asiatic Asia*. Although it is more difficult to make this assertion for the economic narrative woven by the other two publications, the language tells of influence from the government and conservatives in Japan. The government's willingness to support such endeavors can be seen in the meetings with United States State Department officials who give advice to

the Foreign Ministry in how best to go about getting the Japanese case out into public view. The economic publications also show the government's willingness to intervene, with the publishers of the documents being the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and the South Manchuria Railway Company. The discussion of the influence, or lack thereof, of these publications on the general or specific groups within the United States can also be seen through the State Department's correspondences, where it is clear that Japan is losing the trust of the people over time. The attempt to continue putting out these types of propaganda is important to understanding the Japanese government's psyche and attitude towards its own actions. To the people living abroad it may be propaganda, but the deeply held beliefs of the writers in attempting to convince foreigners of the correctness of Imperial actions is equally as important.

This thesis as whole seeks to insert itself into an ever growing dialogue regarding the Japanese Empire. Liberalism was sweeping the world with a new focus on diplomacy rather the war following the Great War. Collaborationism between states became important as the League of Nations and Washington Naval Conference sought to solve problems peacefully rather than by means of force. It is from this time of relative peace that many of the ideas of Pan-Asianism became more widely discussed among activists and academics in Japan. The *Pan-Asianism: A Documentary History* does a magnificent job at bringing together a more complete big picture of the ideology. This is a book of primary sources, with the editors or others' analysis, which came from books, newspapers, speeches, pamphlets and radio broadcasts during the period that either influenced or were influenced by Pan-Asianism. It is wide-ranging two volumes but not enough attention is paid to the state of Manchukuo and its central importance to Pan-

Asianism.<sup>5</sup> The Manchurian Incident not only is important in terms of the ideology but also to the way it affected the relationship between the government and its people.

The preeminence of Manchukuo in Japanese history is echoed in Louise Young's *Japan's Total Empire*. The Manchurian expedition represented the "new face of empire," it was military conquest, state capitalism and mass migration to alleviate social problems.<sup>6</sup> It was a place to perfect policies that would eventually be used in Japan itself. An excellent history of the Manchukuo, it is lacking the inclusion of Pan-Asianism and its importance in the creation the state both in the minds of the Japanese people and the actual ideals the state was supposedly founded on.<sup>7</sup> This is where the role of the media and government come in, both of which exerted great influence during this crucial period.<sup>8</sup> The government through the "Peace Preservation Act" of 1925 would go on to silence critics from the left. This would allow only the conservative end of the political spectrum to espouse their views with more or less impunity. It was here that media

---

<sup>5</sup> There is one chapter in these volumes that deal explicitly with Manchuria and the founding of Manchukuo. The chapter by Duara starting on page 137 until 148 describes this period of time. The focus, though, is not as much on the rhetoric of Pan-Asianism but rather the political circumstances surrounding the state and the Japanese Empire. There is clearly some of the rhetoric in these publications, but it is not the focus. The focus is on Manchukuo, its founding and events occurring within such as the Greater Asia Association based in Manchukuo. My thesis seeks to use some of that information but also tying in Manchuria to the greater history of Japan. This extends to the role of government, media and institutions in forming Manchuria using Pan-Asianist rhetoric over the preceding years. Prasenjit Duara, "Chapter 13: Greater Asia Association and Matsui Iwane," *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 137-48.

<sup>6</sup> Young, *Total Empire*, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Young talks about some "ideas and symbols" of Manchuria and their importance on page 17. There is also mention of the Manchurian lifeline, which linked Manchukuo and Japan historically, culturally and economically on pages 4, 88. This book focused more on the cultural aspects of Manchuria and what it meant to Japan while including many other narrative such as the military, political, economic and ideological. It is meant to show how Manchuria shaped Japan. I am analyzing Japan through the lens of Manchurian influence in English language publications.

<sup>8</sup> Young also discusses the role of the media in creating the military conditions for the invasion of Manchuria. Some of the rhetoric used is Pan-Asianist but the discussion goes no further than mentioning the individual instances of usage in media coverage of the Manchurian Incident. There not enough historical context to the Pan-Asianist rhetoric, in my opinion. *Total Empire*, 114, 116-54.

played a central role in assisting the military and eventually the government to gain public support for the war.

Susan Carruthers and Gary S. Messinger both looked at media and their role in creating the conditions for war. It was from Carruthers *Media at War* that a formula for the coalescence of mass media into the state's control is firmly put forth and one that I used to analyze the conditions before, and after, the Manchurian Incident. It is in this nexus of Pan-Asianism, the Japanese Empire, and media that I will study the English language publications of both private Pan-Asianist organizations and quasi-public companies. This will help better understand the totality of the Imperial mission that was undertaken even before the hardening of the fascist regime. The English language publications will also help to learn about how the Japanese undertook foreign relations from a nontraditional standpoint. They look at those influenced by government actions, rather than only looking at formal government correspondences. It is here that this thesis will build on the work of Robert Vaillant who looked at the role of media in Japan during the Sino-Japanese War until the Russo-Japanese and the way the government used the media to try to influence foreign nations.<sup>9</sup>

The emergence of Japan as a world power broke the glass ceiling of race in international relations, but there were still limitations. The inferiority complex that began with the stripping of war spoils after defeating China to the racialized policies of the United States towards Japanese immigrants forced Japan to deal with more problems than just expanding empire. There was a barrier produced by the West that refused equality of races, something Japan attempted to place into the Charter of the League of Nations.<sup>10</sup> The actions of Japan from the Triple Intervention on were constantly being explained by the government or quasi-private news agencies in an attempt to convince

---

<sup>9</sup> Vaillant, "The Selling of Japan," 423.

<sup>10</sup> Naoko Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London: Routledge, 1998), 115.

foreigners of the true intentions and correct actions of the state. This would continue into the 1930s when criticism from Western nations increased due to the perception, albeit correct, of Japanese aggression and imperialism in China. There was a concerted effort to court public opinion, although for the most part it would fall on deaf ears. The need to prove itself as a crusader for justice based on a self-created morality was important to the Imperial government as a basis for its very existence. The English language publications show this attempt to explain to Western audiences of why Japan is different, why Japan is unique and why the actions taken were and are correct.



## **Chapter 1: Japan and the World from the 1850s to the 1930s**

The moment that Japan was forced open by Commodore Perry the histories of the United States and Japan were inexorably linked. The Japanese Empire would need to balance its Asian interests against those of the West, most importantly the United States. These “integral” continental interests would place Japan on a collision course with Open Door economic, and sometimes imperialist, policies of Euro-American nations. This dilemma would come to a head on issues of Manchuria which had been developing for decades before the Mukden Railway incident, although they had been a mere dream until the invasion.<sup>11</sup> Manchuria as the next stage of empire-building conflicted with the diplomatic endeavors of the 1920s where Japan was, more or less, as a “civilized nation.” These included membership in the League of Nations (1920), the Nine-Power Treaty (1922) and the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928) among numerous other bilateral treaties with Euro-American nations. This was the Japan before the seizure of Manchuria of China, imperial ambitions was pitted against the anti-war rhetoric of internationalism from the West. This chapter will look at the history of the Japanese Empire from the Meiji Restoration until the final defeat in 1945. The narrative of Manchuria as an object of imperial desire will be slowly built to better understand its role in Japanese history. The public opinion of especially the United States would be a concern for the imperial government as they went about aggrandizing the territory of Japan at the expense of other East Asian nations, at first China. The connection between imperialism, especially in Manchuria, and the attempt of the Japanese government to control media narratives in the West would be in constant conflict. Tokyo would constantly try to continue its imperialist policies while at the same time assuage

---

<sup>11</sup> Young, *Total Empire*, 4.

fears in the United States of a Japanese takeover of “special” American interests in the region.

The interactions between the Euro-American nations and Japan did not begin in 1853 but began through ambassadorial endeavors in the 1500s and early 1600s to Europe and New Spain. The Tenshō Embassy saw Japanese noblemen seek an audience with the pope among other interests such as visiting the kings of Europe.<sup>12</sup> Although the country was effectively closed to foreigners, two ports continued the interactions throughout the following two centuries. Dutch Studies was the name for the study of Western medicine, technology and culture in Japan. The intrusion of European merchants on Chinese commerce began in earnest in the beginning of the 19th century. The rising British Empire would defeat China in 1842 during the Opium War, shaking the foundation of the East Asian structure of power. The Sinocentric model was weakened, setting the foundation for debate in Japan over the way forward.<sup>13</sup> The 1840s saw pressure mounting from the West to begin opening up before it was forced to do so.<sup>14</sup> This warning was not heeded and the United States forced a reluctant Japan to sign an unequal treaty, the Japan-US Treaty of Friendship and Amity, with other nations to follow. The Shogun, as the representative of the Japanese government, received much criticism as the nature of these treaties became more obvious. The Emperor, who opposed the treaties, but also signed them, was the figure who the opposition rallied around, the *sonnō joi* (revere the Emperor, expel the barbarians) movement. The early 1860s saw the Emperor begin to take a more active role in governance, issuing decrees, usually unenforced, but they gave rebels even more of a reason to fight the Shogunate.

---

<sup>12</sup> C.R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan 1549–1650* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1951), 314.

<sup>13</sup> Sun Yat-sen, “Pan-Asianism.” *China and Japan: Natural Friends, Unnatural Enemies*, Shanghai: China United Press 1941, 141-51, in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 78.

<sup>14</sup> W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Stanford, CA: University of Stanford: 1973), 78.

The Meiji Restoration began as the Boshin War, the movement to end the Shogunate, led by the Satsuma and Chōshū domains. These forces would defeat pro-Shogun armies in the Boshin War paving the way for the Emperor to assume full political power. This was followed by the centralization of the state through “returning” the feudal domains to the imperial government, with a stipend being paid to the lords that had ruled the land. This allowed for rapid modernization of the entire archipelago rather than more adventurous or patriotic *daimyo* independently taking action. Although the path to industrialization and modernization would not be linear, there was a clear trend towards a more powerful Japanese state internally and internationally. The economic and political evolution of the state would eventually have the nation look beyond its own shores to prove its stability and might as a modern nation-state.

China, as the largest empire in Asia in terms of population, wealth and military power, was the main target for foreign aggression for most of the 19th century. Western nations carved out spheres of influence, meddled in internal politics and a myriad of other actions that eroded the sovereignty of the Qing Empire. Despite all these anchors the state was modernizing by synthesizing Western technology and methods with traditional social mores. The Treaty of Saint Petersburg in 1881 displayed the strength of the Qing as a land power, forcing the removal of Russian influence from the Ili Basin region.<sup>15</sup> The Battle of Bang Bo/Zhennan Pass saw a Chinese force decisively defeat a smaller French force, once again on land, opening up northern Vietnam to invasion. The capture of cities in Annam humiliated the French and despite negotiations that ended the conflict, gave the impression that China was on the verge of victory.<sup>16</sup> The ascension of China as a military power overshadowed the rise of Japan, until 1895. The Sino-

---

<sup>15</sup>John Haywood, *Historical Atlas of the 19th Century World, 1783-1914* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1998), 5.19.

<sup>16</sup>John K. Fairbank and Dennis C Twitchett, *Late Ch'ing 1800-1911* (London: Cambridge University Press), 251.

Japanese War would begin as battle over the colonial status of Korea, whether it would remain within China's tributary regime or the first step of Japanese imperialism.

The Japanese turn to Korea as a target of military campaigns was nothing new, it was an entrenched part of mythology. The last time Japan was unified under a central government, after the *Sengoku Jidai* (Age of Civil War, 1467-1603), Toyotomi Hideyoshi led an expedition to conquer China through Korea. The invasion of Korea would fail due to the Korean navy's ability to cut off supplies to the invading forces and a Ming army sent in defense of the kingdom. The modern turn to the peninsula began with the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876, forcing Korean ports open to Japanese commerce; other nations following suit shortly after. Early Pan-Asianists such as Tarui Tōkichi and the Kōakai organization began introducing ideas of uplifting East Asia, with Korea as the central testing ground.<sup>17</sup> It would be the job of Japan, not China, to lead the charge of modernization against the West and protect the independence of the region. The impetus of China to maintain its position as *Zhongguo*, the middle kingdom, of East Asia was also great, making this war equally as important to both sides of the conflict. The run up to the war seemed almost anticlimactic due to the fact that many in the West believed that Japan would be easily defeated. Impressions of the modern Chinese military, the *Beiyang* Army and *Beiyang* Navy were quite positive.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the positive media coverage of the modern Chinese military, it was racked with corruption. This reason among many others weakened the Qing armed forces significantly. The Japanese on the other hand were a paradigm for the completion of modernization, industrialization and implementation of contemporary military tactics.

---

<sup>17</sup> Tarui Tōkichi, *Daitō Gappōron* (*Arguments on Behalf of the Union of the Great East*, 1893 ), reprinted in *Fukoku Daitō Gappōron* (Chōryō Shorin/Wakatsuki Shoten, 1975), translated by Kyu Hyun Kim in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 80-81.

The Kōakai, "The Foundation Manifesto of the Kōakai (Raising Asia Society) and the Ajia Kyōkai (Asia Association), 1880-1883," in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 54.

<sup>18</sup> Fairbank and Twitchett, *Late Ch'ing*, 268-69.

The Sino-Japanese War is seen as the foundation of Japanese nationalism and modern Japanese nation-state.<sup>19</sup> It defined the “other,” namely China during the war and the West afterwards during the Triple Intervention, in relation to Japan. It also included remnants of before the Meiji Restoration such as an extension of the samurai spirit. This was done through the popular rights campaigns of *sonno joi* and the volunteer units that comprised mostly of former samurai looking to regain former glory.<sup>20</sup> The successes on the battlefield seemingly gave momentum into the negotiations. Although China was pushed aside, Russia, with European allies, would prevent Japan from gaining all the territory that it desired in the Triple Intervention in 1895. The public reaction was collective outrage and general distrust of the motives of European nations. This is especially true after Russia, Germany, France and Britain gained concessions in places in northern China such as Port Arthur, the Liaodong peninsula and Weihaiwei, in direct opposition to Japanese interests in the region. Russia, the main rival to Japan in Northeast Asia, successfully maneuvered to strip Japan of the building of certain rail lines on the Korean peninsula. As an ascendant world power now recognized as competent, Britain would join in alliance with Japan as a check to Russian expansionism.

The diplomatic wrangling over Korea and Northeast China thrust Manchuria into the purview of the Japanese government and imperialists. Originally Japanese intentions in Manchuria were to protect Korea from Russian imperialism in order to protect Japanese interests. The encroachment, especially by Russia, in what Japan considered its sphere of influence, facilitated a deterioration in relations between the two nations. The South Manchurian Railway was virtually handed over to the Czar by the Chinese

---

<sup>19</sup> Saya Makito and David Noble, *The Sino-Japanese War and the Birth of Japanese Nationalism* (Tokyo: International House of Japan, 2011), 2.

<sup>20</sup> Makito and Noble, *The Sino-Japanese*, 96.

government, the most important transportation artery in the region.<sup>21</sup> The Russian Empire had pivoted to the east to fulfill its imperialist ambitions, using threats of force and collusion with other European nations such as France. It was under these conditions that Japan would face an ever aggressive and perceived powerful Russia in 1904. Despite the government in Tokyo's best attempts to solve the issues through diplomatic means, there were large factions, especially on the military which pushed for war.<sup>22</sup> The crushing victory over the Chinese ten years earlier, combined with the humiliation of the Triple Intervention, was being played up in the Japanese press as preparation for a battle over influence in Northeast Asia.

