ASIA-JAPAN
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY

The Dynamics of East Asian Politics and Diplomacy in the 1920s: The Intersection of International Cooperation and Imperial Expansion

Editor
Kazutaka SOGO

Asia-Japan Research Institute
Ritsumeikan University

AJI BOOKS

The Dynamics of East Asian Politics and Diplomacy in the 1920s: The Intersection of International Cooperation and Imperial Expansion

Editor
Kazutaka SOGO

Asia-Japan Research Institute
Ritsumeikan University

ISBN 978-4-910550-55-8 (Online)
ISBN 978-4-910550-54-1 (Print)

The Dynamics of East Asian Politics and Diplomacy in the 1920s: The Intersection of International Cooperation and Imperial Expansion

AJI Editorial Office
OIC Research Office,
Ritsumeikan University Osaka Ibaraki Campus (OIC)
2-150 Iwakura-cho, Ibaraki,
Osaka 567-8570 JAPAN
Email: aji-eb@st.ritsumei.ac.jp

Note:
Authors' names in this publication are ordered according to their preference and their surnames are capitalized.

Contents

Editor's Preface

Since taking possession of Taiwan in 1895, Imperial Japan continued to expand its imperial sphere, from the colonization of Korea, the acquisition of Manchurian interests, the mandate of the Nanyang Archipelago, the founding of "Manchukuo" in 1932, and the southward expansion under the wartime regime with the construction of the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere" until its defeat in the Second World War. On the other hand, the period after the First World War until the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident did not see such imperial expansion. However, this was not a period of peace and stability, and East Asia remained a major flashpoint. There were a variety of factors at play, including (1) differences in perception between Japan and China over Manchurian interests, (2) unrest among Japanese and Western interests due to the Nanjing government's campaign to recover national rights, and (3) a sense of crisis over the gradual expansion of Soviet communist power in the East Asian region. These were closely interrelated, and this complex historical situation gave rise to a variety of problems, which in turn gave rise to many conflicts and differences of conception within the Japanese empire over how to solve them.

Internationally, it was an era of international cooperation known as the Washington System, and domestically, it was an era of party politics. The 1920s, the interwar period between the world wars, was not only a turning point in the first half of the 20th century in that it was an era in which a democratic, non-armed framework of international cooperation was apparently established, but it was also an opportunity for imperial expansion and opened the path to the war that began in the 1930s. The suppression of imperial expansion, international cooperation, and party politics each functioned in interaction with each other. However, it is difficult to say that in the history of research, diplomatic history

research, colonial research, and party-political history research have progressed by fully sharing their respective findings. In recent years, attempts to rethink the Washington system and the nature of the colonial system of governance have been actively discussed among younger scholars. Hence, this volume aims to comprehensively understand the characteristics of the intersection of international cooperation and imperial expansion in the 1920s by incorporating the perspectives of various actors not only in Japan but also in Britain, the U.S., China, and Japan's colonial authority in the region. An important feature of this book is that it attempts to provide as comprehensive a picture as possible of East Asia in the 1920s from a variety of perspectives, including political, economic, diplomatic, media, and military. The attempt to reevaluate the 1920s as an "intersection" of international cooperation and imperial expansion, based on the latest research results by young researchers in each field, is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of research history.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of a great number of people who contributed to the publication of this book. First, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Yasushi Kosugi, Director of the AJI, and all the members of Ritsumeikan AJI, for providing us with this valuable opportunity. The book is concluded with a paper by Dr. Mahan Murphy, who summarizes the research findings of the five authors and raises a number of important discussion points. We hope to contribute to the development of future research based on the issues he has raised. I would also like to thank Professor Anthony Brewer for his detailed checking of the English text in editing this book. Thanks to the cooperation of all these people, we are able to present our research results in this form, for which I would like to express my great appreciation.

Kazutaka SOGO

Contributors

1. Dr. Yuji KUBOTA

Chapter 1. Japan's Advancement into the Middle and South of China, From the First Sino-Japanese War to the First World War

Dr. Kubota is an Associate Professor at Kokushikan University. He has researched Japanese loan policy to China from the First Sino-Japanese War to the First World War. In 2016 he published his book, *Tai-Chū Shakkan no Seiji Keizaishi: "Kaihatsu" kara Nijūikkajō Yōkyū he* (*A Political on the Economic History of the Japanese Loan Policy to China*). Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai.

2. Dr. Lieven SOMMEN

Chapter 2. On the Mediatization of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1921–1928

Dr. Sommen is a Post-doc in the Dept. of Japanese Studies of the KU Leuven University (Belgium) Faculty of Arts Department of Japanese Studies. Interests: East Asian diplomatic history, public diplomacy, intelligence. Publications: Lieven Sommen, Jan Schmidt, Dimitri Vanoverbeke. *Public Diplomacy and Empire: The Mediatization of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1904–1928*, (PhD. thesis, 2023).

The Rise of Interwar Expert Cultures: Date Gen'ichirō as a Foreign Communications Expert for the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1919–1934. *Bochum Yearbook of East Asian Studies* 45, 219–244, (2023).

Four Phases of Mediatization and the Significance of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Department of Information: 1905–1922. *Japan Forum* 35(2), 195–217, (2023)

"Medeia-ka no 4 Kyokumen" to Senkan-ki ni okeru Gaimushō Jōhōbu Sōsetsu no Igi: 1905–1922 [Four Phases of Mediatization and the Significance of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Department of Information: 1905–1922]. *Intelligence* 23, 4–17, (In Japanese, 2023)

An Empire of the Mid-Tier: The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the New Mass Public-Focused Diplomacy of the Early Twentieth Century. In Jan Schmidt, Willy Vande Walle, Eline Mennens (eds.), *Japan's Book Donation to the University of Louvain: Japanese Cultural Identity and Modernity in the 1920s*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 32–39, (2022).

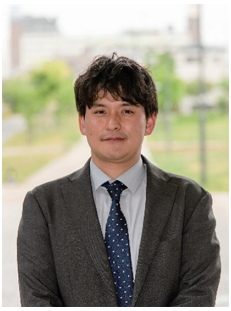
3. Dr. Andrea REVELANT

Chapter 3. The *Manshū Nippō* and the Issue of Chinese Reunification at the Turn of 1929

Dr. Revelant is an Associate Professor, Department of Asian and North African Studies, Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

His research interests focus on policy-making, popular representation, and mass communication in imperial Japan. He is currently working on the political discourse on China in the Japanese press of the interwar years. He is the author of *Sviluppo economico e disuguaglianza* (*Economic Development and Inequality*, 2016), *Il Giappone moderno* (*Modern Japan*, 2018) and *Il Giappone contemporaneo* (*Contemporary Japan*, 2024). He has published in several journals, including *Modern Asian Studies*, *European Journal of East Asian Studies* and *Asiatische Studien*. His work has also appeared in edited volumes, such as *Japan and the Great War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), *Chiang Kai-Shek and His Time*, and *The Historian's Gaze* (both Ca' Foscari University Press, 2017, 2023)

4. Dr. Kazutaka SOGO



Chapter 4. Colonial and Overseas Development Policies of Imperial Japan under Internationalism: Reading the Policies of the Kenseikai Cabinet from the Perspective of Economic and Cultural Integration

Dr. Sogo is a senior researcher at the Ritsumeikan Asia-Japan Research Institute, Ritsumeikan University. His research focuses on the power consolidation process of party politics in prewar Japan, and he received his Ph.D. in Letters from Ritsumeikan University in 2022.

He recently published *Teikoku Nihon no Seitō Seiji Kōzō: Nidai Seitō no Tōgō Kōsō to "Gokensanpa-taisei"* (*Party Political Structure in Imperial Japan: The Concept of Consolidation of the Two Major Political Parties and the "Gokensanpa System"*), Yoshida Shoten, 2024. Currently at the Asia-Japan Research Institute, he continues his research on the issue of colonial and overseas economic expansion and the intersection of domestic politics. His recent publication is "Moving the Border of Empire: The Role of the Colonial Ministry (Takumushō) in Manchuria and the Defeat of Parliamentary Centrism in Japan" (*Journal of the Asia-Japan Research Institute of Ritsumeikan University*, Vol. 6, 2024).

5. Dr. Takeshi SUGAWARA

Chapter 5. Britain and the Difficulty of Anglo-Japanese Military Collaboration, 1902–1928

Dr. Sugawara is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law and Letters at Ehime University. He holds an MA in Modern History and a PhD in History from the University of East Anglia. His research is devoted to diplomatic and international history, with a particular focus on the British diplomacy towards the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. He is the author of "Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902–23)" in Gordon Martel (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Diplomacy* Volume I, A-C (John Wiley & Sons, 2018).

6. Dr. Mahon MURPHY

Concluding Remarks

Dr. Murphy is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, Kyoto University, where he teaches courses on Japanese popular culture and international history. Mahon obtained his PhD in history from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2015. His thesis focused on the internment of German prisoners of war and civilian internees in the extra-European theatres of the First World War, including Japan, which was also the subject of his first monograph. His main research focus is in looking at the cultural impact of the First World War on regions outside Europe.

Publications:

Colonial Captivity during the First World War: Internment and the Fall of the German Empire, 1914–1919 (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Entangled Memories of Two World Wars. *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 20(11), 5, (2022, June).

The Heimei Maru Incident 1921: Japan's Diplomatic Intervention in Prisoner of War Repatriation. *The International History Review* 43(2) 348–361, (2021)

Imperial Entanglements: Britain, German East Africa, and Internment during the First World War. *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 38(1), 3–19, (2016).

Chapter 1
Japan's Advancement into the Middle and South of China, From the First Sino-Japanese War to the First World War

Yuji KUBOTA

1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to reconsider modern Japan's advancement into China. It has been thought that there were two directions for advancing into China: northward and southward. First, what was the northward advance? The northward advance refers to advancing from the Korean Peninsula (colonized by Japan in 1910) to North China via Manchuria. In addition, it is said that the northward advance was mainly proposed by three parties: the Japanese Army, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Manchuria Railway company (Mantetsu).