Western press and leaders before the war were quite confident in Russia's easy victory. The notion of a European nation being defeated by, in many in the West's opinion, a lesser race was unthinkable. This was seen in the reaction to Japanese victory in the Sino-Japanese War, with ideas such as the "Yellow Peril" becoming popularized.<sup>23</sup> There was always a struggle for racial equality in international politics for all non-Western nations, even industrialized ones such as Japan.<sup>24</sup> There was a belief in, and fear of, the superior technology, culture and leadership of the Russian armed forces that they would propel Russia to be the greatest power in East Asia. Those ideas were dashed rather quickly with convincing victories by the Japanese not just on land in Korea and Manchuria but on the sea. The complete destruction of first the Russian Pacific fleet was shocking enough, but after sailing some 18,000 nautical miles from Saint Petersburg the Baltic fleet was also crushed. Suddenly European fears of a Russian juggernaut shifted into a racial-political fear of the "yellow race" rising. Japan had forced its way onto the stage of great powers to the shock and chagrin of the West.

---

<sup>21</sup> Young, *Total Empire*, 24.

<sup>22</sup> Young, *Total Empire*, 24-25.

<sup>23</sup> Robert B. Valliant, "The Selling of Japan. Japanese Manipulation of Western Opinion, 1900-1905," *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol 29, Iss 4 (1974): 434.

<sup>24</sup> Valliant, "The Selling of Japan," 415.

The peace also saw the imperialists to look further afield to fulfill ambitions, with Korea now indisputably within Japanese influence. Manchuria was the next candidate.

The inflammation of Western public opinion against the Japanese in what is known as the “Yellow Peril” started after the Sino-Japanese. Kaiser Wilhelm II was instrumental in whipping up anti-Asian sentiments through his patronage of Hermann Knackfuss in the famous 1895 pen lithograph. This was the culmination of the perceived threat of a an alliance of the East, China and Japan. The racial element combined with the economic threat of the resources and labor of the region being used to dispose of the “white peril.”<sup>25</sup> It is these ideas that were gaining traction around the world that the Japanese found itself trying to combat. The term Yellow Peril had “military, economic and racial exclusion perils all in one phrase,” making it particularly threatening to Japanese foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> This problem was recognized quickly and in 1898 the Political Bureau of the Foreign Ministry began to survey foreign journalists to see their perceptions of the Japanese and policies thereof.<sup>27</sup> This first foray into foreign media showed that there was a general mistrust in Japanese dealings with China. The focus at the outset of the Political Bureau was Europe, but that would change quickly as Yellow Peril rhetoric was fanned in the United States.

Japanese nationalism was on the rise following its stunning victory against China and this was no more evident than by some of the writings following the war. The most threatening of these was Nitobe Inazō’s *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, published in 1899 which imagined Japan in a hyper-masculine imagery through exploring the samurai cultural and code.<sup>28</sup> There was a traditional view as the Occident as masculine and the Orient as feminine formed during the 19th Century due to the vast cultural differences

---

<sup>25</sup> Valliant, “The Selling of Japan,” 428.

<sup>26</sup> Valliant, “The Selling of Japan,” 426.

<sup>27</sup> Valliant, “The Selling of Japan,” 415.

<sup>28</sup> Jing He, “Okakura Tenshin and Pan-Asianism, 1903-1906,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 104.

between the two regions and Western racism/racialism. This was shattered by the more aggressive attitude of imperialism in Northeast Asia along with publications that painted Japan as a nation built on the values of a warrior class. The Japanese government worked against these images through both official and unofficial means. Contacts were made with both American and European newspapers to distribute Japanese news.<sup>29</sup> Okakura Tenshin, an art scholar, promulgated the idea of the greatness of a more peaceful Eastern culture in his most famous publication, *The Book of Tea* (1906).<sup>30</sup> The way the foreign media perceived Japan and its actions were of great concern to government, especially as it prepared to continue its policy of imperialism.

The immediate consequences of the victory in the Russo-Japanese War was the creation of the Korean protectorate and the removal of Russia as a rival for the foreseeable future. This was not the finality of Korean policy though, in 1910 it was completely incorporated into the Japanese imperial polity. The international community had few qualms about this action. The war silenced Russia, China had been defeated a decade earlier, Britain was in an alliance with Japan and the United States was satisfied with the Taft-Katsura Agreement in 1905. The embarrassment of the Triple Intervention was long in the past and more expansionist actions were now the future. Manchuria would become that target, along with some Pacific islands, to be incorporated into the Empire. In order to protect Korea there needed to be a buffer and that role would be filled by the "Three Eastern Provinces" of China. After the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905, the Japanese were given a significant foothold in the region that was formerly held by Russia. This included the Kwantung Lease Territory, the South Manchurian Railway, and the land corridor around the railway.<sup>31</sup> China in general was a constant target of

---

<sup>29</sup> Valliant, "The Selling of Japan," 418.

<sup>30</sup> He, "Okakura Tenshin and Pan-Asianism, 1903-1906," in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 102-105.

<sup>31</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 25.



Japanese expansionism from Ryūkyū Islands in 1874, to the Sino-Japanese War to World War I.

China as the “sick man of Asia” was an attitude not only held by the Western imperial powers but also the Japanese government. The weakness of China meant a cornucopia of opportunity for its closest neighbor and the Japanese set to take full advantage. The dream of conquering China had been one since Toyotomi Hideyoshi attempted to invade the Ming Dynasty through Korea in 1592. The first foray into this modern adventure was the incorporation of the aforementioned Ryūkyū Islands in 1879. The victory in the 1895 war meant Taiwan became the first true Japanese colony and Korea was severed from Chinese influence. The takeover of the Russian concessions in Manchuria further elevated Japanese control. The outbreak of the First World War would be an ever greater opportunity for the Empire, especially with Europe embroiled in its own affairs. This would be the impetus of an invasion of the German held territory around Tsingtao. The policy of exerting influence on China would continue with the 21 Demands.<sup>32</sup> Although it was later reduced to thirteen, it was harshly criticized by the international community. Despite the backlash from its allies in the war, the Republic of China had no choice but to acquiesce and appeased the Japanese government on the revised 13 Demands. The Paris Peace Conference after the war only solidified the gains and gave Japan effective control of the Shantung province. The Japanese respect for the territorial integrity of China is most aptly summed up by how it was referred to starting in the middle of the 1930s. They often did not call it a nation but rather a “geographical expression,” showing indifference to Chinese government and treating it more as an obstacle to the achievement of a moral conquest.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Jerome Chen, *Yuan Shih-k'ai* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972), 152.

<sup>33</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “Mori Kaku: “Extraordinary Means of Extraordinary Times, 1932,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 125.

The Versailles Treaty, apart from more or less maintaining the status quo in favor of Japan in Asia, also included a point of enormous contention in the Paris Peace Conference. That was the Racial Equality Amendment proposed by the Japanese delegation which sought “equal and just treatment in every respect making no distinction either in law or in fact, on account of their race or ethnicity.”<sup>34</sup> This high minded proposal seems like a great example of the fight against Western racial imperialism but it had slightly different intentions. The Japanese push for the amendment was to ensure their own equality to Western Powers rather than all peoples. The language of the proposal was universalist and looked to the Western nations as a sweeping change to the hierarchy of the world. It was supported by a majority of nations and votes but despite this, it was not approved. President Wilson, the chairman of the Convention, would require a unanimous vote on the measure due to a “strong opposition,” namely from within the British delegation, Australia. It was there where it would die, enraging the Japanese public and entrenching a hatred of the United States as untrustworthy. Although Japan had been an equal partner in the war, the ramification of not allowing it to be treated as a racial equal would later manifest itself in nationalist and Pan-Asianist discourses.

This failure would not stop the Empire from pursuing international agreements that would make it de facto a world power, although the role played would often be second to that of many Euro-American powers. This would be most evident during the Washington Naval Conference and the subsequent Nine Power Treaty in 1922. The treaties signed would become the point of great controversy in the Japanese public and within the government itself. The headline from the conference was the ratio of battleships which was 5:5:3, with the United States and Britain allowed more tonnage in terms of battleships than Japan. The point of what would be naval disarmament was

---

<sup>34</sup> Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality*, 115.

world peace, with the United States and Japan building more powerful navies at a rapid pace. Although a victory for the new international order, the reaction was quite different in Japan. The lower limit for Japan had its reasons, but on face value was deeply unfair, something not lost on the Japanese media and public. This would become a major theme of the government to gain support for military build up in the 1930s.<sup>35</sup>

The distrust of the Western Powers was nothing new and this new treaty was more concrete proof of the racial international system that was maintained especially by the United States and the United Kingdom. This was not the only slight that Japan received during the Conference. The question of the Shantung Province was still lingering after continuing negotiations since 1914 between the Allied Euro-American powers, Japan and China. The United States supported China's claim to the province, eventually leading to its political sovereignty being transferred away from Japan to China. Although economic control of the area would still be firmly in Japanese hands, the public perception of the reversion was poor in Tokyo. The entire Conference seemed to pit the West against Japan, fueling nationalist discourse of anti-Westernism, especially against the United States.<sup>36</sup> The US was also stoking those fires through its racist immigration policies in the 1920s. This was not the first time immigration was an inflammatory issue for the Japanese public. The Gentleman's Agreement of 1907 also represented these tensions. The 1921 Emergency Quota Act targeted non-North/Western Europeans for severely restricted immigration. Another instance of American hypocrisy in espousing liberal values. The racial nature of the exclusion was obvious to the Japanese media, contributing to the "us versus them" mentality becoming an easy narrative to play to a disgruntled public.

---

<sup>35</sup> Roger Chesneau and Robert Gardiner, *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1922-1946*, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1980), 3.

<sup>36</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, "The Yūzonsha's "War Cry, 1920," in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 58.

The 1920s was not all about racial tensions and the threat of war with the United States. In Japan it is also about an explosion of liberalism and culture known as the Taisho Democracy. This was a period of increasing party politics and social progressivism. The era of the hegemony of parliamentarianism began with the Taisho political crisis, directly following the death of Emperor Meiji. The *genrō*, elder statesmen, were effectively usurped through the creation of a conservative party by Saionji Kinmochi in 1914 following the Taisho political crisis. In 1918, the election of Takashi Hara as the first commoner as Prime Minister was the first step in this expansion of liberalism. The period ended as increasing protests and expansion of rights came to a climax. The extension of universal male suffrage came at the same time as the backlash against the liberalism came from the government. The year 1925 was the height of Taisho democracy and showed its limits, with the passage of the Public Security Preservation Law, which is incredibly euphemistic sounding. The language of the law was prevent parties or organizations that would seek to remove the system of private property, overtly against communists and labor agitators. This law, which came only two months after the granting of universal male suffrage, showed the limitations to the liberal period, often derided as being *ero-guro-nansensu*, or erotic-grotesque-nonsense.<sup>37</sup> This was beginning of the fascist trend on governance over the next decade.

The policies on a domestic level were increasingly liberal over the Taisho period, but in foreign affairs it was far from idealistic internationalism. Manchuria and China were squarely in the sights of the Japanese imperialist machine. As shown before, the incursions of Japan into the Northeast of China was started with the competition with Russia that led to war. The collapse of Russia in 1917 led to the Japanese extension of their influence into even Siberia. They joined the Allied powers in an expedition to assist

---

<sup>37</sup> Michael Hoffman, "The Taisho Era: When modernity ruled Japan's masses," *The Japan Times*, July 29, 2012.

the White forces against the Soviet Reds. Although a losing strategy, it showed the Japanese comfort in asserting power across Northeast Asia, solidifying its control. It would be the economic concessions achieved during World War I that would be the foothold that would later be the springboard. This was a form of imperialism that would not last indefinitely. The Chinese state became stronger over the 1920s and its power to reject the unequal treaties with Japan also increased. The major actors in this story would be the railroad concession from the Russo-Japanese War, Mantetsu (The South Manchuria Railway Company), The Kwantung Army and the government in Tokyo.

The Kwantung Lease Territory starting from its transfer from Russia to Japan after the Russo-Japanese was the starting point for the drive to imperial hegemony. Like other nations and their spheres of influence in China, Japan defended it with an army that would eventually morph into an imperial corps.<sup>38</sup> Although the most important project was Korea at the time, that would quickly change as China became the newest target. The troops stationed in both Korea and the Kwantung Lease Territory represented the growing power of the Army in relation to the international politics that Japan conducted in the region. The Kwantung Army collaborated and controlled the warlord of the Northeast, Zhang Zuolin since the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty. They even advised him on the selection of advisors, which meant they exerted great control on the events in the region through the Chinese and Japanese side of the issues. There also existed an independent streak whereas the Kwantung Army took many actions without approval from the central government, beginning with its foundation. The rogue nature of the Army combined with odd intertwining of Chinese interests and Japanese interests helped prime Manchuria for the Japanese imperial project.

There was another aspect of this project though, and it was the economic imperialism that was engaged at the beginning of any interest in the region. The sphere

---

<sup>38</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 27-28.

of influence that was carved out by Russia was first with capitalist intentions and later enforced with troops. Mantetsu, the South Manchuria Railway Co., was the old Russian company reborn as a Japanese corporation. It was by far the largest Japanese largest corporation by 1920 and it moved from just being a railroad to covering mining, harbor/port facilities, warehouses, hotels, schools, hospitals, research facilities, collecting taxes and managing public utilities.<sup>39</sup> It was involved with just about every part of life in the railway zone and throughout the Northeast, much of which was still technically Chinese territory. The operations would grow to many other subsidiaries that would monopolize parts of the regional economy such as oil, ceramics, glass, steel and electric lighting. The importation of Japanese citizens to fill the upper management positions also strengthened these operations in terms of Japanese imperial ambitions.<sup>40</sup> There was now a large contingent of people that required protection and were also above the laws of the local Chinese authorities. These economic and social forms of control contributed to the increased importance of Manchuria to the Japanese.

Manchuria was the birthplace of the kind of imperialism that Japan wanted to project to the world. It was state-run development in a pseudo-independent nation-state that would be the epitome of the imperial project. It was here that Confucian teachings were made into concrete policies; where Pan-Asianist idealism became government projects.<sup>41</sup> The objectives that were enlightenment and progress were put into practice in creating a new kind of state. This new state included the many new Japanese citizens that were effectively bribed to leave their rural poverty in the home country to help Manchukuo. The ties to the greatness of the new project in idealistic terms and also the necessity of the region to the welfare of Japan, changed the idea of what constituted the Japanese state. The idea of Manchuria as a lifeline to Japan was deeply rooted after 20

---

<sup>39</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 31-32.

<sup>40</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 33.

<sup>41</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 29.

years of interest and now the actual economic dependence on it,<sup>42</sup> The economic security that it provided allowed for the whipping up of public opinion in favor of aggressive action to protect the newly gained territory. Manchukuo was firmly in both the government's and public's eyes as important to the imperial project and the very existence of the Japanese people and state. This belief aligned directly with the nationalist discourses that had attempted to pressure these kinds of actions earlier in the 1920s, but to little avail. It was only in Manchuria that such a constellation of military autonomy, economic control/dependence and historical memory that imperial ambitions could be realized so swiftly.

This realization of imperial ambitions was at this point deeply embedded in the Japanese public opinion. The media had created the nationalist monster in 1931 with the coverage of the Manchurian Incident. The government sources often celebrated the achievements of the Kwantung Army, even though in private were unsure of what course of action to take. The symbiotic relationship between the autonomous Army and the apologetic government became particularly stark as the crisis became internationalized. Tokyo often had to explain the actions of the Kwantung Army and disavow the violence, while at the same time having no control over the situation. The American State Department realized this very quickly in their dealings with the Japanese Foreign Ministry, understanding but also becoming increasingly frustrated.<sup>43</sup> It was during this stretch of time between 1931 and 1933 that all the racial grievances, imperial "catch-up", economic exploitation, and eventual media manipulation finally came to fruition. The Manchukuo imperial project is what the Japanese believed was the best about their ways. It was centralized, state-run, efficient, idealistic, moralistic and most of all

---

<sup>42</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 88.

<sup>43</sup> Henry Stimson, "Telegram 793.94/2465," United States Department of State, *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, Japan: 1931-1941 Volume I*, Washington DC: GPO, 1931. 36.

This source will henceforth be called "USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*."

subservient to the metropole. The history of Japan and the region of Manchuria were inexorably linked and their connection would propel Japanese imperialism from dream to internalized public and governmental necessity.