Many studies on modern Japanese history so far have focused on the northward advance. As a result, the historical image has been drawn that the main direction of modern Japan's advancement into China was northward. On the other hand, with regard to the advance south, although there are studies that deal with individual themes, there are few studies that attempt to capture the whole picture. Hajime Shimizu (1990) pointed out that "Japan's southward advance began in earnest after the First World War." In order to comprehensively examine modern Japan's expansion into China, it is necessary to accumulate further research on the southward advance. In this chapter, I will reconsider modern Japan's expansion into China from the perspective of advancing southward.

2. An Outline of the "Southward Advance"

There were several objectives in modern Japan's southward advance. The first was the advance into the Middle and South of China. It focused on advancement into Shanghai, Xiamen, and Hankou (now Wuhan). Especially after the First Sino-Japanese War, it started to attract attention. This chapter will cover the period from the Sino-Japanese War, which is the early stage of the southward advance, to the period of the First World War. The second objective was the advance into Southeast Asia. This started in earnest in the 1930s for the purpose of acquiring natural resources. The third objective was expansion into the islands of the Pacific. This was especially started in earnest after the First World War.

The southward advance was promoted by various actors such as the government, the military, and private enterprises. It involved the Japanese government, the Japanese Navy, and Taiwan's Governor.

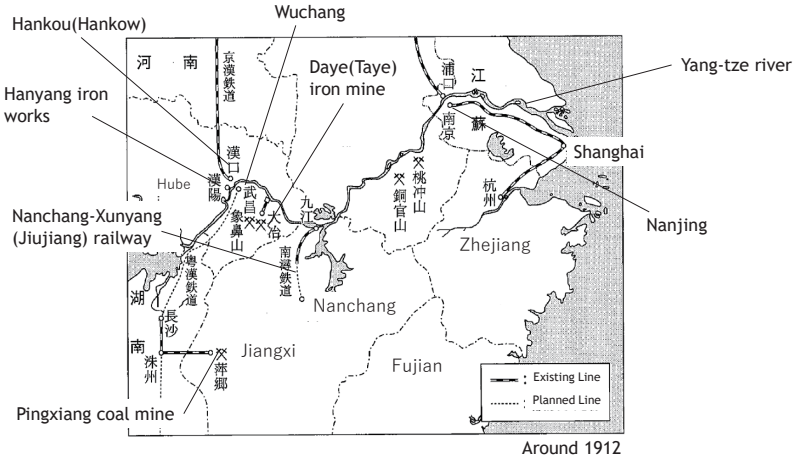


Figure 1. Concessions in the Yang-tze Region Circa 1912
Source: Author

Figure 1 is a map of the Middle and South of China, especially the Yangtze River basin where many interests existed. The Yangtze River runs through the middle of this map. Large cities such as Shanghai and Nanjing are located downstream of the Yangtze River. Going upstream, there is Jiangxi Province, and there is a railway called Nanxun Railway from the open port of Jiujiang to Nanchang. This railway is one of the few railways in which Japan was involved. Further upstream is Wuhan. Around Wuhan, there were the Hanyang Ironworks and Daye Iron Ore Company, which Japan invested in. Japan was trying to make a particularly economic advancement into these regions.

Next, I would like to explain the reasons for the growing desire to advance southward in modern Japan. The most important moment was the colonization of Taiwan after the First Sino-Japanese War. Starting from Taiwan, Japan began to actively try to expand into the Middle and South of China. In addition, in 1901, the state-owned Yawata Iron Works was established with the reparations for the First Sino-Japanese War, and the Japanese government began to seek iron ore and pig iron from the Yangtze River basin. How did Japan advance into this basin? Specifically, there were three strategies. The first was the trade in cotton textile and iron resources, the second was investment in railroads and iron mines, and the third was military action starting from Taiwan.

3. Non-cession Treaty of Fujian Province (April 1898)

Let us examine in detail Japan's advancement after the first Sino-Japanese War. Following the colonization of Taiwan, the turning point for Japan's southward advance was the "Non-cession Treaty of Fujian Province" concluded between Japan and China in April 1898. In the background of this treaty, Germany, Russia, France, and Britain, whom I will refer to as the Western Powers, set up leased land in China to

establish their "sphere of influence" and concluded various treaties and agreements. Regarding the content of their non-cession treaty, the Japanese government drafted it for its own convenience, stating that China would "not cede Fujian Province to any country other than Japan" in order to ensure Taiwan's security and secure a base for advancing into "China Proper."

However, it was recognized that the Qing Dynasty promised not to cede Fujian Province to any other countries (including Japan). As a result, there was a difference of perception between Japan and the Qing Dynasty regarding this treaty. Nonetheless, this agreement was a major basis for the Japanese side to attach importance to Fujian Province and to promote the southward advance from Fujian Province as a starting point.

4. The Japanese Cabinet's Decision on its Interests in the Middle and South of China (February 1900)

In 1900, the Japanese government made a cabinet decision on concessions to the Middle and South of China in an attempt to make the previously mentioned non-cession treaty more concrete. As a long-term goal, Japan had indicated a policy of acquiring railway concessions as shown in Figure 2. The most important route was from Xiamen in Fujian to Fuzhou, and Nanchang in Jiangxi to Hankou in Hubei. The branch lines passed through Fujian Province and from Nanchang in Jiangxi Province to Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province. This decision was not an urgent policy, but rather a long-term goal. It was also related to the Twenty-one Demands, which we will discuss later.

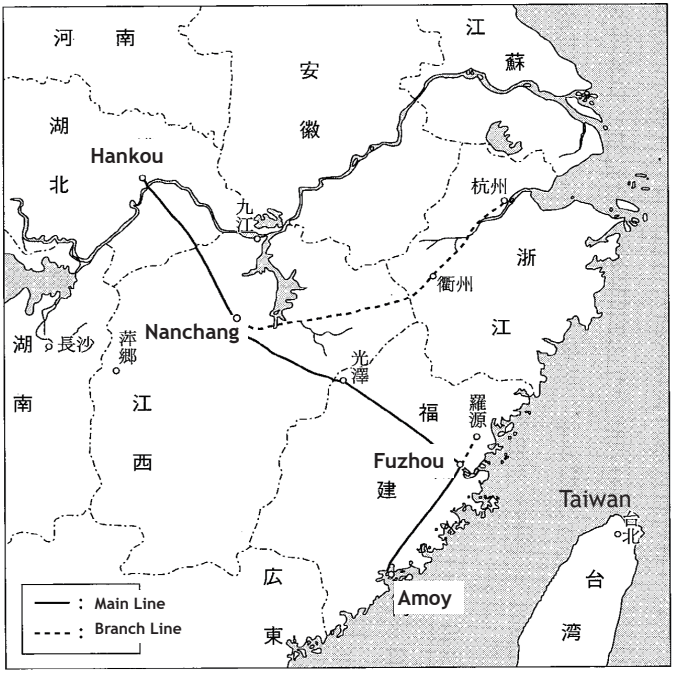


Figure 2. Plan of Railway Concessions
Source: Author

5. Impacts of the Boxer Rebellion (June 1900–September 1901)

Under these circumstances, the Boxer Rebellion occurred in China. The Boxer Rebellion was triggered by a xenophobic group called the Boxer Group, which called for the exclusion of foreign powers and intensified its activities. The Qing Dynasty initially tried to suppress this movement, but was unable to do so, instead choosing to wage war on the Western Powers together with the Boxer group. As a result of the Rebellion, the Qing Dynasty was defeated by the Western Powers and had to pay a large amount in reparations.

(1) The Xiamen (Amoy) Incident (August–September 1900)

The Boxer Rebellion was a major turning point for Japan's southward advance. First, the occurrence of the Boxer Rebellion triggered the Xiamen Incident. While the Qing Dynasty and the Boxer group were fighting against the Western Powers in northern China, the Japanese Governor-General of Taiwan dispatched troops to Xiamen on the opposite side of Taiwan. As this dispatch caused resistance from various countries, the Japanese government was limited to small-scale dispatches and canceled large-scale dispatches. This shows that Japan's military action in Fujian was strongly opposed by the Western Powers, and that Japan could not ignore it. As a result of the Xiamen Incident, the Japanese government came to recognize that advancing southward militarily would be difficult.

(2) The Opportunity of the "Southward Advance" — International Relations

The second major impact of the Boxer Rebellion was that it gave Japan a good opportunity to advance southward. The Governors general of the southeastern provinces of China held talks and declared that they would remain neutral on the Boxer Rebellion. This was the so-called Southeast mutual support agreement. It was aimed at keeping the Southeast provinces away from the Boxer Rebellion and stabilizing relations between the Southeast provinces and the Powers. While northern China was chaotic and devastated by the battle, the situation in the middle and south of China was relatively stable. Furthermore, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was concluded several years after the Boxer Rebellion. The main purpose of this alliance was to respect the status of both Britain and Japan in Korea and China. However, when considering the southward advance, it cannot be overlooked that the Anglo-Japanese

Alliance came to be seen as a good opportunity to advance into the Yangtze region, which was considered to be the British sphere of influence.

6. The Turning Point of Japan's Advancement into China — The Russo-Japanese War

Fig. 3 Arimoto Yamagata
Source: *Kinsei Meishi Shasin*, Osaka: Kinsei Meishi Shasin Hanpu Kai, 1935

The Russo-Japanese War greatly influenced Japan's advancement into China and its policies toward China. Due to the Russo-Japanese War, Japan acquired Guandongzhou (the tip of the Liaodong Peninsula) from Russia and the South Manchuria branch line of the Eastern Qing Railway (Dalian to Changchun). After that, many people from the mainland of Japan began to migrate to Guandong-zhou and become involved in business there. For Japan at that time, the Russo-Japanese War was a war that cost a lot of money and risked many human lives. Aritomo Yamagata, who was an elder and had great influence in the Japanese political world, evaluated the Russo-Japanese War as having cost "Two billion yen in national expenses and two hundred thousand in human lives." Triggered by this war, the main direction of Japan's policy toward China would shift northward. Thus, the Russo-Japanese War was a major turning point in Japan's advance into China.

7. The Xinhai Revolution (1911~12)

Japan's advancement into China shifted northward after the Russo-Japanese War, but then came the turning point. This was the Xinhai Revolution, also known as the Chinese Revolution of 1911, which overthrew China's last imperial dynasty, the Qing Dynasty. It took place in Wuhan, in the middle of the Yangtze River basin. Two weeks after the outbreak of the revolution, the Japanese government made an important cabinet decision. The contents of the agreement were to cooperate with Russia in defending Japan's interests in Manchuria, and to cooperate with the Western Powers in "China Proper" and make efforts to expand its interests. The Japanese government showed a positive policy regarding "China Proper." After that, Japan provided financial assistance to the revolutionaries who were expanding their influence in the middle and south of China. They were financed through private enterprise but were mostly unsuccessful. However, the policy to advance south during the Xinhai Revolution was the origin of various policies during the First World War.

8. The Outbreak of the First World War

A few years after the Xinhai Revolution, the First World War broke out. Although they are well known, I would like to confirm Japan's trends immediately after the outbreak of the First World War. Japan took military action in several directions. First, Japan and Britain jointly dispatched troops to the Shandong Peninsula, which had been occupied by Germany. Japan inflicted a small number of casualties but succeeded in the occupation. Second, the Japanese troops occupied the German South Sea Islands. Both the first and second actions were quickly implemented within months of entering the war. In the short term, the

First World War had the following effects on both Japan and China. First, Japan had accumulated a large amount of capital through increased trade with China and the United States. Secondly, with regard to China, there was no longer scope for European countries to get involved, but there was more scope for Japan to get involved. Third, the Chinese government at that time (the Yuan Shikai regime) also needed Japan's cooperation in military and economic areas. Thus, Japan's policy toward China during the First World War was prepared.

9. The Twenty-one Demands

Fig. 4. Eki Hioki, Japanese Minister to China
Source: George Grantham Bain Collection (Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-DIG-ggbain-37364)

Fig 5. Takaaki Katō, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Source: *Teikoku Gahō*, Tokyo: Fuzanbō Publishing, 1906

One of the important policies Japan implemented during the First World War was the Twenty-one Demands. This entire list of demands is not detailed here. I will explain the brief history of this request, focusing on the important points for the southward and northward advances. In

late January 1915, the Japanese Minister to China, Eki Hioki (Figure 4) handed over a list known as the Twenty-one Demands directly to President Yuan Shikai and negotiations between Japan and China began. These demands were divided into five groups, No. 1 to No. 5. The Japanese government strongly hoped for the realization of their demands in Groups 1 through 4 as "requests." In addition, the demands in Group 5 were expressed as "hopes." Of these demands, Group 3, Group 4, and part of Group 5 were involved in the southward advance. Figure 5 shows Takaaki Katō, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time of the Twenty-one Demands.

(1) The "Southward Advance" and the Twenty-one Demands

1) Requests

Group 3's demands concerned Hanyeping, China's largest iron company which was located in Wuhan. The Japanese and Chinese governments had promised to form a Sino-Japanese joint venture for Hanyeping. Through this, the Japanese government aimed to expand its influence over the Hanyeping company. Group 4's demands requested that the Chinese government promise not to lease ports and islands in the southeastern part of China to foreign powers to protect Japan's interests in Taiwan.

2) Hopes

Group 5 was the "hope" group. Among these provisions, there was also something about advancing southward. Japan's first hope was to transfer the railway concessions in the Middle and South of China to Japan. Its second hope was that China would consult with Japan initially when funds were needed for the development of railways, mines and ports in Fujian. In this way, against the background of

Britain's declining position in China, the Japanese government showed a willingness to aggressively advance into the Yangtze Region, which was recognized as Britain's "sphere of influence." In other words, they carried out an aggressive southward advance policy. The British Foreign Office had warned of this group of demands as a threat to Britain's position in the Yangtze Region, as well as in the Middle and South of China.

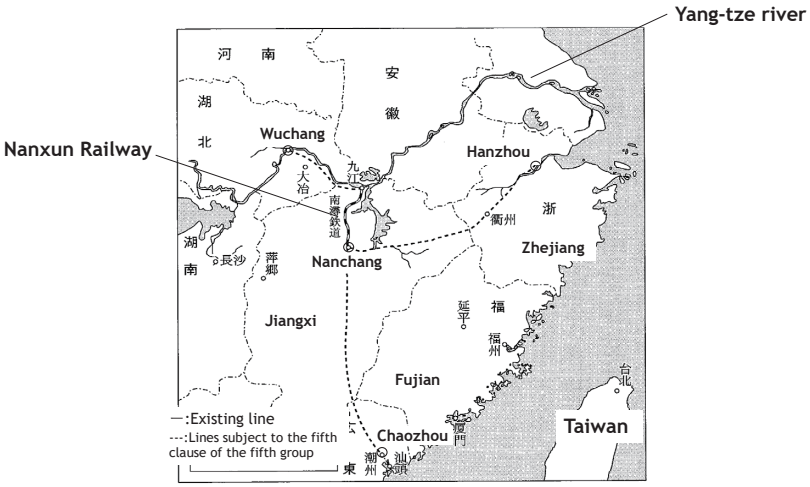


Figure 6. Railway concessions in Group 5 of the 21 demands
Source: Author

Figure 6 shows the contents of the railway concessions in the Middle and South of China that were in Group 5 of demands. The contents of this group were to give Japan the right to lay a railway line extending downstream of the Yangtze River (Nanchang to Hangzhou), a railway line extending upstream of the Yangtze River (Jiujiang to Hankou), and a railway line extending from Nanchang to Chaozhou in Guangdong Province centered on the Nanxun Railway, with which

Japan had already been involved.

(2) The "Northward Advance" and the Twenty-one Demands

However, in the end, the Japanese government withdrew their demands in Group 5. As a result, the content concerning railway interests in the Middle and South of China and Fujian Province was not realized. On the other hand, the Twenty-one Demands strengthened Japan's interests in Manchuria. Contents concerning Manchurian interests were included in Group 2 of demands. As a result of the negotiations, the lease period of Guandong-zhou and the loan period of the South Manchuria Railway were extended. As a result, in Japan, expectations for advancement into Manchuria increased in various fields. The results of the Twenty-one Demands also meant further promotion of the northward advance.

10. Conclusion

(1) Developments of the "Southward Advance" and the Relationship between Japan and Britain

Japan's southward advance continued from the end of the First Sino-Japanese War until the First World War, although there were some gradations depending on the period. A particularly important criterion for Japan's southward advance was its diplomatic relations with Britain. Japan aggressively advanced southward when the Xinhai Revolution and the First World War broke out. However, an aggressive southward advance could have caused friction with Britain. Therefore, the Japanese government used private enterprise and negotiated directly with the Chinese government to proceed with measures to advance southward.

During the First World War, the Japanese government aggressively pursued its southward advance, but it did not produce many results.

(2) Comparison to the "Northward Advance"

Compared to Japan's northward advance, the southward advance centered on the Middle and South of China was more important in terms of relations with China and Britain. In particular, "China's autonomy" is an important perspective. Focusing on "China's autonomy" highlights the importance of Anglo-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relations in the modern history of Japan, which cannot be grasped by the history centered on the northward advance.

References

Published in English

Lowe, Peter. 1969. *Great Britain and Japan, 1911–15: A Study of British Far Eastern Policy*. London: Macmillan.

Published in Japanese

Akashi, Iwao. 2007. *Nitchū Sensō ni tsuite no Rekishiteki Kōsatsu (Historical Considerations on the Sino-Japanese War).* Shibunkaku Publishing

Hatano, Masaru. 1995. *Kindai Higashi-Ajia no Seiji Hendō to Nihon no Gaikō (Political Change in Modern East Asia and Japan's Diplomacy).* Keio Press

Hattori, Ryūji. 2001. *Higashi-Ajia Kokusai Kankyō no Hendō to Nihon Gaikō 1918–1931 (Japanese Diplomacy and East Asian International Politics, 1918–1931).* Yuhikaku Press

Kobayashi, Michihiko. 1996. *Nihon no Tairiku Seisaku 1895–1914: Katsura Tarō to Gotō Shinpei (Japanese Continental Policy, 1895–1914).* Nansosha Press

Kubota, Yūji. 2016. *Tai-Chū Shakkan no Seiji Keizai-shi: Kaihatsu kara Nijūikkajō Yōkyū he (A Political and Economic History of the Japanese Loan Policy to China: From "Development" to the Twenty-One Demands).* Nagoya University Press

Nakamura, Takashi. 1987. Taiwan Sōtoku-fu no Kanan Tetsudō Kōsaku: Chōsan Tetsudō wo Megutte (The South China Railway Work of the Governor-General of Taiwan: About ChaoChow–Swatow Railway). *Nanpō Bunka (Tenri Bulletin of South Asian Studies)*, 14, 73–103.

Naraoka, Sōchi. 2015. *Tai-ka Nijūikkajō toha Nandatta noka: Dai-ichi-ji Sekai Taisen to Nitchū Tairitsu no Genten (What were the 21 Demands to China?: The First World War and the Origins of the Sino-Japanese Conflict).* Nagoya University Press

Shimizu, Hajime. 1990. Senkanki Nihon, Keizaiteki "Nanshin" no Shisōteki Haikei (The Ideological Background of Economic "Southward Advance" in Interwar Japan). In Shinya Sugiyama and Ian Brown (eds.), *Senkanki Tōnan Ajia no Keizai Masatsu: Nihon no Nanshin to Ajia-Ōbei (Economic Friction in Southeast Asia in the Interwar Period: Asia, the West and Japan's Southward Advance)*. Dobunkan Publishing, 13–44.