## **Chapter 2: Japan and Pan-Asianism**

In the historical narrative of the history of Japan there is one ideology that contributed the most to the rhetoric of the Empire and that was Pan-Asianism. The most famous manifestation of this ideology is the “Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” which descended from the “New World Order” speech given by Prince Konoe in 1938.<sup>44</sup> The 1938 speech’s timing coincided with the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War and the seeming Japanese victory. These concepts envisioned Asia as one unified front against Western imperialism to defend the sovereignty of all nations involved. The moralistic nature of the New World Order in East Asia hid the more sinister reason for its existence. It was a front for Japanese imperialism in Northeast China and later the rest of East Asia. This is the experience that many lay people have of Pan-Asianism, but that is hardly the entire story of the ideology. Its origins were far from 1930s version that was decidedly Japanese and imperialistic in nature. The original core tenets of Pan-Asianism were, in fact, resisting Western imperialism through raising up Asia with China as the leader and equality of independent Asian states. These juxtaposed to what was espoused in the 1930s in Japan is striking, but the evolution makes sense. This evolution from the mid-19th century to the Second World War was not always driven by the Japanese either. As shifting military, economic and political fortunes weakened the traditional center of East Asia and placed doubt in the sovereignty of all nations in the region, people looked elsewhere for salvation. As early as the Meiji Restoration, Chinese and Korean scholars were looking to Japan as a model for “self-strengthening.” In this Chapter the history of Pan-Asianism will be examined with an eye towards Manchuria

---

<sup>44</sup> Roger H. Brown, “The Konoe Cabinet’s ‘Declaration of a New Order in East Asia,’ 1938” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 168.

and the role of this political ideology on the general populace. The importance of Manchuria to the ideology itself as well as to publications that used Pan-Asianism in their narratives will be demonstrated. This included English-language publications within Japan and outside of it as well. Pan-Asianism is a complex philosophy that had a long history before its use as propaganda by the Japanese Imperial government. Understanding that history shines light on its power in Japan and abroad and what it meant for the region as a whole.

The history of modern Pan-Asianism can be traced to as early as the 1840s as a Japanese reaction to the Western Powers' aggressive stance in China. Japanese thought in regards to China had traditionally been one of emphasizing differences rather than promoting unity.<sup>45</sup> The threat to sovereignty posed by the Opium War and the unequal treaties that followed galvanized intellectuals in Japan. This would be the same forces that would eventually lead to the Meiji Restoration and rapid modernization. It was in the 1860s where the movement gained steam to link Japan and China, for better or for worse. Hirano Kuniomi in 1863 spoke of the differences but also similarities of the two nations of the East. His call was not to aid the "barbarians" in the West and that China and Japan were in a "strong position to cooperate."<sup>46</sup> Katsube Mitake also said that Japan must go forth and help unite the region through cooperation in naval forces, trade and science.<sup>47</sup> It is this idea that Japan must do something about the deteriorating situation that saw the creation of the first Pan-Asianists societies in Japan. The Kōakai was the first one of these societies of any real importance in 1880, renamed the Ajia

---

<sup>45</sup> Matsuda Kōchiro, "The Concept of 'Asia' before Pan-Asianism" in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 45.

<sup>46</sup> Hirano Kuniomi, *Seiban Sosaku* (Fundamental Measures for Expelling the Barbarians, 1863), reprinted in Hirano Kuniomi Kenshōkai (ed.), *Hirano Kuniomi Denki Oyobi Ikō* (Biography and Posthumous Writings of Hirano Kuniomi, 1980), translation by Matsuda Kōichirō in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 50.

<sup>47</sup> Katsube Mitake, Matsumoto Sannosuke, Ōguchi Yūjirō, *Katsu Kaishū Zenshū* (Collected Writings of Katsu Kaishūin), vol 18, Keisō Shobō, 50, translated by Matsuda Kōichirō in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 51.

Kyōkai in 1883.<sup>48</sup> The organization was very Sinocentric with classical Chinese as lingua franca. This would be common not just for the Ajia Kyōkai but for Pan-Asianist across the region. There was also a Chinese language school that was founded in order to promote that common language.<sup>49</sup>

The diagnoses of the problems facing Asia were varied, some were cultural, social, political, religious and technological. The founding document of the Kōakai sees the strength of the West in the understanding that they have for each other's languages and cultures. It is the common knowledge that has created a regional bloc that protects its own interests first.<sup>50</sup> In 1860, Yokoi Shōnan said that "Europeans were a brave people who took strong interest in the outside world..."<sup>51</sup> Okakura Tenshin in 1903 searched for the reasons for the supremacy of the West as well. He attributed it to technology that allowed for unification of the nation-state and therefore nationalism. It was this national spirit that would give the state power to modernize effectively and dominate its own territory and then that of others.<sup>52</sup> Even as late as 1940 Pan-Asianists looked to the West as an example of regional alliances to assert sovereignty and power. In the Manifesto of the Tōa Renmei Kyōkai they set forth the idea of cooperation of large blocs of Euro-American nations as a model for the future of world politics. The Soviet Union, the America's and Europe were being grouped together which meant that East Asia must do the same in order to fulfill the "inevitable tendency of world history."<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Urs Matthias Zachmann, "The Foundation Manifesto of the Kōakai (Raising Asia Society) and the Ajia Kyōkai (Asia Association), 1880-1883," in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 53.

<sup>49</sup> Zachmann, "The Foundation Manifesto," 55

<sup>50</sup> "Foundation of the Kōakai" (Raising Asia Society, 1880), reprinted in *Kōakai Hōkoku/ Ajia Kyōkai Hōkoku* (Bulletin of the Kōakai, Bulletin of the Ajia Kyōkai). Tokyo, Fuji Shuppan: 1993 edited by Kuroki Morifumi and Masuzawa Akio and translated by Urs Matthias Zachmann in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 58.

<sup>51</sup> Matsuda Kōichirō, "The Concept of 'Asia' before Pan-Asianism," 47.

<sup>52</sup> Tankha, "Okakura Tenshin: 'Asia Is One.' 1903," *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 95-6.

<sup>53</sup> "Tōa Renmei no Hitsuzensei" (The Inevitability of the East Asian League), Ritsumeikan Shuppanbu, 1-7, translated by Roger H. Brown in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 205.

This analysis of the problem was coupled with a vision of unity of East Asia in a much less imperialistic sense than was seen in the 1930s. The Ajia Kyōkai mentioned the cooperation of not just China and Japan, but also Korea, Vietnam, Luzon, Burma and Champa, in order to create a powerful wall of resistance.<sup>54</sup> A grand alliance of Asia that included Japan, China and India was in Okakura Tenshin's vision in *The Awakening of Japan*.<sup>55</sup> They were all unified by social, cultural and religious similarities and were the great example of idealism to the world. In this context, idealism is the lifting of Asia without malevolent intent. An Asia that had independent states that cooperated to rid themselves of Western domination. The social, cultural and religious similarities also are in the unwillingness for the West to even try to comprehend the cultures of East. Okakura Tenshin called for greater understanding of all cultures in order to "repair the grand devastation."<sup>56</sup> Miyazaki Tōten in 1919 even espoused that Japan should free some of its colonies, specifically Taiwan and Korea, in order to create "an Asian federation based on a thorough-going humanitarianism." This also meant a re-evaluation of the policies in China, away from spheres of influence and giving China assistance to maintain its territorial integrity.<sup>57</sup>

The images of an Asia cooperating in order to resist Western imperialism was not only shared by the Japanese intellectuals. In Korea, So Chaep'il in 1898 said that China, Japan and Korea must cooperate because they "exist in one Asia," "their bodies and hair are similar, they use a common script, and they even have many customs in common."

---

<sup>54</sup> "Foundation Manifesto of the Ajia Kyōkai (Asia Association, 1883)," reprinted in *Kōakai Hōkoku/ Ajia Kyōkai Hōkoku* (Bulletin of the Kōakai, Bulletin of the Ajia Kyōkai). Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan 1993, edited by Kuroki Morifumi and Masuzawa Akio and translated by Urs Matthias Zachmann in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 59.

<sup>55</sup> Okakura Kakuzō, *Ideals of the East with Special Reference to the Art of Japan*, London: J Murray 1920 (originally published in 1903), 1-5, 16, in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 97.

<sup>56</sup> Okakura Kakuzō, *The Book of Tea*. London: G. P. Putnam 1906, in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 110.

<sup>57</sup> Miyazaki Tōten, "Rikkōho Sengen," (Election Manifesto, 1915), reprinted in *Miyazaki Tōten Zenshū* (Complete Works of Miyazaki Tōten), vol. 2, Heibonsha 1971, frontispiece, translated by Christopher W. A. Szpilman in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 138.

They were the only nations left on Earth that still were actively resisting the encroaching Western “hurricane.”<sup>58</sup> China also had its fair share of those that supported a Pan-Asianist orientation for Chinese policy. They spanned the political spectrum from Kang You-Wei, the reformer, to Prince Chun, the Regent of the Qing Dynasty from 1908-11. Zhang Taiyan, a supporter of the failed reform movement in Qing China, would start the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood in 1907. This was in reaction to the Anglo-Japanese alliance and without any Japanese support.<sup>59</sup> Its goals were similar to earlier Pan-Asianist organizations, to “rise up against the Western barbarians” which is possible through unity because “we will have the strength of bundled reeds.” In the Charter it set its sights on an expansive organization with branches across the world. This included their headquarters in Tokyo as well as China, Korea, The Philippines, India and even the United States.<sup>60</sup> Although there was optimism from many Asian nations, including India, it was these non-Japanese groups that showed skepticism towards Pan-Asianism as an ideology.

This skepticism was growing out of the Pan-Asianist movement within Japan to the changing international environment of the region. The Meiji Restoration saw a Japan that was rapidly Westernizing and modernizing in order to confront the threat of the Euro-American imperialist forces, especially as it looked to its neighbor, China. It was the increasing strength and confidence of Japan that saw its role in the minds of Asians change from one of many to leader of the region. This would be reflected in Pan-Asianist ideas which would integrate “Japan as a model” into the mainstream of its Japanese ideology. Kōa was the idea of “Raising Asia”, which meant an “enlightened and

---

<sup>58</sup> Sō Chaep’il: Editorial, *Tongnip Sinman*, 9 November 1899, translated by Kim Bongjin in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 175.

<sup>59</sup> Yuan P. Cai, “Zhang Taiyan and the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood, 1907,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 177, 180.

<sup>60</sup> “The Charter of the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood,” reprinted in *Xinhai Geming Shi Cong Kan* (Materials on the History of the Xinhai Revolution), vol. 1. Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 83-84, translated by Yuan P. Cai in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 182-84

prosperous Asia” under Japanese guidance. The Kōakai, Raising Asia Society, was founded in 1880 with a strong inclination for a Japanese leadership role. It came from a scene with the Qing dynasty as senile and Korea as too weak, so it was Japan, “in accord with the will of Heaven”, to “restore their [Qing] wealth and power.”<sup>61</sup> Tarui Tōkichi in the 1890s followed this strain of thought. He was even part of the *sonnō jōi*, “Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarian” movement in his youth. After the successful transformation of the Japanese state to a modern constitutional nation-state, he believed that it was the country’s mission to help others progress from barbarity. He specifically targets Korea as the first step through a union. He believed that such a union would help Koreans fix their institutions, defend the Japanese homeland using the peninsula, assist in common disaster relief, aid in military training and other trade benefits.<sup>62</sup> This union, as well as an alliance with China, was on the basis of equality. It was raising these nations in order to better fight the Western imperialists, rather than to be subsumed into the Japanese nation. After the Triple Intervention of 1895 and the increasing European territorial demands from China, Prince Konoe Atsumaro declared that a “Same-Race Alliance” was needed.<sup>63</sup> This idealistic strain of Japanese Pan-Asianism would slowly give way to a more nationalistic strain as the power disparity between Japan and its Asian nations grew.

The darker side of Pan-Asianism began as early 1881, right alongside the optimistic view on the ideology. The Genyōsha, or Dark Ocean Society, whose main interest dealt not as much with domestic, but rather foreign affairs. It supported

---

<sup>61</sup> Inoue Masaji, *Kyojin Arao Sei. Tsuketari Jūni Resshiden* (The Giant Arao Sei. Including Lives of Twelve Patriots), Sakura Shobō 1910, 145-57, translated by Michael A. Schneider in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 71-72.

<sup>62</sup> Tarui Tōkichi, *Daitō Gappōron (Arguments on Behalf of the Union of the Great East*, 1893), *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 80-81.

<sup>63</sup> Konoe Atsumaro, “Dōjinshu Dōmei, Tsuketari Shina Mondai Kenkyū no Kitsuyōi” (An alliance of the same race and the necessity of studying the Chinese question), *Taiyō*, 24:1 (1 January 1898), reprinted in *Konoe Atsumaro Nikki*, Kajima Kenkyūjo Shuppankai, 1969, 62-63, translated by Urs Matthias Zachmann in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 89-92.

governmental actions that enhanced the prestige of the Imperial House, of which it swore and oath of loyalty. The organization saw imperialism as the duty of the “sacred race” of the Japanese in order to “liberate China, Korea and other Asians under Western control. This liberation was explicitly in order to enhance Japanese power in the world and that “the doors have been open to our exploitation and expansion in the south.”<sup>64</sup> Empire building was integral to unity in East Asia. This group worked both overtly and covertly until the fall of the Japanese Empire in 1945. The opportunities in World War I saw many solutions some to protect the territorial integrity in China, others were more aggressive towards the continent. Tokutomi Sohō, an expansionist and best-selling author for most of the beginning of the century, was representative of the new found confidence during this period. Resentment of Western intervention in the region led him to become a vocal proponent of the “Asiatic Monroe Doctrine.” He maintained that Asia was for Asians, something that would be seized upon during the 1930’s to justify imperialism. He did not stop at the simple defense of Asia from other powers, but an active policy from Japan itself in East Asia. He gave arguments on why Japan should move in Manchuria, Mongolia and into China in order to create a continental empire for the Japanese people. This was the epitome of imperialism, although to him it was rational “offensive defense.”<sup>65</sup>

As Taisho Democracy began to take root, so did the opposition to the Western liberalism that it represented. This can be found not only in the criticism launched by the Genyōsha, but respected teachers such as Kita Reikichi. The great respect that he had in both the field of education and through his publishing gave him influence over the

---

<sup>64</sup> *Genyōsha Shashi* (The Official History of the Genyōsha). Genyōsha Shashi Hensankai, 1917, translated by Joël Joos in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 68.

<sup>65</sup> Tokutomi Iichirō, “Japan’s Mighty Mission,” in *Is Japan a Menace to Menace to Asia?* Shanghai, 1917, 153-159 by Taraknath Das in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 282-83. Tokutomi Sohō, “Jimu Ikkagen” (An Opinion on Current Issues), reproduced in *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* (Complete Collection of Meiji Literature) vol. 34. Chikuma Shobō, 301-14, translated by Alistair Swale in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 283-86.

direction of what Pan-Asianism represented. He took the idea of “Asia for Asians” in view of what it really meant: “Greater Japanism” that was “in the interests of Japan’s self-defense and need for expansion.” He also realizes the threat that the United States represents and actually presents to the future of Japan’s mission in Asia. He believed in Asianism that only served Japanese national interest similar to how the Monroe Doctrine served the United States’ national interest.<sup>66</sup> The ideology that was created by these men and others represented a shattering of the status quo. Konoe Fumimaro specifically attacked the liberal humanitarianism that had swept the world, including Japan as something that was propping up the status quo, specifically Britain, France and the United States. They are the nations that benefit the most from free trade and also the ones that benefit the most from arms reductions, he claimed. This statement was made in 1918, eerily prophetic with the Washington Naval Conference still years away.<sup>67</sup> Pan-Asianism was turning into Japanese foreign policy realism mixed with virulent anti-Westernism.

The rise of Japanese fascism began in the 1920s even as liberalism was coming to its apex with universal male suffrage in 1925. As mentioned in Chapter 1, only two months after that great democratic humanistic accomplishment came the Peace Preservation Act that would be bulwark of state power moving forward, especially during the 1930s and 1940s. The influence of the Genyōsha started to come to fruition during this period with prominent statesman Nakano Seigo, although not a member, associated with many of its more famous members. After a trip to Britain in 1915, he would call on the East to rise up with Japan as the ideal. He would later align himself with the military,

---

<sup>66</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “Kita Reikichi: ‘Misunderstood Asianism’ and ‘The Great Mission of Our Country,’ 1917 in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1: 1850-1920*, 297-300.

<sup>67</sup> Konoe Fumimaro, “Eibei Hon’i Heiwashugi o Hai Su” (A Call to Reject the Anglo-American Centered Peace). *Nihon oyobi Nihonjin* no. 746, 12 December 1918, 23-26, translated by Eri Hotta in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 316-17.



praising their actions in Manchuria in 1931.<sup>68</sup> Political organizations such as the Yūzonsha were highly influential in directing Pan-Asianism towards the radicalization of the 1930s. There were a plethora of prolific and instrumental writers that would come out of the group who were also very well respected academics. They would also move on to other Pan-Asianist organizations after the Yūzonsha's effective dissolution and continue affecting the ideology of the movement until its demise at the end of the war. The core principles were easy to ascertain as in other Pan-Asianist writings: a hatred of the West, its culture and its ideas as well as staunch nationalism that included domestic reforms.<sup>69</sup> The Foundation Principles are even more extreme and telling of the direction of the movement as a whole.

“The Eight Main Policy Planks of this Magazine:

The movement to build a great revolutionary empire

A creative revolution of the national spirit

Advocacy of a moral foreign policy

The formation of a great military state with the goal of liberating Asia

Coverage and critique of the reform situation in various countries

Propagating and popularizing Esperanto

[Serving] as a liaison organ for the reformist movements

Spiritual training for comrades (dōshi) to turn them into pillars of the nation”<sup>70</sup>

Outside of the nationalist sphere was still the optimistic and idealistic strain of Pan-Asianism that was championed most famously by Sun Yat-sen, the leader of Nationalist China during the 1920s. Although his words would be twisted and used by

---

<sup>68</sup> Stefano von Loë, “Nakano Seigō: Populist, Fascist, Pan-Asianist, 1917/1942” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 46.

Nakano Seigō, “Kono Issen: Kokumin wa ika ni Tatakaubeki! (This One War-How the People Should Fight!), Tōhōkai, Tokyo, January 1942, 13-16, translated by Stefano von Loë in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 53.

<sup>69</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “The Yūzonsha’s ‘War Cry,’ 1920,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 58-59.

<sup>70</sup> Foundation Principles of the Yūzonsha, *Otakebi*, October 1920, translated by Christopher W. A. Szpilman in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 60.

the Japanese Pan-Asianists and the government alike, his message was wholly one of empowering Asia through cooperation. He praised the Japanese ability to effectively unshackle themselves from European colonialism through the dismantling of the Unequal Treaties. He also pointed to the victory in the Russo-Japanese War as striking a blow for the common good for the continent, giving hope to the oppressed across the world. Sun Yat-sen also called for China and Japan and the rest of East Asia “unite together to restore the former status of Asia.” The Japan of 1924 was both a nation with the Western civilization rule of Might combine with the Oriental rule of Right, giving it a special burden in the quest for Pan-Asianist independence of Asian nations.<sup>71</sup>

The Dōkōkai, Same Light Society, was a reform organization most famous for its criticism of the Japanese colonial policy in Korea. The high-minded idealism that came from the union of the two states from the turn of the century was finally being judged for what it was, a kind of imperialism. This came after an insurrection in Korea against the Japanese occupation of the peninsula. In an English language journal, the Dōkōkai analyzed what happened up until that point in Korea. The conclusion was that Japan had acted contrary to its promises when it first annexed the Kingdom. There was supposed to be harmony, equality and prosperity for both nations; however, this was certainly not the case for the Koreans. They proposed many measures to rectify the wrongs committed by the Japanese in order to create a harmonious family that protected the human rights of the Korean people.<sup>72</sup> Both the praising of Japan as an equal partner in Pan-Asianism and the scathing reassessment of Japan’s role in uplifting Korea represent views that were becoming drowned out by the upsurge in popularity of nationalism shown before. These ideas existed but were later going to be selectively

---

<sup>71</sup> Sun Yat-sen, “Pan-Asianism.” *China and Japan: Natural Friends, Unnatural Enemies*, Shanghai: China United Press 1941, 141-51, in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 78-85.

<sup>72</sup> The Dokokai, “An Association for Bringing about Equality between Koreans and Japanese,” *The Asian Review* 2:3 (March-April 1921), 277-79, in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 66.

used by the more virulent and explicitly imperialist strains of Pan-Asianism, which became the mainstream in Japan by the 1930s.

The end of the Taisho Period and the beginning of the Shōwa signaled the change in course towards radicalization of both foreign and domestic policy. The rise of extremist conservatism can be best seen in the light of a global movement in response to Great Depression in 1929. This is no different in Japan, with the added bonus of an increasingly independent and powerful military. The Army and Navy had constantly been at odds, fighting over budgets, especially since the Russo-Japanese War.<sup>73</sup> Politics, ideology and the military were becoming increasingly entangled until the Manchurian Incident in 1931. Manchuria had featured prominently in both political and Pan-Asianist discourses over the past thirty years, but that finally came to a head on September 18th of that year. The Yūzonsha had its influence felt starting in this time period. Ōkawa Shumei and Kita Ikki were both prolific writers but also political agitators whose influence using Pan-Asianism would increase over the time. The March Incident was a coup d'état attempt by Ōkawa to establish a military government that wished to end corrupt party politics. Kita Ikki's writing would eventually inspire some factions in the military to try to seize power in 1936, leading to his eventual execution.

The gradual ramp up in the crackdown on liberal and leftist thought, beginning with the Peace Preservation Act of 1925 and would have the consequence of allowing conservative ideology to run rampant. One of the main beneficiaries of this would be Hosoi Hajime, a writer, journalist and publisher, who propagated a hard-line foreign policy around an imperialistic vision of Pan-Asianism. His influence would be even greater as he started his own publishing company that would distribute this ideological writings to a wide audience. Christopher W. A. Szpilman even says that these

---

<sup>73</sup> Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History Since the Meiji Renovation 1868-2000* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 198.

publications would influence the course of Japanese history in favor of an aggressive stance towards the United States.<sup>74</sup> Following the Manchurian Incident and the formation of the state of Manchukuo, Hosoi would both defend the action but also propose a solution in order to better the Japanese state. He railed against the West as hypocritical in “plundering rights and privileges in the [Asian] region at will.” The building of greater states that would encompass regions was the way of the future combined with state planned economies was the vision of Pan-Asianism that was espoused by not just Hosoi but other Pan-Asianists. The nation that would make this all happen was Japan as a “monolithic power under the umbrella of Greater Asianism...it must guide and help the entire continent of Asia.”<sup>75</sup>

Another radical Pan-Asianist rising to prominence following the Manchurian Incident was Mari Kaku. He was a rightist politician that had opposed the internationalist orientation of Baron Shidehara's Foreign Ministry's foreign policy during the 1920's. He often described it as bowing to Western demands and not asserting Japanese power in a weak China. He also saw the importance of Manchuria in both an ideological and imperial state project. It was here that he wanted to implement reforms in state planned economy in order to perfect the system for importation back to Japan. This would become a theme in Manchurian policy, the *kaihatsu* or coordinated industrialization.<sup>76</sup> China was the aim of most of Mari Kaku's rhetoric, being a major proponent of the “China as a geographical expression.” This fit well with another part of ideology which he also espoused, the “Asian Monroe Doctrine.” China was within the Japanese sphere of

---

<sup>74</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “Hosoi Hajime: ‘Japan's Resolve,’ 1932,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 118.

<sup>75</sup> Hosoi Hajime, *Nihon no Ketsui* (Japan's Resolve 1932). Nihon Yūben Taikai Kōdansha, 322-25, 334, translated by Christopher W. A. Szpilman in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 120.

<sup>76</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 43.

influence and because it was not a true state it could be controlled without impunity from other powers.<sup>77</sup>

Other than just being the major turning point in both the Pan-Asianist and Japanese domestic ideological current, Manchuria would now feature as the prominent example of the liberation of Asia. This meant that Manchukuo was an equal partner in the Greater Asianist drive towards the repulsion of the Western imperialists. This became a theme in both private publications and eventually governmental ones as well. The most obvious indication of this new thrust in policy can be seen through the way Manchukuo and China are discussed in these publications and public statement. Often times they are not considered one entity, often referred to separately. Sometimes even Inner Mongolia was separated from China as well. This would align with the Japanese government's drive to create another puppet state in the northeast which would eventually succeed. Mengjiang was such a puppet state in Inner Mongolia, created in 1936.<sup>78</sup> When trying to push the cause of Japanese hegemony these states, along with Japan, China and sometimes other Asian nations, would be included in the language. The commonality of these nations was espoused in order to engender a sense of community with the eventual Japanese conquerors.

Japanese attempted hegemony over Asia was set into high gear starting with the invasion of China in 1937. This action was the next phase of Pan-Asianism, one that saw the ideology become purely propagandistic and explanatory in nature. Nagai Ryūtarō called this the "Holy War for the Reconstruction of Asia", also the name of his piece in the *Nippon Bunka*. He first calls for a strengthening in the partnership between

---

<sup>77</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, "Mori Kaku: 'Extraordinary Means for Extraordinary Times,' 1932," in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 125-26.

Mori Kaku, "Hijōji no hijō shudan" (Extraordinary Means for Extraordinary Times), *Diamond*, July 1932, reprinted in *Tōa Shintaisei no Senku: Mori Kaku*. Mori Kaku Denki Hensankai, 1941, 26-29, by Yamaura Kan'ichi in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 126-27.

<sup>78</sup> George F. Botjer, *A short history of Nationalist China, 1919-1949* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1980), 180.

Japan, China and Manchukuo through sacrifice and cooperation on the homefront. This would allow the “grand fundamental ideal of *hakkō ichiu* [eight corners of the world under one roof]” and human fraternity through Japanese hegemony. Nagai was a minister in the cabinet of Prince Konoe Fumimaro, meaning that this was becoming the actual governmental stance on the military actions taking place on this continent.<sup>79</sup> These ideas would be flushed out over the next year before the Cabinet came out with Prime Minister Prince Konoe’s speech on a “Declaration of a New Order in East.” This radical form of Pan-Asianism became the governmental position and the Prince restated many of the themes of Nagai. He wished for tripartite relations between Japan, China and Manchukuo to create a “new fabric on a moral basis in the Far East.”<sup>80</sup> These three nations were so related to have a common mission and that was to establish peace in the region.

This cooperation was only so important because unification of East Asia could be accomplished through the holy war currently waged. “The engine for this task... [was] the advancement of Japanese nationalism on the Asian mainland.”<sup>81</sup> The resuscitation of China was becoming increasingly important as the virulent anti-Westernism that had always been a pillar of the ideology had a concrete target, the United States, which had to be defeated. The name of the Second Sino-Japanese War changed depending on the perceived purpose. In light of China’s importance to the future of the Japanese mission to “liberate” Asia, it became the “War of Renovation” to Hiranuma Kiichiro. There was also belief that the Chinese classics were the “cement that united China, Japan and

---

<sup>79</sup> Nagai Ryūtarō, “Ajia saiken no seisen” (Holy War for the Reconstruction of Asia). *Nihon Bunka* 10 (November 1937), 27-42, translated by Roger H. Brown in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 156-59.

<sup>80</sup> In light of the previous discussions on the “geographical expression” of China that occurred earlier in 1932/3, the China discussed now was the new regime created by the Japanese led by Wang Jingwei. Prince Konoe referred to the Guomindang as a “local regime” in this same speech.

<sup>81</sup> Rōyama Masamichi, “Tōa Kyōdōtai no Riron” (The Principles of an East Asian Cooperative Community). *Kaizō*, November 1938, 6-27, translated by Jung-Sun N. Han in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 177-78.

Korea in Sinitic Civilization. This war was going to make the East a utopia of everlasting peace.<sup>82</sup> The Japanese Empire needed the resources from a China that was under their control to actualize their goal of defeating the West. A member of the collaborationist government believed in this mission. Japan had liberated China in order to share the responsibility for East Asia in the future.<sup>83</sup>

As World War 2 raged in Europe, the Japanese looked on for inspiration and also opportunity for the expansion of their war against not just local Asians, but also the Western imperialists. Britain and the United States were greatest targets for Japanese attacks. Ishiwara Kanji imagined a “final war” with the West, specifically the United States. An East Asian alliance would have the power to expel Europeans and the United States in order to create his envisioned East Asian League. This alliance was of three people's: Japanese, Chinese and Manchurian. He also linked liberalism as indistinguishable from British imperialism.<sup>84</sup> In the famous “Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” speech by Matsuoka Yōsuke in 1941, the fight to liberate East Asia from Western imperialists was one of the main purposes of his speech. He was extolling the virtues of the Japanese Emperor, wishing to “extend the benevolent rule of *tennō* (Emperor) to the whole world. The combination of these two statements show the increasingly adversarial position of the government to the Western powers in the region. They sought to “liberate” the peoples of East Asia, meaning war with Britain, France, the

---

<sup>82</sup> Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “Hiranuma Kiichirō: ‘The New Asiatic Order,’ 1939,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 195-96.

<sup>83</sup> Wang Jingwei, “Minzuzhuyi yu Da Yazhoushuyi” (Nationalism and Greater Asianism). *Da Yazhouzhuyi*, 1:4 (November 1940), 1-5 translated by Torsten Weber in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 215.

<sup>84</sup> Roger H. Brown, “Ishiwara Kanji’s ‘Argument for an East Asian League,’ 1940,” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 202.

Netherlands and eventually the United States.”<sup>85</sup> This idea of a clash of civilizations was becoming more important in the nationalist-Pan-Asianist.

These analyses of the impending war with the West and specifically with the United States became a facet in publications such as *Asiatic Asia*, which was started in 1941. The evolution of Pan-Asianist ideology from the mid-1800s until World War 2 is impressive. The idealism and defensiveness of the original thinkers gave way to pragmatism, nationalism and eventually fascism. Pan-Asianism came from a place of anti-Westernism, to maintain the sovereignty of the Asian nations who were becoming colonies of the Europeans. This is also where the ideology would end, but in a very different form. The destruction of the old colonial system by the Japanese is more than anyone in the 1880s could dream of, but the reason for this was not for true liberation but rather replacing one imperialist with another one. This was not without other strains that attempted to correct the path away from way to justify imperialism to actual liberation ideology. Although more prominent in the early 1900s, they would eventually be crushed by the increasing conservatism of the Shōwa Period and rise of the military in influencing politics. As the ideology transitioned from purely intellectual to governmental policy, the leaders of the movement and the state needed to not only convince their constituents. In the very international world of the 1930s, world opinion was something that was of great concern. In order to accomplish the goals of the movement and the government, the Western powers, who were constantly derided by nationalistic Pan-Asianists, needed to be appeased. They had to be courted to attempt to convince them of the righteousness of the Japanese position. The first movement by the government was to go along with institutions such as the League of Nations. When this did not produce satisfactory results for Japan, they took the other option, using Pan-

---

<sup>85</sup> Yosuke Matsuoka, Address by the Foreign Minister of Japan before the 76th session of the Imperial Diet, 21 January 1941. *Contemporary Japan*, February 1941, in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 225.



Asianist rhetoric to justify their actions to the West and to other peoples whom they were conquering.