Xinchun, Yu. *Shingai Kakumeiki no Chūnichi Gaikōshi Kenkyū (Studies in the History of China-Japan Diplomacy during the Xinhai Revolution).* Toho Shoten, 2002

Chapter 2
On the Mediatization of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1921–1928

Lieven SOMMEN

1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the so-called Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Information, the "Gaimushō Jōhōbu" in Japanese, which was a propaganda and information management institution for the Ministry that existed between 1920 and 1940. In my doctoral research, I asked the question of whether this institution was a significant institutional addition to the ministry's structure in the 1920s or not.

The reason I asked this question is because existing literature generally sees the structure of this department as having been compromised and lacking in impact on Japan's foreign relations in the 1920s. To an extent, there is truth to this characterization: the Department of Information did not have all that extensive of an institutional jurisdiction within the Ministry at large. However, I argue in this chapter that this department's creation in 1920 was nonetheless an important institutional step forward for the MOFA's propaganda, information-management and public diplomacy-capabilities.

2. Theoretical Framework

To support my argument, I will use the so-called "framework of the mediatization of diplomacy" by a researcher named James Pamment (2014, 2015). The basic argument of this framework is that in order for a

diplomatic institution to be able to send out an effective and convincing diplomatic messaging or improve its capability to do so, it needs to evolve and grow three major aspects of its institutional structure.

Pamment calls them the "dimensions of the mediatization of diplomacy." Summarized briefly, the first of them is the "internalization" dimension, which involves starting and maintaining a "hub of media expertise" centrally within the diplomatic institution. The idea is that this hub gives advice to other parts of the institution and centrally steers the diplomatic messaging of the institution as a whole.

The second dimension is the "semiotic dimension," which refers to the idea that the aforementioned "hub of media experts" will do analysis of foreign media spheres and will try to identify the logics by which it perceives these media to function. Then, it bases its communication policies on these findings.

The third dimension is the so-called "building blocks of information" aspect, which means that this "hub of media experts" gives out "building blocks of information," basic elements of the messaging, to the various exponents of the diplomatic institution, such as foreign delegations. These building blocks are then to be used as the basis for diplomatic messaging by the various international spokes of the diplomatic institution.

This final aspect is important because Pamment's framework operates under the assumption that diplomatic messaging needs to be consistent in content in order to be effective. The consistency aspect is said to be more important than its being adapted to the very specific context about which messaging is being sent out.

If these three theoretical dimensions were found to apply to the case of the Department, it would show that the Department fits into a longer and stereotypical progression of the growth of the propaganda and diplomatic messaging capabilities of such institutions. This would then, in turn, support the notion that the Department's creation in the

1920s, as well as its activities and the institutional process of learning about engaging with foreign media, were all necessary steppingstones towards the more powerful communication management institutions of the Japanese state which came into being in the 1930s and during the Second World War. If that is true, then it follows that the department was, in fact, more significant to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' structure than its humble image among the extant literature would imply. That is my fundamental argument in this chapter.

3. The Work of the Department of Information

I would like to concentrate on three important diplomatic events in this chapter. These are respectively the Washington Conference (1921–1922), the enactment of the Immigration Act of 1924 in the United States, and the Ji'nan Incident (May 1928). However, rather than exhaustively describing these events themselves, I instead wish to focus on the aspects of the growth of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that were either exemplified or facilitated by the Department of Information in each of these cases. I will refer to these aspects as the three "vectors of growth."

(1) Background to the Washington Conference

The first of these vectors is seen in the Washington conference. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been actively trying to create more effective and systematic propaganda and public diplomacy messaging structures since the end of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). It had already begun to pay attention to the impact of foreign communications on Japan's international image in the 1890s, but its efforts on this front became more pronounced during the Russo-Japanese war.

The most important initiative the Ministry undertook was probably the creation of two news agencies, Kokusai News Agency and Tōhō News Agency, which were both created in 1914. However, ministry officials in the 1910s, in general, considered these agencies to have been failures. The Seimukyoku, the Bureau of Governmental Affairs, in 1919 wrote a report saying that the news agencies were ineffective because there was a lack of institutional knowledge about foreign media within the Ministry, and that this lack of knowledge needed to be remedied if officials were going to create more powerful propaganda institutions.

In general, existing literature about the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' propaganda capabilities defines the Ministry's approach to foreign media as having been largely ad hoc and reactive before 1920. For instance, if a piece of anti-Japanese rhetoric appeared in foreign media, a foreign legation would try to suppress or delegitimize it of its own accord. Methods for this included bribing those who were espousing the anti-Japanese messaging or sending out counter-propaganda. However, there was little centralized guidance or centralized directive emanating out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how to proactively and consistently promote Japan's cause with communication abroad. There were some cases where this did happen, but in general, the Japanese propaganda approach was very reactive and passive in nature.

However, during the First World War, a consciousness arose within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that propaganda should not just be reactive but should instead be proactive. The Ministry realized it should create a comprehensive blanket of pro-Japanese messaging that preemptively countered the anti-Japanese rhetoric that might potentially come out in the future. In other words, propaganda should take the form of a generalized pro-Japanese messaging, as opposed to merely being a reaction to individual pieces of criticism of Japan.

(2) Paris Peace Conference (1919)

The Paris Peace Conference took place in 1919, and Japan was initially one of the big five at the Conference. The Conference made clear that diplomats worldwide would need to embrace the tenets of the so-called "new diplomacy." Engaging with the mass public and informing it on matters of international relations had by then become very important for diplomatic institutions. However, while the Japanese delegation to the Conference did have a small press office in Paris, hardly any photographic material of the delegates was distributed to the international press, and the Japanese largely avoided engaging with the foreign press. This press office would give out statements but there was very little content to them. This was one of the characteristics of the Japanese participation in the Paris Peace Conference.

(3) Washington Conference (1921)

In many ways, the Washington Conference in 1921–1922 was a continuation of the Paris Peace Conference. Prior to this conference, in 1920, the Japanese Cabinet had established the Department of Information within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was a chance for the Ministry to improve upon its lack of mass public-facing communication efforts at the Paris Peace Conference.

This department undertook various initiatives to support public diplomacy efforts at the conference. It worked with US newspapers and tried to get statements by Ministry officials onto their pages. It succeeded in doing so in the case of the newspaper *New York World*, for instance, getting a full statement by the head of the department of information printed. It also undertook other types of activities, such as sending Japanese civilians to the conference with the idea of projecting

a positive image of the Japanese citizenry to the outside world.

The department conducted a daily analysis of the US newspapers and monitored public opinion. Alongside this, it began editing and preparing drafts to be presented at daily press conferences in the ministry headquarters, aiming to influence newspaper correspondents in Tokyo to promote Japan's cause. These press conferences were often led by department officials, but sometimes also featured the foreign minister or other highly placed officials.

(4) Failing to Produce a Comprehensive Propaganda Strategy

The Department of Information was started in 1920 with the intent of having a central institution that centrally guided the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' propaganda and messaging strategies. It is, therefore, logical to expect that such a department would create an overarching propaganda plan for the Washington conference. However, I have not really found any evidence that the Department managed to produce such a full-fledged plan. One notable archival document I have found in this sense is a telegram from the Department to the consulates in China from September 1921, in which the Department ordered these consulates to start preparing as many propaganda drafts as they could in preparation for the conference.

This was two months before the Washington Conference. The China-based consulates were told to send out as many propaganda texts as possible throughout the conference. The Department noted in this telegram that this was to be an attempt to step away from the previous reactive propaganda approach and that the Ministry wished to be more preemptive in its communication by sending out a saturated blanket of proactive and pro-Japanese messaging.

However, the plan did not offer any detail beyond this, so it cannot be considered a fully realized propaganda plan telling every part of the

Ministry exactly what they needed to do for the Washington Conference.

(5) First Vector of Growth Experienced by the Department

Now, we come to what I call the first vector of growth exhibited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its public diplomacy communications. While the Department did not deliver a revolutionary new approach to public diplomacy at the Washington Conference for the Ministry, there was now a much stronger intention to focus on this aspect and try to engage with the international press, as compared to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. The cumulative effect of these efforts was significant. The Department itself sought to prove as much by conducting an analysis of US newspapers' rhetoric on Japan at the Washington Conference.

The conclusion of this report by the Department was that, especially towards the end of the conference in February, the perception of the Japanese delegation was relatively positive among the major nations and certainly was far more positive than it had been at the end of the Paris Peace Conference. Therefore, the appraisal by the Department of its own activities was that the Japanese Ministry had communicated with the foreign press and the mass public much more effectively than it had done in Paris.

The Department's holding of press conferences, working with foreign newspapers, and its orders to the Chinese legations to produce propaganda drafts may all be interpreted as expressions of the "internalization dimension" of the mediatization of diplomacy. In performing these actions, the Department was acting as a hub of media expertise that was trying to centrally steer the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' messaging. Its daily analysis of US public opinion, on the other hand, corresponds to the "semiotic dimension," because the Department

tried to shape its messaging on the basis of the public opinion that it perceived in these newspapers.

The first vector of growth, therefore, lay in the much-increased investment by the Ministry in such activities between the Paris Peace Conference and the Washington Conference.

4. The US Immigration Act of 1924

On the July 1, 1924, a federal law went into effect in the US that had a small clause attached to it which almost entirely banned Japanese immigration to the US. This law would continue to exist for decades until the 1950s.

The matter of Japanese immigration to the US had been a point of contention between the two nations since the first years of the twentieth century. Japan had been trying to dissuade the US government from limiting Japanese immigration via various negotiations and initiatives. Despite this, in 1924, a law banning Japanese immigration was enacted. Both to Japanese officials and to the general population, this symbolized the perceived discrimination they underwent at the hands of the other major powers. The ability of Japanese citizens to emigrate freely was seen as a measure of the geopolitical standing of the Japanese Empire. Thus, it follows that it was important for Japan to defend this right in order to uphold its international image.