### **Chapter 3: At the Intersection of Media, Government and Corporation in 1930s**

#### **Japan**

The ideology of Pan-Asianism had a tremendous impact in both intellectual circles as well as the government policy. This was evident in the different statements by important government officials, mostly importantly the Prime Minister, Prince Konoe. The government also had increasingly tight control over the media and publishing institutions starting in 1933, after the Manchurian crisis.<sup>86</sup> The mood of the nation though was in favor of aggressive national policy. The State and private media were on the same page, with little coercion needed for independent media sources to jump on nationalist stories.<sup>87</sup> These stories of heroism and Japanese goodwill fit into a narrative of the myth of Japan that was created by the jingoists. Manchuria, and Manchukuo, were central to this new vigor in thought. Without this geography to target the history of the movement and Japan would look much different. There was also an increasingly nationalist strain of Pan-Asianist thinking in Japan that dominated right wing publications. The Japan-centric Pan-Asianism became important in the ideology starting after the victory in the Sino-Japanese War. Many organizations sprung up throughout East Asia, especially in Japan, that would seek Pan-Asianism as their goal. These organizations would sometimes have some kind publications in order to both change opinions and inform the public about their missions. There were also other institutions, such as corporations or business groups that would also use this rhetoric to both further their own interests as well as the interests of the Japanese Empire. The publications focused on Manchukuo and published in New York represent the explicitly foreign appeals of Japanese actors. The

---

<sup>86</sup> Gary S. Messinger, *The Battle of the Mind: War and Peace in the Ear of Mass Communication* (Amherst and Boston, MA. University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 80.

<sup>87</sup> Messinger, *The Battle of the Mind*, 9.

changes in government along with an evolving international situation that can be seen through such publications.

The audience of Pan-Asianism was both domestic and foreign. The public had to be convince of the efficacy of the ideology before there would be any attempt to pursue it on any level abroad. The Manchurian Incident represents the critical departure from a relatively independent media to one that was directed by the state. This was in part due to the public reaction to the Japanese invasion, which was overwhelmingly positive. This positive sentiment in regards to the Manchurian question was cultivated over the past thirty years due to public sensationalism over the Triple Intervention and subsequent Russo-Japanese War. After the annexation of Korea, Northeast China once again became the object of desire. The Japanese people had been primed to understand that Manchuria was an indispensable part of the Empire, even before it had been acquired. Mantetsu, the South Manchurian Railway, was Japan's largest corporation and controlled just about every aspect of life in the region.<sup>88</sup> Japanese foreign investment by 1927 in China amounted to 85% of its total, with Manchuria representing 80% of that.<sup>89</sup> There was also increasingly Japanese emigration to Northeast China, meaning that there were now citizens lives directly involved. This kind of intimate relationship between the metropole and prospective imperial conquest lent itself to the kind of attention that the media would give to the military intervention, no matter what the political ramifications.

The development of the modern Japanese media started with the first newspaper coming in the 1861, increasing rapidly along with the development of the Empire. The early part of the 1900s saw a trend similar to the other nations in the West, with more

---

<sup>88</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 31.

<sup>89</sup> Prasenjit Duara, "Japanese Pan-Asianism in Manchukuo, 1935," in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 163.

papers and more readership.<sup>90</sup> The 1920s saw the creation of the NHK, the Japanese national radio broadcaster, expanding news availability to the public but also allowing another avenue of state control.<sup>91</sup> This was all in the lead up to the Manchurian Incident, which saw an explosion of press coverage in Japan and across the world. At first the Japanese Foreign Ministry was quite open to discussions on the Manchurian Affair, but after international condemnation of the actions their actions gradually changed. This came at the same time as the more conservative elements in the government came to power. The new leadership in Tokyo was well aware of “opinion management” in terms of the domestic and foreign audiences.<sup>92</sup> The period during the crisis saw a liberal Japanese media not yet manipulated but still marching to the beat of the government's.

The power of journalists in Japan on creating powerful narratives was already proven in 1925 with the passage of universal male suffrage. The media was part of the pressure placed on the government to create more progressive policy.<sup>93</sup> This “liberal” bent in the newspaper would give way to the economy of war. News of war generated large sales and those willing the conflagration to continue would feed those desires. In general, media organizations would let political elites set the agenda, in Japan's case this would be the Kwantung Army. The reporting from the front was heavily censored by the Army, which forestalled the actual investigation into the event. It also led the United States to hesitate on believing the claims of China when first brought to international attention.<sup>94</sup> The reporting on the news in Japan was nearly all pro-military, even when there was no censorship in the early 1930s. Only a small number of publications dared to question the adventure and they were often small, non-influential papers. The public

---

<sup>90</sup> Gary S. Messinger, *The Battle of the Mind: War and Peace in the Ear of Mass Communication* (Amherst and Boston, MA. University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 44.

<sup>91</sup> Messinger, *Battle of the Mind*, 79.

<sup>92</sup> Susan L. Carruthers, *The Media at War* (Basingstoke, Hampshire. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 7.

<sup>93</sup> Messinger, *Battle for the Mind*, 79.

<sup>94</sup> Stimson, “793.94/1868,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 5-6.

wanted patriotism, heroism and an escape for the economic malaise of the Great Depression. It was from the expedition to “save” the people of Manchuria that they would get it.

The Imperial government was of two minds when it came to the Manchurian Incident due to the fact that they had no control over the invasion. The action was taken independently of Tokyo and without any prior notice or warning. Although this was the case, it was also part of the imperial plan to link Japan to Manchuria due to the nature of the relationship. The idea of the “Manchurian Lifeline” was powerful, inexorably entwining the two entities in the minds of the Japanese populace.<sup>95</sup> The patriotic fervor associated with the region raised the stakes even further, making it nearly impossible for a credible news agency to oppose the war on any ground suitable to the Japanese public. They could be accused of collusion with the Chinese or be tools of Western imperialism. Either of these sentiments alone could be pressure enough to fall in line with the mainstream acquiescence to war. The domestic situation was one of the news media voluntarily being swept in war fervor, reinforcing the public will to continue the intervention into the region. The freedom of the press would slowly erode over the next few years. The lack of antiwar sentiments, driven largely by the government efforts to undercut leftist groups, meant that the conservative elements of society were given full reign over the media narratives.

State control over the media only began in earnest in 1932 with the Bureau of Thought Supervision, but really started to intensify the next year. The Japanese Information Bureau in the Foreign Ministry began effectively stonewalling the foreign press on issues dealing with Manchuria.<sup>96</sup> This corresponded with a general increase in state power overall in Japan that would lead to a fascist state. It would this drive to

---

<sup>95</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 4, 88.

<sup>96</sup> Messinger, *Battle for the Mind*, 80.

consolidate and expand the state that would lead to a less free press. As Carruthers notes more generally, the new political elite, which was decisively pro-military, used this power to enforce patriotism and pro-war sentiment.<sup>97</sup> As the decade wore on the government's policies would eventually lead to self-policing among media organizations, furthering the power of the political right. This is where the Pan-Asianists, who as described in the previous chapter would fill in the gap. Some would participate in political agitation, others in prolific writing that would influence the public as the only viable ideology in Imperial Japan. This influence would be exerted in many different ways, but one way that it would be seen was through the view of English language publications.

The state control over media may not have been complete in the beginning of the Manchurian Incident, but the policies that the Japanese Foreign Ministry took were already heading in that direction. The interaction with United States diplomats show the confluence of media control and foreign relations. In Japan and in the United States, the issues over Manchuria and then later Manchukuo continued to be the greatest source of any interaction between the two nations. The Manchurian Incident, in the eyes of the Americans, was a Chinese problem. Originally the State Department generally concurred with the Japanese explanation of the goings on in Manchuria. The Foreign Office and the US government were on the same page due to the trust of the Americans. This story was basically that the Chinese attacked the Japanese concession in Mukden. The narrative of Japanese protection of their sphere of influence played well with the American insistence of the Open Door policy. This would last for the entire month of September, that is until reports out of the region began coming back. The Chinese delegation lobbied the League of Nations to look into the matter, which the American legation fully supported. The Japanese were suspicious of the actions of both the United States and the League of Nations, assuming that they were conspiring with the Chinese

---

<sup>97</sup> Carruthers, *Media at War*, 43, 64.

government. The efforts to bring the United States in line with the views of the Japanese government recurred over the next half year during the investigation. It is in these interactions that the effort to convince the American government through other means also reared its head.<sup>98</sup>

The Japanese Foreign Ministry was not new to using public opinion to change the fortunes of its international goals. The Triple Intervention was a public relations disaster and led to Russia being able to influence other Western nations to side with its claim. The reaction to this in the Imperial government was to increase the reach of government dispatches and ideas through foreign media. The purchase of newspapers in France, Austria and Germany as well as placing certain journalist on the Foreign Ministries rolls allowed for the viewpoint of the Japanese to at least be displayed in foreign presses. This was most evident with the break out of the Russo-Japanese War, where a public relations battle was waged between the combatants along with the physical combat.<sup>99</sup> It was here that the Japanese allowed foreign reporters into the Army. Although severely restricted, reports flowed back to Europe with positive press of the effectiveness of the Army. The government learned a lesson when they began to enforce strict regulations on journalists. There was a turning of foreign public opinion against the Japanese. It was the personal vendetta of the regulated journalists that caused this problem, and it was one that spiraled out of control.<sup>100</sup> These lessons of state control over media and the influence of foreign public opinion would be paramount to government actions in the 1930s.

The obfuscation of the intent of the Japanese in Manchuria was seen from the beginning of the affair. The Foreign Ministry was “genuinely surprised” by the actions of

---

<sup>98</sup> The Japanese Embassy in the US, “793.94/2585,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 39.

<sup>99</sup> Valliant, “The Selling of Japan,” 416, 426.

<sup>100</sup> Valliant, “The Selling of Japan,” 431.

the Army, but “the deep rooted anti-Japanese feeling in China” meant no withdrawal.<sup>101</sup> There was an understanding that Tokyo could not control the military in Manchuria, but that understanding gradually broke down as the government continued policies that the military undertook.<sup>102</sup> The Foreign Office was making statements about the need for Japanese intervention, clearly backing the military invasion into Chinese territory. There was a narrative of “aggressive” Chinese forces which required the Japanese Army to protect the railways and the local people.<sup>103</sup> This would often contrast to the way the Japanese representatives in the United States would explain the situation, often disagreeing with their government and apologizing.<sup>104</sup> This schism between foreign rhetoric and action led to increasingly skeptical State Department and the erosion of trust. By November 18th of that year, less than three months after it began, the United States lost all confidence in Japanese motives.<sup>105</sup>

There was a general consensus within the State Department that the Japanese were actively discouraging cooperation with Allied League of Nations members. “The League of Nations meant nothing to the Japanese.”<sup>106</sup> The reporters within the Chinese troops were refuting the narratives of the government even while Tokyo continued espousing “open door”, “self-protection”, and military “ensuring the safety of persons and property.”<sup>107</sup> The United States had stayed out of public discussion about the Manchurian Incident, especially within the League of Nations. The lack of public movement on the issue gave space for rumors to spread that the US was purposefully

---

<sup>101</sup> Neville, “793.94/1822: Telegram,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 4.

<sup>102</sup> H. L. Stimson, “793.94/2074,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 23.

<sup>103</sup> The Japanese Embassy in the US, “793.95/2585,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 39.

<sup>104</sup> H. L. Stimson, “793.94/2209,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 26.

<sup>105</sup> H. L. Stimson, “793.94/2611a: Telegram,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931.41.

<sup>106</sup> William R. Castle Jr, “793.94/2176,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 26.

<sup>107</sup> Japanese Government, “794.94.3560,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 72.



distant from the League in order to gain concessions from the Chinese government.<sup>108</sup> This was a misconception and the State Department believed that such a rumor was created by the Japanese to create the illusion of American acquiescence to the current state of affairs. It was finally on November 28 that public opinion in the West had turned decidedly against the Japanese which was communicated by Henry Stimson, the Secretary of State to the Ambassador in D.C.<sup>109</sup> Baron Shidehara, the Japanese Foreign Minister, asked the American government to assure the nation's press of Japanese intentions.<sup>110</sup> This was even before the failed attempted coup, where the government became more closely entwined with the nationalistic elements of the military. It was after this point that the Japanese began to use ideas such as "China as not an organized state."<sup>111</sup>

One of the main reasons for this disconnect between the actions of the Japanese government, especially in Japan and their rhetoric had to do with the obsession with perception. In Japan by the time of the coup, the media had been inundating the public with pro-military news so that they were fully invested in the effort. The government did not need to even direct the media to undertake this "public service," because nationalism and images of a victories Japan were immensely popular with every passing day.<sup>112</sup> The democratically elected government eventually fell in line creating a disconnect between Japan and the West in what the State Department describes as the "creation of a war of psychology."<sup>113</sup> The government was also beginning to believe the lies it had been telling to the world and the League of Nations, causing a serious rift with the Western powers. This was also during a time that the Japanese press was wearing down the

---

<sup>108</sup> H. L. Stimson, "793.94/2803," USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 45.

<sup>109</sup> H. L. Stimson, "793.94/2865," USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 48.

<sup>110</sup> Forbes, "793.94/2941: Telegram," USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 52.

<sup>111</sup> Count Uchida at League of Nations Commission, "793.94 Commission/338," USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 96.

<sup>112</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 114.

<sup>113</sup> Count Uchida at League of Nations Commission, "793.94 Commission/338," 97.

positive Japanese public opinion of the United States.<sup>114</sup> It was after all of these increased tensions that the Foreign Ministry began rapprochement with Americans, but not without purpose. On October 3, 1933 the government wished to do a good will mission in order to explain the actions of the government despite the condemnation of the League of nations earlier in the year.<sup>115</sup> The proposal was rejected due to the fact that “organized foreign propaganda is viewed with distaste by the American public.” There was also a planned state visit of Prince Tokugawa that the American ambassador in Tokyo suggests will do much more to promote goodwill.<sup>116</sup>

Despite these attempts to assuage American fears of Japanese expansionism the actions of the government spoke very differently. The next point of contention between the two powers came over the oil monopoly granted by the state of Manchukuo to a semi-governmental Japanese organization. This was seen as a breach of the Open Door Policy espoused by the Japanese not even a year before in their justifications for the creation of the state. The Foreign Ministry remained obstinate and kept directing the matter to the government in Manchukuo. This was despite American attempts to force the Japanese to admit the actual circumstances of the situation, that Manchukuo was a puppet state.<sup>117</sup> This was done firstly to maintain the facade of Japanese respectability, but also, as mentioned earlier in the State Department Papers, the view of Manchukuo as an independent state was internalized. The government believed in the systems that were created. The Japanese Foreign Ministry spoke to the American government about the need to convince the US public of the good intention of the Japanese. Many times the Japanese government pursued goals that would conflict with the interests of the

---

<sup>114</sup> Grew, “894.00/434.5, 893.01 Manchuria/429: Telegram,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1933. 99, 102.

<sup>115</sup> Grew, “711.94/845:Telegram,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1933. 124.

<sup>116</sup> Grew, “711.94/845:Telegram,” 124.

<sup>117</sup> The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “893.6363 Manchuria/38,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1934. 132.

United States whose fears they were attempting to assuage. It would also be slightly naive to believe that everything the Japanese government did was simply due to realist nation-state principles. The nationalistic press had internalized the values of Japan as the great savior of the “yellow race” with Manchukuo as the first step in the freeing Asia.

The moment of the Manchurian Incident was reflected in publication abroad, especially in the United States, which as discussed earlier was seen the primary rival to Japanese hegemony in East Asia. One of the publications came one year after the creation of the state of Manchukuo to commemorate the occasion. *Manchukuo: The Founding of the New State in Manchuria*'s timing was no coincidence, since in 1933 its very existence was still in the middle of a controversy engulfing world politics. The other publication, *Economic Construction Program of Manchukuo* was an economic assessment of the new state's development program, also a year after the founding of Manchukuo. Similar to how the private organizations espoused Pan-Asianist ideas in English to reach a wider audience across the world, these two sought to do the same albeit within a specific target country. The United States, as discussed before, was seen as place that Japan could convince the public of their good intentions. The Department of State disagreed, especially with propaganda, but there were still attempts made, with these two publications being part of that endeavor.

One and a half years after the initial invasion of Manchuria and one year after the founding of the state of Manchukuo, controversy still stirred. The United States, which had at first sided with the Japanese version of events had come around since revelations of the actions of the invading troops. This also comes after the findings of the Lytton Commission that condemned the Japanese invasion of Manchuria as aggressive and without any international merit. It is in this environment, with an increasingly obstinate Japan and hostile League of Nations that this document was produced. The state of Manchukuo had not been and would not be recognized by the United States.

*Manchukuo: The Founding of the New State in Manchuria* was published in New York by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce. This organization, operating in the United States would of course have many goals in publishing this 44 page text on the entire incident from the start until the present. As a chamber of commerce it sought to organize Japanese businesses into the city or region of which it serves to encourage ties between the two nations. Today, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce (and Industry) of New York says, on their website, that their founding was “to foster and promote friendship and economic relations between the United States and Japan.”<sup>118</sup> This document can easily be seen in that light, an attempt to assuage the political and economic fears of the American constituencies that the Chamber was so near.

The publication itself is meant as a document for businesses, but also clearly political in nature. The setup of the document was the justifications before entering into the economic prospects of the region. In the Introduction the corruption of the previous Chinese warlord regime was the main target, building up the greatness of the region. The other narrative that was common in Japanese propaganda regarding the founding of the state was that the people wanted freedom and liberty from such a regime. It was only natural for an oppressed people to search for help and that would come from Japan.<sup>119</sup> This was similar to the Yūzonsha’s “War Cry” in 1920 “to liberate the slaves of Asia.”<sup>120</sup> The analogy that the author gave, fittingly for American audiences, was that the United States looked to France for help in the Revolution of 1776 as Manchukuo looked to Japan. The American intervention in Cuba during the Spanish-American War is also given as an example of liberation coming from an outside power.<sup>121</sup> This one probably

---

<sup>118</sup> Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New York, Inc. “Our History.” <http://www.jcciny.org/about.aspx>

<sup>119</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding of a New State in Manchuria* (New York, Japanese Chamber of Commerce. 1933), 1.

<sup>120</sup> “The Yūzonsha’s “War Cry, 1920,” 60.

<sup>121</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 3.

even more pertinent due to the sometimes colonial attitude that United States had towards Cuba during the “interbellum” period of the 1920s..

The next portion of the first chapter of the document focuses on a legalistic approach to the founding, using some historical precedent in the region. This was buttressed by placement of Emperor PuYi, the former Emperor of all of China before the Revolution in 1911, as the constitutional monarch.<sup>122</sup> The form of government was then detailed as a constitutional democracy, making it seem like every other modern nation in the world. The discussions of equality and rights were also raised ostensibly to assuage fears of a tyrannical government antithetical to the norms of the world. There is mention of the “Law Guaranteeing Civil Rights”, which was apparently non existent in China proper. An interesting diagram of the different offices of the new state with their hierarchical relation to another is also present. An interesting caveat to this was the discussion of Election Law, which had not been passed yet due to the need for “peace to be restored.”<sup>123</sup> The bandits, a popular trope in Manchuria to denote the need for more force, were the reason for this lack of peace. The first chapter shows the Japanese position on events as well as why Manchukuo was a stable democratic and modern state, even more so than Nationalist China.

The middle twenty pages of the book focuses on the economics of the state and the effects of the formation on freedom to do business. It is here that there is a discussion on imports, exports, resources and fears of Japanese state monopoly in a plethora of different business interests. There is a fall in both exports and imports of American goods to Manchukuo which the author, at length, discussed the reasons why this was not due to discriminatory policies. There was a direct appeal to the fiscal and monetary liberalism of American businesses. The Lytton Report was quoted at length in

---

<sup>122</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 6.

<sup>123</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 6.

describing the sheer number of currencies in the region and the way that old government officials used that confusion to oppress the people of the region. This moved into the high taxation of the former regime, which included four pages on the types of taxation and the revenue brought into the government's coffers.<sup>124</sup> The reforms of Manchukuo were then juxtaposed to those issues, showing the progress that had been made.<sup>125</sup> Even within this assessment of the fiscal and monetary situation there was still time to take a very political tone. While mentioning the resources in the territory they describe the region as “robbed of the fruits of her (Japan’s) military victory.”<sup>126</sup>

The entire document is inundated with reassurances to the American businessmen while at the same time serving a deeply political purpose. It was an appeal to powerful interest groups within the United States to facilitate a change in the direction of American policy towards the newly formed state. It is an appeal to investment in the nation because it “will mean more to American trade with that continent which on the map still appears as China, than the Communist-ridden Yangtze Valley or the civil-war areas of South China.”<sup>127</sup> The appeal to the Open Door Policy was another gesture to both the American government and capitalists. Although, as discussed earlier in this chapter, it was often only a gesture. The Japanese advisors would then use seemingly innocuous laws to strangle foreign competition. This direct appeal to business interests shows the expansive nature of the campaign to “correct” foreign perceptions of the Manchurian state and its foundations. This also gives context to the interactions with the State Department, who were wary of the Japanese attempting to influence public opinion. There was a concerted effort to influence those with power, this time financial, to pursue a policy course different than that at the State Department.

---

<sup>124</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 22-25.

<sup>125</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 27-28.

<sup>126</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 31.

<sup>127</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 42.

The attempt to gain more legitimacy through outreach to American businesses and economic interests in general was not limited to the Japanese Chamber of Commerce. *Economic Construction Program of Manchukuo* was another document produced in New York City meant for an English speaking audience in commerce. The publisher was the New York Office of the South Manchurian Railway, the massive Japanese, semi-public conglomerate that effectively controlled the economy of Manchukuo. This was by far the largest Japanese corporation and by far its most profitable, so it represented the interests of the Empire very well. It benefited most from a separate Manchukuo state in terms of its private economic control of the markets in which it was engaged. It is also interesting to note that this was a private organization producing a document that outlines development for the entire country. This was, similar to the previous document, political and economic justification for a change in American policy following the will of the new order.

Although published during the time and for the same reason, the anniversary of the founding of Manchukuo, the language of the texts are quite different. The South Manchuria Railway Company was much more honest about the situation that was occurring in the new state. Although still couched in optimistic language, the end goal of the policies that were envisioned were firmly centralizing and statist in nature. The reforms of the state were championed as making the environment better for business, but there was still progress to be made in terms of security.<sup>128</sup> The seemingly level headed and fair assessment of the situation make it seem like Manchukuo as a state had struggled to provide a climate that was much better than when under Chinese rule. The theme from the outset was that a strong governing power was needed to control the region, with that now provided other developments could now occur.

---

<sup>128</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 1.

The need to reign in “capitalism when unbridled” was just the way to ease into the need for “national control” so that “all branches of the people’s development may be realized.”<sup>129</sup> There was listed four basic policies that the state needed to follow to best serve the people through development. These four policies were essentially: prevention of monopolies, coordinated development through some national control, open door to foreign investment and those with technical skills and creating greater interdependence between Japan and Manchukuo.<sup>130</sup> The exertion of control over the national economy was central to this planning. An entire section dedicated to what was considered to be within the purview of this state control apparatus and it was basically every and any industry or commercial enterprise. The direction of three types of broad industries in particular were the preoccupation of the document: transportation, agriculture and mining.<sup>131</sup> It is no surprise since the Company was involved in all of these sectors and would profit greatly over the effectively monopolized control such a system would bring. The “private economy” is not ignored completely, although technically an entire section with the title “Improve of the Private Economy”, it has very little about such endeavors. These actions to “improve” the “private economy” include enforcing policies and the establishment of facilities.<sup>132</sup> In the same paragraph it is mentioned that the state will not tolerate a class of idlers and support virtues of self-dependence.

The almost throw-away section on the private economy shows the true direction that the largest, most powerful company wanted to take the state of Manchukuo. The idea of foreign competition being able to make any moves into the market would be laughable at best, since national control would be exerted over any industry deemed important. This was not just any corporation though, the weight of the suggestions made

---

<sup>129</sup> *Economic construction program of Manchukuo* (New York, New York Office of the South Manchuria Railway Company. 1933), 5.

<sup>130</sup> *Economic construction*, 4-5.

<sup>131</sup> *Economic construction*, 8-12.

<sup>132</sup> *Economic construction*, 14.



are great, being that Mantetsu was the largest Japanese corporation in existence at the time. The nature of the relationship with the Japanese government makes this document an interesting insight into the true intent of the policy makes of the upper echelon. The model that Manchukuo would represent the future of reform in Japan itself. *Kaihatsu*, or coordinated industrialization, was aimed at military self-sufficiency which led to a plethora of semi-public corporations.<sup>133</sup> Other than the all encompassing South Manchuria Railway Company, there were others in order to commercialize agriculture to create profitable crops other than soybeans. The policy of centralization was being formalized by Tokyo and this document shows the road map for it to be accomplished.

These two texts, published in the United States, show two very different sides to the way that the Japanese propaganda operated. The Chamber of Commerce text represented the same view that the government had been espousing in the international realm. This, of course, had evolved to the point where the defense of the Manchukuo state was integral to Japanese foreign policy. They also appealed to foreign nations in making it seem like Manchukuo was a real state and that it would not threaten the interests of those who had already made investments. This was mostly a text of justification and reassurance, a very different tone than the South Manchuria Railway Company. That publication was, in hindsight, extremely telling in what direction the Empire was moving towards. Although still in the throes of international controversy, those in power in the region were pushing for reform. The purpose of Mantetsu to put out their text was to keep or gain foreign investors while at the same time trying to reassure those same people of the political legitimacy of the regime. The description of the history of the state takes up only three of the fifteen pages of the entire document put out by the South Manchuria Railway Company. Therefore the focus was squarely on business and economics. This can be contrasted with The Chamber of Commerce, who spent the

---

<sup>133</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 43.

better part of 14 out of 39 pages only on the political history. The rest of the document describes the economics of the government in terms of taxation and inefficiencies, a very different angle to appeal to American businesses. The Chamber of Commerce focused on the state, its history and all of the good that came out of a new regime from different angles including stability and credibility. They both did make an appeal to moneyed interests, but through different means.

The publications from New York were most representative of the changing government policies within Japan. They were a manifestation of the domestic strategies of the increasingly more conservative central government in Japan. Corporations, semi-public institutions and private associations were acquiescing just like the newspapers at the outbreak of the military expeditions into Manchuria. Pan-Asianism was a driving force in these new narratives that were spread across the world. The publications about Manchukuo were doing the work of that ideology as well as foreign relations for the Japanese government. They represented the crossing over of Pan-Asianist rhetoric into the mainstream of both politics and business. This moment that was memorialized in both *Economic construction program of Manchukuo* and *Manchukuo: The Founding of a New State in Manchuria*. It also represented the pivotal point for the greater ideology of Pan-Asianism. Manchuria was the beginning of a new Japan, a new Empire and a new order for East Asia. It would be in other purely Pan-Asianist documents that the influence of Manchukuo would be felt.

#### **Chapter 4: *Cultural Nippon* and *Asiatic Asia*, Pan-Asianism in Print**

The internationalism of the world throughout the 1920s meant that an expansive Japanese foreign policy in the 1930s would not be ignored by the Europeans and the United States of America. The attempts to justify the actions of the rogue Kwantung Army was pressing for the Foreign Ministry, especially as the government in Tokyo did not disagree with the end goal. This was done by Pan-Asianists and governmental/pseudo-governmental organizations either through actually believing in the principles underlying the invasion or merely justifying the action after the fact. Although some of the justifications, as seen in the previous were domineering and self-serving, as was to be expected. The evolution of the Pan-Asianist ideology to a much more imperialistic ideology occurred during this period. It is reflected in some of the publications by these Pan-Asianist organizations, which would have a plethora of authors with different specialties and viewpoints. Although not both published in Japan, *Cultural Nippon* and *Asiatic Asia* are emblematic of the increasing similarities between the government position and the radical assertions of some Pan-Asianist rhetoric. These texts can help to understand the attitudes of those who wished to change Japan to fulfill the ideals of the movement going back to the 1800s: expulsion of the West.

*Asiatic Asia* was a Pan-Asianist publication produced by the Shanghai Dai-Asia Shugi Ken-Kyu-Jyo, the Pan-Asiatic Association starting in 1941. It was a monthly magazine that included many different topics that deal with the entire continent of Asia from Turkey to Japan. Although Japan was omnipresent in the publication it was not always the explicit subject. The most prominent nations outside of Japan to appear in the magazine are both India and China as the ancient harbingers of true Asian culture.

They also represented the future of resistance to Western power. China would lead, with Japan, to free Southeast Asia from Britain, France, the US and the Dutch. India represented something slightly different, although still struggling against the British Empire. The distance of Japan from India made intervention a less realistic proposition, but the narrative of independence coupled with the large Indian diaspora advocating freedom from the Britain, made the story quite compelling to Japanese audiences. It was also integral in the historical narrative of Japan as the “museum of Asia,” being that Japan culturally and religiously borrowed from both China and India.<sup>134</sup> There were other nations mentioned in the publication including Turkey, Afghanistan and Persia which were struggling with the West in many different ways. They were also succeeding in others; Turkey was held up as a beacon of modernization that was rediscovering its cultural heritage, which was likened to Japan.<sup>135</sup> The focus of this organization was Asia, showing a more intimate look at how Asians saw each other and the struggle of anti-imperialism.

*Asiatic Asia* was authored primarily by many Japanese and Indians authors. There was a focus on Asia as a continent in large part due to the large number of Indian writers. This also affected the language of the publication where the influence of the many Indian authors could be seen in the English text. This publication was very international in nature not only because the large number of non-Japanese contributing to its pages. It was a Pan-Asianist periodical that was published in Shanghai; although a very international city, it was now firmly within the Japanese Empire at the point of its first print. It was unique but at the same time represented many of the views of Pan-Asianists throughout history. *Asiatic Asia*, although published outside of Japan, was very much part of the contemporary movement that was increasingly radicalized by Japanese

---

<sup>134</sup> Okakura Kakuzō [Tenshin], *Ideals of the East with Special Reference to the Art of Japan in Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 16.

<sup>135</sup> “Turkey and the War,” *Asiatic Asia* August 1941, Vol 1, No 4. (1941): 32.

imperialism. There were authors who assessed a war with America as easily winnable, advocated moving south to liberate more Asians and even that “Japan Can’t Lose.”<sup>136</sup> It was a collection of different voices that were in unison against the West and loosely unified in the goodness of Japanese expansionism. The uniqueness of the publication because of its English language was seemingly for two reasons. The large number of Indians that authored pieces and were part of the organization as a whole was one reason. The other being the international nature of the publication itself. It was based in China with stories and writers from all over Asia, including Persia, Turkey, India and Afghanistan. The reach of *Asiatic Asia* would be greatest to the people who the Japanese may need in future conflicts with the West.

This can be contrasted by the Nippon Cultural Federation’s quarterly publication, *Cultural Nippon: A Study of Nippon Culture*. The first volume was published in 1933, long before *Asiatic Asia* and many of the events discussed. It was at the beginning of Japan’s aggressive imperialism and was published in Tokyo. One of the most interesting parts of this publication is that it has varying stories in many different languages. All the languages are European: English, German and French, in order of their prevalence. This shows a very different perspective on the audience to which the authors were trying to reach. That audience was an international and educated one, targeting Euro-American powers to explain the history of Japan and Asia. The content of the works also seem to be explanatory in nature rather than confrontational. It was often reasoning with the reader and making wide ranging arguments based on a long history that the reader may have no knowledge of. There was still demonizing of Western imperialism but it was usually to show contrasts with the East, not as much demonizing the Euro-American

---

<sup>136</sup> T. Nakatani, “Japan and America - The Japanese-American Conflict and Its significance from the viewpoint of the History of Civilization,” *Asiatic Asia* March 1941, Vol 1, No 2. (1941): 1.  
“Foreword,” *Asiatic Asia* January 1941, Vol 1, No 1 (1941): 1.  
Nobumasa Suetsugu, “Japan Can’t Lose,” *Asiatic Asia*, August 1941, Vol 1, No 4. (1941): 3.

culture as a whole.<sup>137</sup> *Cultural Nippon* is meant to explain, or rather justify, Japanese actions to those who seemingly did not know or understand Japan.