(1) Shidehara Kijūrō's Anti-Propaganda Stance

It was the Department of Information's mission to try to point out the discriminatory and unjust aspects of this law to the international public. However, there was an obstacle in the form of an extremely prominent Japanese diplomat, Shidehara Kijūrō, who had been

ambassador to the US and would become Japan's foreign minister in the summer of 1924. He strongly objected to directing pro-Japanese propaganda towards the US. In 1920, he had already staunchly opposed a proposal by the Department of Information's Second Division to start a new news agency that would focus on sending propaganda to the US.

Shidehara, who was still the Japanese ambassador to the US at that time, strongly advised against starting such an agency, stating that the US State Department was very sensitive to any foreign messaging which was perceived as influencing domestic American public opinion. He categorically stated that if any communication was to be sent by the Department to the US, it should only amount to un-editorialized data or photos.

The head of the Second Division of the Department, Matsuoka Yōsuke, who had proposed the establishment of this news agency, was very critical of Shidehara's objections. He claimed that Shidehara's plan for propaganda was effectively to have no propaganda at all, which was a problem for Matsuoka because he was in charge of performing propaganda towards the US. However, Shidehara's stance was ultimately followed, and the Department would refrain from sending overly blatant propaganda to the US during the 1920s.

Four years later, the crisis in US-Japan relations surrounding the anti-immigration act would follow, and the Department now had to find ways to get around the limitation that it should not send blatant propaganda to the US. It tried to adapt itself in two ways. The first was that instead of news propaganda and news articles that contained propaganda, it focused on supporting oral propaganda lectures. The second was that they tried to make their public diplomacy publications more assertive from 1924 onwards.

(2) The Department's Work in Response to the Immigration Crisis

For several years Mr. M. T. Yamamoto, as representative of Tokyo Chamber of Commerce, has been dividing his time between America, Europe, and the Orient. He is speaking frankly to promote a better understanding between American people and the people of Japan. He has lived in America long enough to have a thorough knowledge of American Institutions and American Ideals.

Recently Mr. Yamamoto took an extensive trip to England, France, and Germany. Last year he visited Siberia, China, and Japan. He is thoroughly equipped to deal with the live, burning problems of the day.

Figure 1. News report of Yamamoto Minosaku
Source: Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], 'Yamamoto Minosaku Raishin' [Incoming Letter from Yamamoto Minosaku], Yamamoto Minosaku to Komura Kin'ichi, March 26, 1926. JACAR Ref.: B03040731200, p. 133.

Figure 1 shows Yamamoto Minosaku, a Japanese person who went around the US giving pro-Japanese lectures. He was supported financially in this by the Department, and the latter provided him with materials with which to assemble his lectures. In 1924, these lamented the US Immigration Act and the discrimination of the Japanese people that it institutionalized.

Regarding its focus on publications, the Department published all kinds of bulletins and one-off edited volumes, as well as collections of the Ministry's statements throughout the 1920s. Before 1924, the main publication was a magazine called *Kokusai Jijō*, and there was also a collection of ministry statements called *Gaimushō Kōhyōshū.*

However, these early publications were rather restrained in their formats. They consisted largely of enumerations of dry statistics and

featured very little editorializing. Before 1924, *Gaimushō Kōhyōshū* contained only public diplomatic documents and actively avoided having content that was related to unresolved or sensitive diplomatic issues.

1) On the "The Establishment of the Immigration Act of 1924…" Volumes

However, with the arrival of the immigration crisis, this tone changed, because the Ministry needed to not only convince the Japanese domestic public that it had done all it could to stop this law from becoming a reality, but also to convince the US public that this law was unjust and should be repealed. The Ministry, therefore, very rapidly produced a two-volume set of books called *The Establishment of the Immigration Act of 1924 and The Process of US-Japanese Negotiations Related to This Matter*, both in English and Japanese.

The Department, which had been publishing diplomatic document collections in the years prior, played a key role in this process, selecting the documents and producing the books. The volumes were produced in just two months to have their publication coincide with the enactment of the law in July 1924, and it was decided that the English version of this should be used as propaganda materials by the foreign legations.

These books most notably contained confidential correspondence between Ambassador to the US Hanihara Masanao and Secretary of State Charles Hughes, in which the latter agreed that the clause banning Japanese immigration to the US was unjust and should be prevented from being enacted. The very swift and assertive publication of these volumes was considered a victory within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it was decided by the Shidehara-led Ministry that publications in this format would become a pillar of the Ministry's public diplomacy strategy going forward. This represented a major shift in approach to these Department publications.

2) On the Diplomatic Magazine *Kaigai Jihō*

One can see this same increased tendency in assertiveness in the department's bi-monthly diplomatic bulletin called *Kaigai Jihō*, which was published from 1924 until 1926. Having carefully studied the department's three diplomatic bulletins, *Kokusai Jijō* (1920–1926), *Kaigai Jihō* (1924–1926), and *Kokusai Jihō* (1926–1929), I found that *Kaigai Jihō* was far more assertive and editorialized in tone than the other two publications. As an example of this, in June 1925, *Kaigai Jihō* contained an alleged article by a certain Frank Wolf, translated by the Department of Information. I have been unable to confirm whether this Frank Wolf was a real person or not, but he was described by the article credit as being a journalist of the "international news service" working in China.

The article stated that Wolf had claimed that the anti-Japanese immigration clause in this law was nothing more than a ploy by conniving warmongers within the US who wished to start a US-Japanese war in order to profit from the economic production that would be necessary to support such a war. It is quite noteworthy to find such a radical article in an official Ministry of Foreign Affairs diplomatic bulletin. This article is an example of the type of more assertive messaging that could be found in these Department-published magazines after the immigration crisis happened.

5. The Second Vector of Growth Experienced by the Department

The second vector of growth is found in the Department's response to the limitation of being unable to send blatant news propaganda to the US. As a form of adaptation, it, therefore, increased its investment in more indirect propaganda lectures by civilians in the US. The Department also pushed forward the Ministry's public diplomacy

approach in general by putting out more assertive and tendentious publications in 1924. These publications may be considered to have served as the "building blocks of information" helping to structure the messaging of the foreign legations. It was specifically noted by the Ministry that the English and French translations of the documents it published in relation to the 1924 immigration crisis should be used as the basic ingredients (the building blocks) for the diplomatic messaging of the foreign legations. In this way, they corresponded with the concept of "building blocks" as proposed by James Pamment.

(1) Background to the Ji'nan Incident

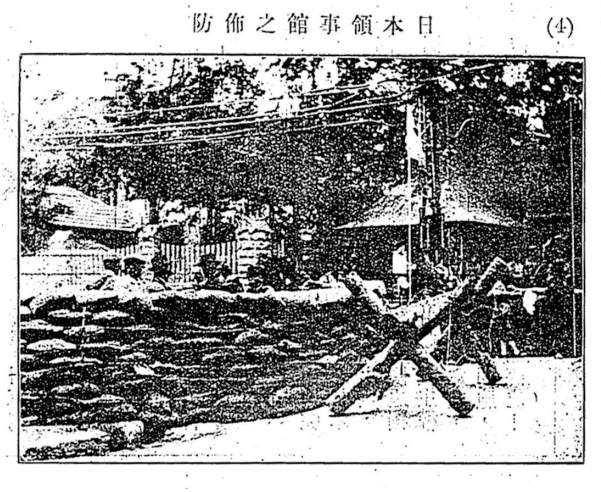


Figure 2. Japanese fortification in Ji'nan
Source: Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], 'Tenshin / 7 Sainan Jiken ni kan suru Senden Dentan Sōfu no Ken' [Tianjin / 7 On the Matter of the Sending of a Propaganda Pamphlet on the Ji'nan Incident], Katō Sotomatsu to Tanaka Gi'ichi, October 2, 1928. JACAR Ref.: B02030067200, p. 130.

The Ji'nan Incident was a battle that took place between the Japanese Shandong Expeditionary Force and the Chinese National Revolutionary Army, during the Northern Expedition in May 1928. The official explanation by the Tanaka Gi'ichi Cabinet for the presence of the Japanese forces in Shandong was that they had been sent to Ji'nan in order to protect Japanese lives and Japanese property in the region. Inevitably, these forces encountered the Chinese National Revolutionary Army while passing through the city.

This led to a battle known as the Ji'nan Incident, in which Japan was ultimately victorious on May 11, 1928. Following their victory, the Japanese occupied Ji'nan until around the end of April of 1929.

The question of which side had been the one to start this battle became the object of significant propaganda by both sides. "Was it the Chinese soldiers who had started the fighting? Or was it the Japanese?" That was the major question. You would expect that the Department of Information would undertake a propaganda campaign to try to put out the message that it had been the Chinese side that started the fighting. However, very curiously, the Department of Information did almost nothing during the Ji'nan incident.

Why, then, is it relevant to discuss this incident in relation to the Department? It is because the officials' reason for remaining idle is actually quite significant.

(2) Investments into MOFA-controlled News Agencies

In order to understand why the Department did nothing during the Ji'nan incident, one must look back further in time. In the early 1910s, the idea of the so-called "National News Agency" was introduced among Japanese foreign policymakers. This was the concept of a theoretical international news agency that would send abroad news that

supported the state's positions and interests. However, at the same time, this Agency was editorially independent from it. The idea was that this journalistic independence would give the news agency credibility in the eyes of other nations or other international news agencies. Therefore, it could be made to function as an effective propaganda tool. The idea that the Japanese state should build this type of institution took hold very strongly among Ministry officials in the 1910s.

Hence, the Kokusai and Tōhō News Agencies were created in 1914, with the idea of shaping them into such "national news agencies" for Japan. However, as I mentioned earlier, neither of these institutions was very successful at breaking into its respective international news market in the 1910s, and by 1919, the Ministry concluded that this was due to a lack of knowledge about the international news industry among its officials.