The explanatory nature of the publication is important because helped to fit along with the current state of the world, international and increasingly nationalistic. The interests of the Japanese government and Pan-Asianists had become aligned, seeking to create a more powerful Japan through imperialistic means. This was done in *Cultural Nippon* as a gradual insertion of the more aggressive positions over time. The audience needed to be prepped, like the Japanese public was, for explicit expansionism. This was done through describing the history of the Japanese nation and of the state using many mythological and spiritual examples. One of the points stressed over and over again was the divinity of the Emperor. The Constitution was not just written but given by the Emperor as a gift to his subjects.<sup>138</sup> The hegemony of the Emperor allows for a very ordered outlook on how a society should run. Even with the checkered history of great struggles over power such as the Sengoku Jidai in the late 1500s as well as the Boshin Sensō, there was also an idea that Japan did not have revolutions. In describing the rule of Qin Shi Huang and China as one rife with violence, cruelty and revolution, compared to Japan which had only evolution.<sup>139</sup> This made Japanese style rule, due to the long line of Imperial succession, seem peaceful, benevolent and ordered. The author also made mention of positive parts in Qin Shi Huang's rule, like patronage of the arts and other generous acts in order to demonstrate positive Chinese traits.

The description of the Chinese monarchy was done in order to justify the type of rule in Manchuria, namely the reinstatement of PuYi as the new Emperor of the state. The creation of a monarchy that was both Chinese and Japanese in order to rule with

---

<sup>137</sup> Although it is certainly critiquing it.

<sup>138</sup> Fujisawa, "The Japanese Mental Outlook," *Cultural Nippon*, October 1934, Vol. II, No. III (1934): 184.

<sup>139</sup> Tony Pippon, "Chin Shih Huang Ti and His Times: An Episode in Chinese History," *Cultural Nippon*, December 1933, Vol II, No II (1933): 152.

tranquility and benevolence.<sup>140</sup> Although mostly a piece to demonstrate the lessons to be learned from a Chinese ruler, in the end it ventured into the political realm of Manchukuo. The description of the Japanese Emperor, outlining his claim to power and his abilities as a ruler was at times used to show the close relationship with the Manchurian state. The explanation for everything had its place in the discussing the political legitimacy of both Japan and Manchukuo. This was also contrasted with a disordered West. "Capitalism and individualism threaten world peace," with only the sage king of Japan able to shine a "light from the East" to stop another great war.<sup>141</sup> The Manchurian Incident was the beginning of the spread of these ideals to the Asian continent where they were being manifested in the new Chinese Emperor in Manchuria.

The two different perspectives are fascinating to juxtapose, one from within the Asian group and the other explaining Pan-Asianism to outsiders. It shows the differing rhetoric that shows the more extreme views within the group and the tempered explanatory views to outsiders. These tempered views found in publications such as *Cultural Nippon* are more scholarly in nature, making an attempt to convince a skeptical audience. The way to appeal to these outsiders was even discussed in *Asiatic Asia* and neatly sums up the purpose of the other publication. The Education Minister is quoted as saying that there is a "necessity for Japan to direct more efforts towards world appreciation of Japan's position."<sup>142</sup> This position that needed "world appreciation", Western appreciation effectively, was that Japan was constructing a new order in Asia. The quote by the Education Minister was the only reference to non-Asians in any sense other than anti-imperialism in the three volumes that I was able to acquire. Although *Asiatic Asia* was mainly for those on the continent, it still had an eye for the West and how to deal with it in a world that was dominated by Euro-American powers. This helps

---

<sup>140</sup> Pippon, "Chin Shih Huang Ti," 153.

<sup>141</sup> Fujisawa, "Japan and the World," *Cultural Nippon*, December 1933, Vol I, No 1 (1933), 10, 14.

<sup>142</sup> T. Nakatoni, "The Meaning of 'Hakko Ichiu,'" *Asiatic Asia*, March 1941, Vol 1, No 2 (1941): 33.

understand the purpose of *Asiatic Asia*, to provide news and ideas for a future free of imperialism. It was to fulfill the dream of creating an Asia for Asians, ruled by Asians. *Cultural Nippon* holds many of these same views, but is not as concise. The text of the *Cultural Nippon* was much longer and less like the magazine format of *Asiatic Asia*. This made the breadth of coverage in the publication much greater. The target audience was also quite different. Everything needed to be explained due to what is assumed to be a lack of knowledge by the reader in *Cultural Nippon*. This meant the creation myth of the Japanese people, race and nation. This also meant an explanation of evolution of the culture and everything it represented. The differences between the East and the West had to be laid out from the perspective of the East to better understand the actions that Japan was taking in their sphere of influence. The historical, spiritual and political circumstances were of grave importance to these imperialist actions in East Asia.

The importance of Manchuria to both these publications is quite explicit. In the first volume of *Cultural Nippon*, the second piece of writing mentions Manchuria as the springboard for the proliferation of Japanese ideas.<sup>143</sup> These ideas were finally placed on the world stage forcibly. The Western Powers had to deal with them as much as the Chinese when trying to do business, diplomacy or any other kind of activity with the government of Manchukuo. This often meant the preferential treatment of Japanese companies in the actions like the creation of stricter controls on business.<sup>144</sup> Manchuria as the starting point is also integral to *Asiatic Asia*. It appears in the "Intro to Asiatic Asia" piece heralding the triumph in Northeast China as a step towards freedom. This was part of the narrative of anti-imperialism that was a core tenet of Pan-Asianism since its modern iteration. Manchukuo was now a state that was "inspired by the high spirit of

---

<sup>143</sup> Chikao Fujisawa, "Japan and the World," *Cultural Nippon* December 1933, Vol I, No. 1 (1933): 13

<sup>144</sup> Wm. R. Langdon, "893.5151 Manchuria/21," USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1931. 153.



ancient culture” and had cultural independence from foreign(Western) influence.<sup>145</sup> This “high spirit of ancient culture” was one that could help to unify the continent and resist imperialism. This return to the great times of old heralded a union of ideas, the new modern Japanese ones as well as the old Chinese ones. It is very similar to the way that both New York publications discuss the new regime. *Economic construction* talks about the need to conform to the will of the heaven” and *Manchukuo: The Founding* speaks of applying the Princely (Kingly) Way. This was Pan-Asianism in practice; a newly founded state guided by its principles.

*Cultural Nippon*, being the earlier of the two publications, shows the evolution of Japanese policy towards America. The Japanese public was already skeptical of US motives, so when the American representatives did not side with Japan’s position on Manchuria, old wounds were reopened. The Japanese private and government press stirred up anti-Western and anti-American fears of another Triple Intervention after the Manchurian Incident.<sup>146</sup> The tack taken by *Cultural Nippon* was different, it was attempting to educate English language speakers on what Japan was and why it took the actions that it did. In the introduction to the first volume one of the reasons for the publication is to “introduce Japanese culture to the world because it has invaluable quality.”<sup>147</sup> They also hope to “enlist the sympathetic support of foreigners studying Japan.”<sup>148</sup> The first paper in *Cultural Nippon* is titled “Some Fundamental Traits”, in reference to how the Japanese people see themselves and their essence. This was the basis of creating the mythology of Japanese exceptionalism over both the Orient and Occident.

---

<sup>145</sup> T. Nakatori, “An Intro to Asiatic Asia,” *Asiatic Asia* January 1941, Vol 1, No 1 (1941): 4.

<sup>146</sup> Messinger, *The Battle for the Mind*, 80.

Stimson, “793.94/4969,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1932, 87-89.

<sup>147</sup> Chikao Fujisawa, “Foreward,” *Cultural Nippon*, December 1933, Vol 1, No 1 (1933): 0.

<sup>148</sup> Fujisawa, “Foreward,” 0.

Both *Cultural Nippon* and *Asiatic Asia*, the Pan-Asianist publications, give great context to the English language international texts that were described in the previous chapter. The inside-outside dichotomy of the different kinds of audiences is one important aspect of comparing the two groups together. Those creating all the documents are looking to gain something from the works that they are publishing and are mostly insiders in either the movement of the government themselves. They are all actively trying to change the situation of either domestic or foreign policy of the Japanese government. The Pan-Asianist publications seek to change the narrative of how one talks about Japan and how Asia should view itself. *Cultural Nippon* explains why the Japanese think and act the way they do, giving insight into the reasons why in the international realm the nation acts in certain ways. The justification of actions through explanation is giving a voice to the new Japan and giving others a way to talk about the actions with language constructed by Pan-Asianists rather than the West. *Asiatic Asia* is a place where Pan-Asianists from all over the continent report and effectively brainstorm a vision for the future. Here the changing language of the movement was seen from within, looking to each other rather than outsiders. The discussions had within this text were reinforcing the rhetoric of Pan-Asianists and convincing themselves of the path in which they had all chosen.

The Manchurian documents had similar goals to *Cultural Nippon*. They tried to change the opinions of the people who would read the publications. Both being from New York, this meant primarily Americans. The language of the Manchurian texts were converting the insider rhetoric of the Pan-Asianist writers into something digestible that could be understood by Americans. Through creating a powerful state economically and politically the Japanese will have created “a paradise in Asia.”<sup>149</sup> This was the first step to expulsion of the West. The state economic control that would eventually squeeze out

---

<sup>149</sup> *Manchukuo: The Founding*, 42.

foreign investors saw its beginning in this time and in these texts. Despite the internationalist rhetoric that was being presented, the reality of actions were all too clear to the State Department. They realized that monopolies were being formed to give control to the Japanese with foreigners to only act as investors and not owners.<sup>150</sup>

They were not, however, just conveyors of such changes in the way the Japanese spoke of themselves and their nations, they were also active players in it. Mantetsu, the South Manchurian Railway Company, had many interests in Manchuria and maintaining the new status quo. The new order of Emperor PuYi needed historical precedent and so they used the available rhetoric to explain the happenings in the region. This meant borrowing heavily from Pan-Asianists and from the government itself, which it was deeply associated with anyways, to promote the state and investments in the state. In business the idea of stability is one that promotes economic development and so it was heavily leaned upon in the documents.<sup>151</sup> This is where those ideas of evolution in governance and order of the monarchy were especially important. The use of certain Pan-Asianist narratives were both beneficial to Japanese businesses, semi-governmental institutions and all overseas operations.

There was not a change in the media, business and government for no reason. As described in the previous two chapters, this was something that had been building in private and public discussions for the better part of two decades. There was confluence of mass media, ideology and public interest in this defense of Japanese action in Manchuria. The stable environment in Manchukuo was not the only selling point of the new regime, but also closer ties with Japan. The idea of two separate states cooperating in order to pursue common goals comes directly from Pan-Asianist rhetoric since the beginning. The Ajia Kyōkai in 1883 advocated such cooperation between the states of

---

<sup>150</sup> The American Embassy in Japan, "893.6363 Manchuria/29", USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 1934, 131.

<sup>151</sup> *Economic construction*, 15.

Asia.<sup>152</sup> The new Manchurian state fit well into that goal with now Japan, Korea and northeast China together in a large regional bloc. *Cultural Nippon* echos that, showing the power and benefits of a combined Chinese and Japanese style of rule in Manchuria; this was cooperation of a different kind.<sup>153</sup> The benefits of cooperation are also heralded by the Mantetsu publication, *Economic Construction program of Manchukuo*. One of the listed goals for economic construction is “harmonizing and rationalizing economic relations among Eastern Asiatic nations.”<sup>154</sup>

There was also an integration of the other principle of Pan-Asianism in these newer public texts, an antagonism with the West. The opposition to the colonial nature of the relationship between the East and West had run through the ideology since its inception and the 1930s was no exception. It is no coincidence that the narrative of the “Manchurian Lifeline” came at the same time that these New York publications were espousing the safety and promise of the new Manchukuo state.<sup>155</sup> The region was reformed into a productive economy that would be able to provide for the Japanese and therefore continue the goals of the Empire. Pan-Asianist ideas were becoming realized with the invasion of northeast China. The uplifting of the continent envisioned by those such as Kōakai, which saw it as Japan’s mission, was entering a new phase. The restoration of the region to its former glory “in accord to the will of Heaven” with Japanese leadership and a new Emperor leading through the Kingly Way.<sup>156</sup> The alliance of many East Asian states was finally coming to fruition. Japan had begun with

---

<sup>152</sup> “Foundation Manifesto of the Ajia Kyōkai (Asia Association, 1883),” *Pan-Asianism: Volume 1*, 59.

<sup>153</sup> Pippon, “Chin Shih Huang Ti,” *Cultural Nippon*, 152.

<sup>154</sup> *Economic Construction*, 4-5.

<sup>155</sup> Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 4.

<sup>156</sup> Inoue Masaji, *Kyojin Arao Sei. Tsuketari Jūni Resshiden*, 71-72.

Korea in 1910 and now had another ally in Manchukuo. This was the only way to protect the territorial integrity of East Asia from Western imperialism.<sup>157</sup>

All of these documents occupy an interesting place in the evolving policies of the Japanese government, both from within and without. They represent the changing environment within the nation due to the effects of the increasing draconian application of the "Peace Preservation Bill." A slow gutting of the political Left that allowed nationalists and conservatives to flourish and proselytize. A good representative of this new found power is the *Cultural Nippon* publication, which sought to teach about the history of the Japanese people. This history was meant to change minds, sometimes explicitly stated, in order to better understand the goings on in the region at the moment. It was in this same time that the Japanese Chamber of Commerce looked to justify Imperial actions in Manchuria as well, appealing to the business sense of foreigners who had turned their backs on Japan. The optimism and turn to the West to gain acceptance for their actions was typical of the changing policies of the nation. Pan-Asianism was inexorably linked to Manchuria and despite the best efforts of the effectively propagandistic publications such as *Cultural Nippon* and the text from the Chamber of Commerce, it fell on deaf ears in the West.

It was during this same period of time that an increasingly radicalized military, intellectuals and politicians were gaining power and mindshare. This can be seen by some of the entries in *Cultural Nippon* from the very beginning, which were included alongside the explanatory pieces about the Japanese state and people. One said that capitalism and individualism would destroy world peace, a direct attack of the West and its very core.<sup>158</sup> The hegemony of Eastern values that can be seen in this, with Japan as the one who currently emanates those values. These values included the absolutism of

---

<sup>157</sup> Tarui Tōkichi, *Daitō Gappōron*, 80-81.

<sup>158</sup> Fujisawa, "Japan and the World," 10.

the state represented by the Emperor, to bring order to the people. This type of government and view on East Asia is seen through the South Manchuria Railway Company's 1933 publication. Although not expressly Pan-Asian, it reflected many of the goals of the movement at the time. The creation of a centralized state based on what can be described as the "Kingly Way", lead by an Emperor and friendly to the Japanese was completed.<sup>159</sup> The defense of this kind of state was the prime directive of the Company's piece, the defense of Japanese interests in the region. The end game of this ideology can be seen from *Asiatic Asia*. Although focused towards English speakers on the Asian continent, it still represented a radicalization of Pan-Asianism. The internalization of Japanese imperialism, which they still believed could be justified to the West, showed how far they had come from simply trying to get the recognition of the Manchu state. The government ideology had become imperialist Pan-Asianism in the most conservative form possible.

Throughout the Manchurian Incident it is seen that Tokyo was transformed from the Taisho liberal democratic to a fascistic one dominated by mythical nationalism. These changes were wholesale as economic, cultural, and social but also in Japanese foreign relations.<sup>160</sup> The withdrawal from the League of Nations gave the government a useful narrative at home to continue its policies in the geographical expression that they described as China. This was the Japan that attempted to influence the English speaking world. As demonstrated in this chapter, these plans had little audience due to the cultural and political gap between the Japanese and the American public. Even their attempts to influence powerful interests within the United States were not great enough to alter the course of American policy. The need to explain their motives shows a side to the nation as one that believed in the Pan-Asianist ideals at least on some level. Since

---

<sup>159</sup> *Economic Construction*, 3.

<sup>160</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 4, 13.

the late 1800s the seed was planted for this increasingly powerful ideology. The experiment of empire in Manchuria was an experiment in creating a world free from domination from the West and for a stronger Asian continent to resist the West in the future. It was in this Pan-Asianist mission that they succeeded, with the help of a conservative government and a sensationalist media. It was the victory here that would set the stage for further radicalization of the movement as the 1930s wore on.

## **Conclusion**

The Japanese Empire in 1931 was a turning point in its history, hinging on the events that occurred in Manchuria. These economic, political and social changes were fueled by nationalists whose ideas had become increasingly popular since the middle of the 1920s. The nationalism was mixed with imperialism to eventually create the fascistic Japanese state of the end of the 1930s. The ideas that drove and justified the actions of many of these actors were Pan-Asianist in nature. The rhetoric coming out of Tokyo in 1937, at the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War, was so heavily influence by this movement that they were virtually indistinguishable. Prime Minister Prince Konoe declared a “New Order in East Asia” in order to “secure international justice...defen[d] against Communism...[and] economic cohesion.”<sup>161</sup> He wanted China to wake and be able to defend itself from the pressures of imperialism. This alliance between Japan and China was the “new fabric on a moral basis in the Far East.”<sup>162</sup> The uplifting of the region and the defense against the West were the integral points of Pan-Asianism and they had been built upon since the late 1800s. The unity of China and Japan against the “barbarians” started as early as 1863.<sup>163</sup> After nearly seventy years the ideology had developed into something that could be used to influence the Japanese people and guide foreign policy. The nascent movement became inexorably linked to the Japanese Empire and a their imperialism.

Pan-Asianism was aided by international circumstances to become a dominant ideology. The idea of the victimization of the state of Japan was something that those in the early 1930s to gain support. This was not without any merit, as racial tensions

---

<sup>161</sup> Brown, “The Konoe Cabinet’s ‘Declaration of a New Order in East Asia,’ 1938,” 169.

<sup>162</sup> Brown, “The Konoe Cabinet’s ‘Declaration of a New Order in East Asia,’ 1938,” 172.

<sup>163</sup> Hirano Kuniomi, *Seiban Sosaku*, 50.



between the West and Japan flared from time to time. The Triple Intervention and the “Yellow Peril” were early signs of this racial discrimination in the international realm. These two incidents inspired the Japanese to take action against foreign public perception. The setup of an agency to attempt to influence the foreign press and public's was the first invention.<sup>164</sup> This was the first time that the state used media to proliferate propaganda to the international markets. As Japan expanded its Empire to follow the model set by other powers of the time, Pan-Asianism began to look more like imperialistic nationalism rather than the Japan as a shining city upon a hill. In 1917, Tokutomi Ichiro advocated for the advancement of the Empire across all of East Asia in order to make sure that it was an “Asia for Asians.”<sup>165</sup> This expansionist rhetoric came at a time when Japan was making the 21 Demands of China while the Europeans were preoccupied with their own war. During the peace talks in Paris the Japanese delegation continually pushed for an Equal Rights Amendment, but failed due to certain contingents in the West. This would give more credence to the arguments of the nationalists in the 1930s.

The decade of the 1920s saw a changing political landscape as well as one in the media. Mass media was becoming increasingly important and ideas could be spread faster than ever before. This also meant that government policy concerning the now powerful media would also begin to change. It was the newspapers that pressed for universal male suffrage in 1925.<sup>166</sup> The government and conservatives would harness this power in the following decade. Pan-Asianists blended these two interests to advocate war against China and the creation of true equality.<sup>167</sup> The nationalists also used the ideology to push forward their own agenda with the “war to liberate the slaves

---

<sup>164</sup> Valliant, “The Selling of Japan.” 415.

<sup>165</sup> Tokutomi Ichiro, “Japan’s Mighty Mission,” 282-83.

<sup>166</sup> Messinger, *The Battle for the Mind*, 79.

<sup>167</sup> Stefano von Loë, “Nakano Seigō,” 53.

The Dokokai, “An Association for Bringing about Equality,” 64.

of Asia.”<sup>168</sup> During a “Conference of Asian Peoples” in Nagasaki in 1926, the New York Times even mentioned that “[Pan-Asianist doctrine] now begins to impress Japanese statesmen.”<sup>169</sup> The moment for the movement to finally come together with government policy would be the Manchurian Incident.

As I have demonstrated, Manchuria had an important role to the Pan-Asianist movement for two reasons. The first was as the beginning of the hegemony of the military and military-imperial politics in government. The second reason was the rhetorical one, that Pan-Asianism was fully embraced as a driving moral force in policy. The change was one coming from when Manchuria was targeted by Japanese politicians following the Sino-Japanese War. It was the first step into controlling China and making a more powerful Japan. The resource rich area had been targeted by military planners and the result was the Manchurian Incident. The government in Tokyo had very little control over the happenings in the region, but they did have control over the way they talked about the military expedition. The opportunism of the central government had it coalesce around the military and defend the actions of the Kwantung.<sup>170</sup> The mass media of the nation supported this turn with a steady stream of heroic stories flowing to the eager populace.<sup>171</sup> The narrative of national defense and the “Manchurian Lifeline” were created during this time to mobilize the public further and morally justify the invasion.<sup>172</sup> Pan-Asianism used during this time to further the cause with ideas such as the “White Peril” and the Asiatic Monroe Doctrine being invented to play to fears of further Western imperialism.<sup>173</sup>

---

<sup>168</sup> “The Yūzonsha’s “War Cry, 1920,” 60.

<sup>169</sup> Sven Saaler, “‘Conference of Asian Peoples’ in Nagasaki, 1926” in *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 101.

<sup>170</sup> Neville, “793.94/2317:Telegram,” USDoS, *Papers...United States, Japan*, 28-29.

<sup>171</sup> Messinger, *The Battle for the Mind*, 9.

<sup>172</sup> Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 130.

<sup>173</sup> Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 147-148.

It was in the confluence of government, policy and nationalism following this important event that Pan-Asianist publications should be looked to. They both represent the inertia of the movement itself but were also in dialogue and used by the Japanese government. They were both the future of the ideology and its present. *Cultural Nippon*, published starting in 1933, exemplifies one of the new turns in the movement in general. As it became increasingly important to the government to explore foreign policy that was not to the liking of much the rest of the world, there needed to be some kind of rationale. This meant that it could not be virulently anti-Western and published in an international language. In the case of *Cultural Nippon* it was English. This power of explanation came from the Pan-Asianists, which would feature in government and quasi-governmental publications. The South Manchuria Railway Company, the largest Japanese corporation that had ever existed by 1931, as well as the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, both put out English language publications in New York City.<sup>174</sup> They both appealed to American businesses but also furthered the Japanese cause, sometimes through Pan-Asian rhetoric. “The Kingly Way” featured in both publications and the idea of “harmonizing and rationalizing economic relations among Eastern Asiatic nations.”<sup>175</sup> These ideological strains in the documents were overshadowed by the Manchurian Incident. The reason for the existence of the publications was an outgrowth of the will of Pan-Asianist ideologues and government policy makes. The mere fact that such documents exist to attempt to justify the actions of the Japanese government and they contain some Pan-Asianist rhetoric is important. The ideology had become a force in the foreign policy of the Empire, even using it to address foreigners.

*Cultural Nippon* then represented something else, that Pan-Asianism was becoming more important, therefore non-Asians needed to understand. As the

---

<sup>174</sup> Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 31.

<sup>175</sup> *Economic Construction*, 4-5.

government turned away from international involvement after the League of Nations condemnation, a publication such as this one came about. In an increasingly futile effort to convince the West of its just goals it turned to the lofty ideals of Pan-Asianism. *Cultural Nippon* was not the only English language Pan-Asianist text that would exist though. Even as late as 1941, there was *Asiatic Asia*, whose rhetoric was much sharper in tone. The times had changed and the Pan-Asianism had become one with the Japanese Empire, nearly all foreign policy used this kind of rhetoric. The most famous manifestation was the 1941 declaration of a "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" by Matsuoka Yōsuke. He was the one time president of the South Manchuria Railway Company. In his writings he furthered the "Manchurian Lifeline" narrative saying that Manchukuo had special relations to Japan and that now that relationship was strong and secure.<sup>176</sup> He also wished for the extension of the *tennō*'s rule to the entire world.

It was during this time that Japan had focused its energy on the Asian continent to fulfill the mission that they had set through the inspiration of Pan-Asianists. A united, under Japanese rule, Asia to fight against the tyranny of the West. *Asiatic Asia* with its tough rhetoric of anti-Westernism along with its hopeful vision of the future represent the ideology at this time. It was focused on Asia and defeating the United States. The authors reflect this new reality both in nationality and content. There were a plethora of Indian, Chinese and other nationalities along with Japanese to represent the thrust of Japanese imperialism, East Asia as a whole. These beliefs were sincerely held though and not thought to be merely justification for the expansion of Japan across the continent. There was a belief by those in positions of power that many Japanese soldiers believed that they were fighting for East Asian liberation.<sup>177</sup>

---

<sup>176</sup> Janis Mimura, "Matsuoka Yōsuke; 'The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,' 1941," *Pan-Asianism: Volume 2*, 224-225.

<sup>177</sup> Mimura, "Matsuoka Yōsuke; 'The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,' 1941," 225.

As seen in Matsuoka Yōsuke's writings on the "Greater East-Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere," Manchuria held a special place in the writings of the government, corporations and ideologues of Pan-Asianism. It was the the turn to this type of rhetoric in 1931 to justify the actions of the nation to the world, most importantly the West. This meant that publications such as *Cultural Nippon* both reflected and push forward a narrative of Japanese exceptionalism to a wider and Western audience. The importance of English in the endeavor cannot be understated, because it was a requirement for engagement in the greater international community. The people appealed to were the ones that needed to learn more about the past and present condition of the Japanese nation in order to understand the actions being taken. Pan-Asianism was teased into these appeals but the strategy was not completely coherent due to the nature of media and the state at the time. Over the course of the decade, the central government would assume totalitarian control of the mass media and united the ideology of Pan-Asianism with the policy of the state to form a powerful propaganda machine.<sup>178</sup> This propaganda would be internalized by not just the Japanese people but aspired to by the peoples under European imperial subjugation throughout Asia.

This final fusion of government and ideology would see statements from the state as important milestones in Pan-Asianism rather than just the thinkers in the right-wing publications. This is the world that *Asiatic Asia* was now being published. It was also one that valued English not just as language to communicate with the West but also to enter dialogue with other Asians. There was a completely different group that was being appealed to. This is evident by the hefty assumptions of easy victory with the United States.<sup>179</sup> It is fairly clear that this English language publications was not directed at those nations which the Japanese wished to "liberate" its fellow Asians from. The anti-

---

<sup>178</sup> Messinger, "The Battle for the Mind," 81-83.

<sup>179</sup> Suetsugu, "Japan Can't Lose," *Asiatic Asia*, 3.

Western rhetoric was virulent at times, especially when comparing the cultures of the East with that of the West. The importance of English to the Empire changed but that did not mean that it was not important. It fits along with the expansion of Japan further into the continent, engaging with a larger number of cultures and nationalities whose commonality with each other was a foreign language originating from its former colonial masters, whether British or French. This also included India, who was a target of the Imperial Army after the capture of Burma. English was integral to the creation of a truly Pan-Asian Empire that would wrest control of the continent away from the West.

This thesis sought to use these English language publications to help shine a light on Pan-Asianism as a ideology in regards to Manchuria and the Empire as a whole. The focus has been on the time period from 1931 until 1934 because that it when the massive changes occurred in Japan within a rapidly changing international environment. Manchuria and Manchukuo represented the point on which change was catalyzed. It was from this moment that captured world attention that a need to publish English language texts became clear to the government and its allies. These publications would do the work of telling the story of Japan to the West and convince them of the Empire's righteousness. The direct appeal to the publics of foreign nations coincides with the beginning of central control of the mass media within Japan. The analysis of the English language publications shows that they were part of a convergence of media, an ideology and the state. Pan-Asianism could be found in these documents that sought not only to convince Western audiences of the correctness of Japanese actions, but also to attract investment and interest in the new state. Although this would be on the terms of the Japanese government rather than an open door. Pan-Asianism and the Manchukuo were integral to the formation of imperialist Japanese state in the 1930's. Through looking at English language publications I sought to see through a new lens the foreign

policy of Japan and how it viewed itself in these non-official channels of international interactions.

## **Bibliography**

### **Primary Sources**

*Economic construction program of Manchukuo*. New York, New York Office of the South Manchuria Railway Company. 1933.

*Manchukuo: The Founding of a New State in Manchuria*. New York, Japanese Chamber of Commerce. 1933.

Nippon Cultural Federation. *Cultural Nippon: A Study of Nippon Culture*, 1-3, 1933-5. Tokyo: Nippon Cultural Federation, 1933-5.

Pan Asiatic Association in Shanghai. *The Asiatic Monthly Magazine: Asiatic Asia*: January 1941 Vol. I, No. I. Shanghai: Office of Pan-Asiatic Association in Shanghai, 1941.

PuYi, Henry. *The Last Manchu: The Autobiography of Henry Pu Yi, The Last Emperor of China*. Edited by Paul Kramer. New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2010.

Saaler, Sven and Szpilman, Christopher W. A.. editors, *Pan-Asianism; A Documentary History, Volume 1: 1850-1920*. Lanham, MD, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011.

Saaler, Sven and Szpilman, Christopher W. A.. editors, *Pan-Asianism; A Documentary History, Volume 2: 1920-Present*. Lanham, MD, USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011.

United States Department of State, *Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States, Japan: 1931-1941 Volume I*, by The Japanese Embassy in the US, 793.94/2585, Washington DC: GPO, 1931.

Young, C. Walter. *Japan's Special Position In Manchuria: Its Assertion. Legal Interpretation And Present Meaning*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press, 1931.

### **Secondary Sources**

Beasley, W. G.. *The Meiji Restoration*. Stanford, CA: University of Stanford, 1973.



George F. Botjer, *A short history of Nationalist China, 1919-1949* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1980), 180.

Boxer, C. R.. *The Christian Century in Japan 1549–1650*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1951.

Carruthers, Susan L.. *The Media at War*. Basingstoke, Hampshire. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Chen, Jerome. *Yuan Shih-k'ai*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972.

Chesneau, Roger and Gardiner, Robert. *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1922-1946*. London: Conway Maritime Press, 1980.

Duara, Prasenjit. *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003.

Fairbank, John K. and Twitchett, Dennis C.. *Late Ch'ing 1800-1911*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Haywood, John. *Historical Atlas of the 19th Century World, 1783-1914*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1998.

Ichioaka, Yuji. "Japanese Immigrant Nationalism: The Issei and the Sino-Japanese War 1937-41," *California History*, Vol 69, No 3, Fall 1990.

Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New York, Inc."Our History."  
Accessed August 1, 2016. <http://www.jcciny.org/about.aspx>

Makito, Saya and David Noble. *The Sino-Japanese War and the Birth of Japanese Nationalism*. Tokyo: International House of Japan, 2011.

Messinger, Gary S.. *The Battle of the Mind: War and Peace in the Ear of Mass Communication*. Amherst and Boston, MA. University of Massachusetts Press, 2011.

Sims, Richard. *Japanese Political History Since the Meiji Renovation 1868-2000*. London. Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Shimazu, Naoko. *Japan, Race and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Valliant, Robert B., "The Selling of Japan. Japanese Manipulation of Western Opinion, 1900-1905," *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol 29, Iss 4, 1974.

Young, Louise. *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California. University of California Press, 1998.