In 1920, the Department of Information was created, and one of the key missions of this department was to take control of both the Tōhō and Kokusai News Agencies and try to expand and invest in them, making them into stronger propaganda tools. For this, they also brought in outside experts. Date Gen'ichirō and Iwanaga Yūkichi became the respective managers of Tōhō and Kokusai. The Department of Information worked with Iwanaga in 1925–1926 to turn Kokusai into a news agency cooperative called Rengō, which eventually also absorbed Tōhō. Thus, in 1926, the newly formed news agency Rengō (Nihon Shinbun Rengōsha) was created to act as the national news agency for Japan.

(3) Tōhō Agency's Work During the Ji'nan Incident

By the time the Ji'nan Incident broke out in May 1928, significant investments had been made into Tōhō and Rengō by the Department,

and this gave the news agencies a strong network within East Asia as well as more advantageous relations with news agencies from other news spheres, such as Reuters.

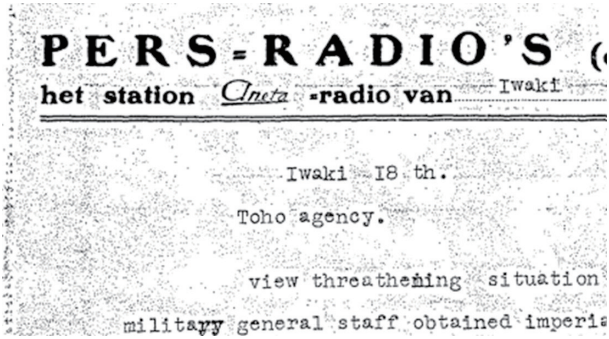

PERS-RADIO'S
het station Ineta -radio van Iwaki
Iwaki 18 th.
Toho agency.
view threathening situation
militayy general staff obtained imperi

Figure 3. Radio newsclip from Tōhō Agency
Source: Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Honpō Kakkokan Musen Denshin Renraku Riyō Zakken / Nichi, Ran-ryō Higashi Indo no Bu [On the Matter of Wireless Transmission of Information Between Japan and Various Countries Miscellanea on Communication / The Section on Japan and the Dutch East Indies]: 'Bunkatsu 3' (Section 3), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1928. JACAR Ref.: B10074944800, p. 246

The Ji'nan Incident broke out on May 3, 1928. On that same day, the lone Chinese wireless station in Ji'nan was promptly destroyed by the Japanese, who themselves maintained control of another wireless station.

This meant that in the first days of the conflict, the news that was coming out of that region was exclusively from Japanese side. In addition, the Tōhō News Agency, which was working in China, had more highly-developed structures, better facilities, and a greater network within East Asia than its counterpart Chinese news agencies. This

allowed Tōhō to saturate the global news channels with the Japanese version of what had happened, saying that the Japanese side had not been the one to start the fighting and that the Chinese side was at fault for causing the incident.

The Department subsequently made an analysis of public opinion among the various major powers and concluded in May of 1928 that, aside from the Soviet Union and China, the press of the various major powers was much more willing to believe that it had been the Chinese side that was at fault for the Ji'nan incident, because the National Revolutionary Army was seen as undisciplined, and because the Nan'jing incident had happened the year before. In that earlier incident, the National Revolutionary Army had also been perceived as being wantonly violent against foreigners. As such, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs had generally succeeded in instilling the belief among the international community that the incident had not been Japan's fault.

(4) The First Glimpse of the "National News Agency"

For these reasons, the Department of Information would not have needed to undertake any specific action to combat the perceptions of the incident among the major powers. Furthermore, the Japanese army at this time was independently performing its own propaganda as well. As Tōhō News Agency succeeded in dominating the narrative in those key first days of the incident, it is reasonable to conclude that if the Department had tried to add to this with its own proactive propaganda campaign, it would just have muddied its own message. It seems that the Department wisely kept silent on this matter.

It may be argued that, in this case, the Tōhō News Agency acted like the "national news agency." It presented the Japanese state's message, but it did so without needing direct instruction or interference from the

Department. It was acting out its purpose on its own.

Furthermore, the Ji'nan Incident would create an impetus for the Ministry to invest even more in these news agencies, giving them stronger wireless equipment, adding more correspondents, and upgrading their branch office facilities. This allowed Rengō to enlarge its market share and become an even stronger player in East Asia in the 1930s. This would then in turn prepare the path towards the creation of Dōmei News Agency in 1936, the most powerful interwar Japanese state news agency.

6. The Third Vector of Growth Experienced by the Department

The third vector of growth is a longer-term one: it consists of the investments that were made by the Ministry and subsequently by the Department of Information into the news agencies, first in the 1910s when these news agencies were started, and then in the 1920s when there was continuous investment and expansion of these news agencies. By that point, the Department of Information had taken responsibility for these news agencies in a centralized way in order to guide them directly out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo.

This then allowed the Ministry to accumulate greater knowledge of how to deal with the global news industry. So, this centralization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' propaganda strategies into the Department was now paying off in the context of the Ji'nan Incident.

7. Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the aspects of the growth of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that were either exemplified or facilitated by

the Department of Information. I have called them the three "vectors of growth."

The first of these was the progression from the Paris Peace Conference to the Washington Conference, during which the Ministry went from paying almost no attention to the public diplomacy aspect of a conference to proactively investing in one.

Then, in 1924, the second vector manifested via the increased assertiveness of the Department's publications, and then finally, during the Ji'nan Incident, the third vector was found in the growth of the news agencies, which were controlled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and which came into their own more and more in the 1920s, thanks to the centralization of their management within the Department of Information.

James Pamment (2014) says that, in a general sense, the process of "mediatization of diplomacy" first arose in the 1910s as diplomatic institutions began to create press offices and tried to centralize and professionalize their propaganda and public diplomacy outputs.

While Pamment was not particularly thinking about the Department of Information in Japan when making this assertion, I think the Department's case actually directly supports his thesis.

From an institutional perspective, the creation of the Department was, in this way, a necessary addition to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Although the Department of Information was relatively limited in its reach in the 1920s, its acquisition of institutional knowledge about how to manage news agencies and how to deal with the international news industry in a centralized way would have been important fundamentals in the path towards the more powerful and more centralized Japanese propaganda institutions of the 1930s and 1940s.

In conclusion, I would say that the Department of Information was a significant addition to the institutional structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which contradicts the image of the Department that has

existed in extant scholarship, as a weak or limited institution for the interwar Japanese state's public diplomacy and propaganda efforts.

References

1) Articles

Akami, Tomoko. 2008. The Emergence of International Public Opinion and the Origins of Public Diplomacy in Japan in the Inter-War Period. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 3(2), 99–128.

Birn, Donald. 1970. Open Diplomacy at the Washington Conference of 1921-2: The British and French Experience. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 12(3), 297–319.

Matsumura, Masayoshi. 2002. Washinton Kaigi to Nihon no Kōhō Gaikō [The Washington Conference and Japan's Public Diplomacy]. *Gaimushō Chōsa Geppō [Monthly Research Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]*, 2002(1), 47–76. (In Japanese)

Pamment, James. 2014. The Mediatization of Diplomacy. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 9(3), 253–280

———. 2015. Strategic Communication Campaigns at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Managing Mediatization During the Papal Visit, the Royal Wedding, and the Queen's Visit to Ireland. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 9(2), 118–133.

Satō, Junko. 2003. "Nashonaru Nyūsu Eijenshī" no Setsuritsuron: Iwanaga Yūkichi ni yoru Tsūshinsharon no Kōsatsu [Establishment of the 'National News Agency': Study of the News Agency Theory by Yukichi Iwanaga], *Ochanomizu Joshi Daigaku Daigakuin Ningen Bunka Ronsō [Journal of the Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Ochanomizu University]* 6, 4.1–4.9. (In Japanese)

Seki, Shizuo. 1995. Shidehara Gaikō to Hai-Nichi Iminhō [The Shidehara Diplomacy and the Anti-Japanese Immigration Law]. *Tezukayama Daigaku Kyōyō Gakubu Kiyō [Tezukayama University Bulletin of Liberal Arts]*, 49, 90–105. (In Japanese)

Takahashi, Katsuhiro. 1991. "Beikoku Hai-Nichi Iminhō Shūsei Mondai" to Chū-Bei Taishi Debuchi Katsuji ["The United States' Anti-Japanese Immigration Law Amendment Issue" and Ambassador to the US Debuchi Katsuji]. *Nihon Rekishi [Japanese History]*, 523, 59–75. (In Japanese)

———. 2011. Dai-ichiji Taisen-go ni okeru Nihon no Tai-Bei Senden Kōsō ni tsuite [On some plans of Japan's propaganda to the U.S. after World War 1]. *Kokushigaku [The Journal of Japanese History]*, 203, 81–113. (In Japanese)

2) Monographs

Akami, Tomoko. 2012. *Japan's News Propaganda and Reuters' News Empire in Northeast Asia, 1870–1934*. Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing.

———. 2014. Soft Power of Japan's Total War State: The Board of Information and Dōmei News Agency in Foreign Policy, 1934–45. Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing.

Burkman, Thomas. 2008 *Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914–1938*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Minohara, Toshihiro. 2016. *Amerika no Hai-Nichi Undō to Nichi-Bei Kankei: 'Hai-Nichi Iminhō' wa Naze Seiritsu shita ka [The US' Anti-Immigration Movement and Japanese-American Relations: Why Was the 'Immigration Act of 1924' Established?]*. Tokyo: Asashi Sensho. (In Japanese)

O'Connor, Peter. 2010. *The English-Language Press Networks of East Asia, 1918–1945*. Kent: Global Oriental.

Shōgen Tsūshinsha-shi Henshū Iinkai (ed.). 2021. *Shōgen Tsūshinsha-shi [The History of News Agencies Based on Testimonies]*. Tokyo: Shinbun Tsūshin Chōsakai. (In Japanese)

3) Other Sources (In Japanese)

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzen-ki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period] : Denshin [Telegraph]: Musen [Wireless]: Honpō Kakkoku-kan Musen Denshin Renraku Riyō Zakken / Nichi, Ran-ryō Higashi Indo-kan no Bu [On the Matter of Wireless Transmission of Information Between Japan and Various Countries Miscellanea on Communication / The Section on Japan and the Dutch East Indies]: 'Bunkatsu 2' [Section 2], Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 4 May 1928. JACAR Ref.: B10074944700.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Sainan Jiken / Honpō Yoron (Kengi, Ketsugi Nado) [Ji'nan Incident / Public Opinion in Japan (Recommendations, Resolutions, etc.)]: 'Sainan Jiken ni kan suru Setsumei-sho Haifu no Ken' [On the Matter of Giving Out Texts Explaining the Ji'nan Incident], Inabata Katsutarō to Taketomi Toshihiko, 21 July 1928. JACAR Ref.: B02030106800.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Shinbun Zasshi Sōjū Kankei Zassan [Miscellaneous Articles related to the Operation of Newspapers and Magazines]: 'Shinbun Seisaku ni kan suru Shin Keikaku-an (Miteikō)' [A New Proposal for a Plan on the Newspaper Policy (Draft)], Gaimushō Seimukyoku

Dai-ikka [First Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Bureau of Governmental Affairs], 14 April 1919. JACAR Ref.: B03040600400.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Teikoku [Empire]: Senden Kankei Zakken / Shokutaku oyobi Hojokin Shikyū Sendensha Sono-ta Senden-hi Shishutsu Kankei / Honpōjin no Bu Dai Yonkan [Miscellanea Related to Propaganda / In Relation to Consultants and the Payment of Support Expenditures of Propagandists as Well as Other Matters Related to Expenditures / Section on Japanese Volume Four]: 'Yamamoto Minosaku', Saitō Hiroshi to Shidehara Kijūrō, 15 May 1924. JACAR Ref.: B03040731100.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Teikoku [Empire]: Senden Kankei Zakken / Shokutaku oyobi Hojokin Shikyū Sendensha Sono-ta Senden-hi Shishutsu Kankei / Honpōjin no Bu Dai Yonkan [Miscellanea Related to Propaganda / In Relation to Consultants and the Payment of Support Expenditures of Propagandists as Well as Other Matters Related to Expenditures / Section on Japanese Volume Four]: Yamamoto Minosaku: 'Yamamoto Minosaku-shi Kōen Hikki Sōfu no Ken' [On the Matter of a Marked-down Version of a Lecture of Mister Yamamoto Minosaku], Saitō Hiroshi to Shidehara Kijūrō, 9 February 1925. JACAR Ref.: B03040731100.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Tōhō Tsūshinsha

Kankei Zassan [Miscellaneous Related to Tōhō News Agency]: Taishō Hachi-nen Jūichi-gatsu Hatsuka kara Shōwa Ichi-nen Jūni-gatsu Nijūnananichi [November 20, 1919 to December 27, 1926]: 'Tōhō Tsūshinsha Kakuchō ni kan suru Ken' [On the Matter of Expanding Tōhō News Agency], Uchida Kōsai to consuls in China, 30 September 1920. JACAR Ref.: B03040706300.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Washinton Kaigi [Washington Conference]: Keihatsu sono ta Senden Zakken [Enlightenment and Other Matters of Propaganda]: 'New-York World yori Gunbi Seigen Iken Chōshū no Ken' [On the Request by the New York World for Opinions on Naval Limitations], Kumasaki Kyō to Uchida Kōsai, 1 January 1921. JACAR Ref.: B06151005000.

Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan [Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Senzenki Gaimushō Kiroku[Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prewar Period]: Washington Kaigi [Washington Conference]: Keihatsu sono ta Senden Zakken [Enlightenment and Other Matters of Propaganda]: 'Washinton Kaigi ni tai suru Senden Hōhō narabi ni Shoyō Shiryō Hōkokuhō no Ken' [On the Matter of the Propaganda Method for the Washington Conference, as Well as the Delivery of Various Necessary Materials], Uchida Kōsai to consuls in China, 24 September 1921. JACAR Ref.: B06151006800.

Gaimushō Jōhōbu [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Information], (ed.). 1922. *Gaimushō Kōhyōshū Volume 2: 1922 [Collection of Public Declarations by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Volume 2: 1922]*. Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Gaimushō Jōhōbu [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Information] (ed.). 1924–1926. *Kaigai Jihō [Foreign Report]*. Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Gaimushō Jōhōbu [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Information] (ed.). 1920–1926. *Kokusai Jijō [International Situation]*. Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Gaimushō Jōhōbu [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Information] (ed.). 1926–1929. *Kokusai Jihō [International Report]*. Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ed.). 1924. *Sen Kyūhyaku Nijū Yo Nen Beikoku Iminhō Seitei oyobi kore ni kan suru Nichi-Bei Kōshō Keika [The Establishment of the Immigration Act of 1924 and The Process of US-Japanese Negotiations Related to This Matter]*. Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Chapter 3
The *Manshū Nippō* and the Issue of Chinese Reunification at the Turn of 1929

Andrea REVELANT

1. Introduction

The *Manshū Nippō*, alternatively named *Manshū Nichinichi Shinbun (ManNichi)* in 1907–27 and again in 1935–44, was for several years the largest newspaper circulated in Northeast China. It was based in Dairen (Dalian in Chinese), the economic center of the Japan-administered Kwantung Leased Territory, and belonged to the media network of the South Manchuria Railway Company, or Mantetsu for short. As a quasi-official press organ, it played a major role in the dissemination of views favorable to Japanese interests in the surrounding region. Despite being a prime source for the study of imperial Japan's relations with China from the standpoint of public communication, the *ManNichi* has so far attracted little attention in the scholarly literature (Ikeda 2000, 69–109; Ri 2000; Satō K. 2009; Matsushige 2013; Ma 2015; Cao 2016; Revelant 2021; Rong 2021). In particular, except for the second half of 1929, there is still an almost complete lack of discourse analysis on the crucial period between June 1928 and the summer of 1931. It means the interval from the conclusion of the Northern Expedition, waged by the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) against the "warlords" who controlled central and northern China, up to the months preceding the outbreak of the Manchurian incident.

The purpose of this essay is to clarify how the *ManNichi*, within that span of time, dealt with a turning point in Chinese politics: the "change

of banner" (*yìzhì*, read *ekishi* in Japanese), which on December 29, 1928, marked the formal submission of the Northeast, or Three Eastern Provinces, to the Nationalist Party and the central government it had recently established in Nanjing.[1] More precisely, the articles examined here cover a period of about one month between the announcement of the flag replacement and the aftermath of a closely related incident that upset the factional balance of power in the "Fengtian clique," that is the shooting of Yang Yuting and Chang Yinhuai by order of Zhang Xueliang on January 10, 1929. Through a comprehensive survey of editorials, opinion pieces, and factual reports, this study aims to ascertain the character of the resulting narrative in comparison with the editorial views of the two leading newspapers of Japan, as well as with opinions that appeared later in the *ManNichi*, after a change of government in Tokyo.

In the first place, did the *ManNichi* differ significantly from the mainstream press in Japan when they dealt with the same issues? A recent comparative study on the two largest independent newspapers, from June 1928 to June 1929, shows that there was a remarkable distance between their respective views on what was happening in China and how Japan should respond to those changes (Revelant 2023). The *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun* held a conservative stance on Japan's established rights overseas, starting from those that ensured a special position in "Manchuria-Mongolia" (*ManMō*, hereafter Manchuria). Consequently, it had a cold attitude toward the Nationalists and was concerned about the prospect of their influence spreading to the

1 In addition to Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, the Northeastern regime also controlled the special district of Rehe (Jehol). In February 1929, the latter was elevated to province, while Fengtian took the name of Liaoning. The eponymous capital city of Fengtian, called Shenyang in 1929–32 and again since 1945, was known internationally by its old Manchu name of Mukden.

Northeast. The *Ōsaka Asahi Shinbun*, instead, saw the need for a more active policy of dialogue with the Nanjing government as the only viable option left to Japanese diplomacy. This approach meant that, even in Manchuria, the promotion of Japanese interests would have to pass through the renunciation of some rights without relying anymore on the Fengtian regime as a negotiating counterpart.

Despite these differences, both newspapers harshly criticized the China policy of the current administration, led by premier-cum-foreign minister Tanaka Giichi (April 20, 1927 – July 2, 1929). The *Mainichi* deplored its inconsistent tactics and militaristic image, which was counterproductive, while the *Asahi* dissented from both the cabinet's outdated vision and its wrong choice of means. Moreover, both newspapers demanded that the cabinet inform the public about the results of its investigation on the Huanggutun incident of June 4, 1928, that is the assassination by bombing of Zhang Zuolin, leader of the defeated Northern coalition. Tanaka, however, not only had to keep it secret that radical officers in the Kwantung Army had killed Zhang to provoke a regime change, but was also unable to punish them properly. This failure ultimately led to his cabinet's resignation.

Research on the *ManNichi*, instead, has verified that the newspaper kept arguing for the preservation of regional autonomy in the Northeast throughout the latter half of 1929 (Revelant 2021). Its writers insisted that Chiang Kai-shek's efforts to bring China under a unified rule were bound to fail, pointing at the endless strife among military cliques as proof. Moreover, when conflict with the Soviet Union over control of the Chinese Eastern Railway ended in a sound defeat for China, the *ManNichi* took that outcome as a case in point to urge Nanjing not to interfere again in the Northeast. At the time, the newspaper's divergence with the strategy of the new foreign minister, Shidehara Kijūrō, was not evident to the public: as a result of the Sino-Soviet conflict, Shidehara

set aside his initial intention to address the "Manchurian question" under a unified China policy. Nevertheless, the differences are sufficient to prove that the *ManNichi* was not under tight government control. This finds partial explanation in the lingering influence of the previous administration on company appointments, but additional research is required to assess the role of other institutional actors.

By shifting the object of the enquiry to the turn of 1929, it is possible to reach a better understanding of discourse in terms of continuity and responsiveness to political change. Under Tanaka there was an alignment of key positions in Dairen, because the *ManNichi* president, the Mantetsu president, and the director-general of Kwantung all belonged to or were closely associated with the party in government, the Rikken Seiyūkai (Revelant 2021, 192). Therefore, one may expect the newspaper to have adhered closely to the cabinet's policy in that period. At the same time, further comparison with the *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun* can lead to a more accurate assessment of the common ground between mainstream public opinion and the *ManNichi* with respect to basic policy objectives.

Before presenting the results of the survey, it is expedient to recall briefly how historians have put the main facts falling within the examined month in their broader context. From the standpoint of Japan's foreign policy, the "change of flag" of the Northeast meant the failure of previous efforts to avoid its alliance with the Nationalist government. After causing some delay, however, by the autumn of 1928, Japan had stopped interfering in the negotiations between Nanjing and Fengtian. The consolidation of Chiang's "moderate" faction in power, along with signals that the Northeastern regime would retain *de facto* autonomy, had softened Tanaka. The prime minister still thought it possible to exert tutelage over Zhang Xueliang, the son and successor of the assassinated leader. He pressed Zhang to allow an extension of the Mantetsu lines, as

reluctantly promised by his father (Iriye 1960; Tsuchida 1992, 81–84, 87–89; Satō M. 2009, 314–341).

Factional instability remained, however, a source of concern. The young Xueliang (henceforth called by name to avoid confusion with other Zhangs) had still to prove himself. Although he did have his own followers in the "new faction," such as Gao Jiyi, his position largely depended on the ability to hold the balance between other power brokers. More than by the "old faction" of Zuolin's comrades, such as Zhang Zuoxiang and Zhang Jinghui, Xueliang felt challenged by the growing influence of Yang Yuting, Zuolin's former chief of staff, and his ally Chang Yinhuai. Yang had a long experience as a negotiator with Japan and other military factions in China. Under Xueliang, he refused an appointment that would have removed him from the center of politics and kept for himself the strategic post of director of the Fengtian arsenal. He also secured for Chang the governorship of Heilongjiang and the vice presidency of the communications commission.

Many authors in China, and others by reflection (Nishimura 1996, 61–63; Zhang 2016, 117–118), have held that a core aspect of rivalry between Xueliang and Yang lay in the latter's opposition to joining forces with the Nationalist Party, which implied a pro-Japanese stance. This interpretation has been discarded by other authors, owing to evidence that Yang actively pursued an accommodation with the Nationalists to increase his own authority. In so doing, however, he not only made Xueliang feel in danger, but also antagonized the "old faction," which saw in those maneuvers a threat to its territorial base (Tsuchida 1992, 75–76; Mitter 2000, 24–28; Higuchi 2004; Kwong 2017, 136–139). After investigating the double assassination, in his report to Tanaka (24/11/1929, in NGB, 152), the consul general in Fengtian, Hayashi Kyūjirō, portrayed Yang as a two-faced schemer:

> [T]hrough Chang Yinhuai, Yang Yuting secretly caused opposition to the railway issue in negotiations with the Mantetsu; on the other hand, he informed the Japanese that the procrastination […] was due to Zhang Xueliang's irresoluteness, and so he would guide Zhang Xueliang and see that a solution be reached gradually. Moreover, toward the Nationalist government […] he slandered Zhang Xueliang as a puppet of Japan and vigorously spread convenient words of self-recommendation […] Zhang Xueliang realized that […] owing to the lack of progress on the railway issue he was inviting suspicion by the relations with Japan, and he was also falling into an unfavorable position with the Nationalist government.

If Yang was not simply pro-Japanese, then, why did that label remain stuck on him? One obvious answer is that, at the time, it helped justify his execution. Furthermore, as Yang had often dealt with the Japanese under Zuolin, his public image was tainted by that record. This is key to understanding why the press reacted to his death in conflicting ways, as illustrated further here.

For the sake of clarity, the analysis of screened articles is organized into three thematic paragraphs. In order, they present the immediate reactions to the "change of flag," seen in the context of Sino-Japanese pending issues; the opinions on the "Yang-Chang shooting incident;" the outlook for Japan's Manchurian policy, and related appeals for the unity of public opinion. Finally, the concluding paragraph answers the research questions on the basis of the findings. Due to limited space, articles are cited only by date of issue (day/month, omitting the year) and page without the title. For those sent by telegram to the *ManNichi* headquarters in Dairen, the origin is shown in square brackets as follows:

s: special telegram; B: Beiping (Beijing's name under the Nationalists); C: Changchun; F: Fengtian; N: Nanjing, S: Shanghai, T: Tokyo.

When two articles have all of the above features in common, a lower-case letter is added to distinguish them. The *ManNichi* had two daily editions, consisting of eight pages in the morning and four pages in the evening. As by common practice, the first page of the morning edition was entirely filled with advertisements. Editorials ran across the top of the third page in the morning, therefore citations omit that number. Edited diplomatic correspondence from the series FRUS and NGB is cited by document number, while microfilm slide numbers identify the documents cited from *Gaimushō Kiroku* (GK).

2. The White Sun Rises over Manchuria

Despite a string of rumors, according to which the change of flag would take place on January 1, 1929, as late as December, the *ManNichi* still assumed that Fengtian authorities would defer any decision at least until mid-March (22/12 ev., 1 [N 21/12]). A reporter reminded readers that the Third National Congress of the Kuomintang was to be held in Nanjing from the 15th of that month. Consequently, Fengtian leaders would wait for its outcome before resuming discussion on a possible compromise with the South. In any case, they would delay the agreement as long as possible. If a deal turned out to be unavoidable, they would still aim at preserving the autonomy of the Three Eastern Provinces in internal affairs (23/12, 2 [sF 22/12]). While preparations for a superficial restyling of the political organs were under way, the policy was to set limits to the local application of the "principles and spirit" of the Nationalist Party (25/12, 3 [sF]). On December 29, however,

news that the change of flag had been anticipated on that very same day disproved the recent forecast (29/12, 2 [sF 28/12a]; for Hayashi's last efforts to find out what was going on, see his reports of 27–28/12, in NGB, 232–236).

The *ManNichi* tried to shed light on the circumstances behind the sudden turn of events. On the 27, it was explained, Chiang Kai-shek had solicited Xueliang to carry out on New Year's Day the long-delayed display of allegiance. The Fengtian leader had immediately convened his top officials and proposed to them to anticipate the flag replacement. "Certain heavyweights," though, had voiced their opposition on the grounds that the step was premature, thereby opening a debate that seemed still unresolved when the reporter informed the staff in Dairen. A reason for Xueliang's hurry, the writer speculated, might have been that he wanted to take advantage of Japan's distraction: because of the impending session of the Imperial Diet, in the neighboring country all attention was set on domestic issues (29/12, 2 [sF 28/12b]). A telegram update added that extended consultations with provincial representatives had led to the decision to hoist the Nationalist flag on the 29. Appointments to the new organs, however, would be postponed owing to complaints from members of the provincial assemblies, who would lose their positions as a result of the reorganization (29/12, 2 [sF 28/12c]). It was observed afterwards that Zhang Zuoxiang was most keen about preserving the assemblies, while Heilongjiang province had shown no interest in the issue (4/1 ev., 1 [sF 3/1]). This can be read as a sign of Chang Yinhuai's support for changes that would weaken the "old faction."

The first page of the evening edition had its upper half filled with titles about the big event, including an excerpt from the official announcement. Xueliang and his colleagues stated that the late Marshal, Zhang Zuolin, had always wished for peace and unity. He had fought communism, not the Three Principles of the People; as the Nationalist

Party had broken up with the communists, mutual trust now allowed for unification and obedience to Nanjing (29/12 ev., 1 [sF a]). Other articles, all written in a neutral tone, were purely descriptive. Despite fears that the communists might cause trouble, there was no report of incidents at any place. Nothing was said about the ordinary people's response, aside from a remark on some "novelty-loving merchants" who could not wait until morning to hoist the new flag in Fengtian (29/12 ev., 1 [sF b]; cf. Hayashi to Tanaka, 29/12, in NGB, 237).[2] Later on, a writer using the pen name "Jochiku" (如竹) reported some sarcastic comments by students of the Northeastern University (6/1, 2 [F]).

A correspondent from Tokyo wrote that the government had foreseen the change in light of recent developments. Although it would not interfere in China's internal affairs by issuing a protest or a warning, it was concerned that Southern organizations and radical elements in the North might foment the anti-Japanese movement, which was worsening across China with blatant Nationalist endorsement. If Nanjing did not stop it, the cabinet would have to issue a "firm admonition" and take other "effective measures" that were currently under careful study (29/12 ev., 1 [sT]). The *ManNichi* also enquired about the unofficial response of the Kwantung Territory and Army. Both had a wait-and-see attitude, as it was common belief that Nanjing would not attempt to impose some of its men to key posts in the Three Provinces. Notwithstanding superficial unification, they did not foresee any immediate change in practice. Northeastern leaders would think twice about entrusting all negotiations

2 The US consul in Harbin reported to the minister in China this impression: "No particular enthusiasm over the event was expressed by the local Chinese residents, but it is reasonable to conclude that they are relieved by this outward sign that North and South China are united." (Hanson to MacMurray, 31/12, in FRUS, 79). Japanese consular reports composed a mixed picture: a festive atmosphere in Juzijie (now Yanban) and Tonghua; indifference in Qiqihar, Chifeng, and Tieling (GK b, 528, 532, 536, 562–563).

with Japan to Nanjing, as that would mean for them to "dig their own grave" (1/1, 2).

Another article, however, presented a partially different view from unspecified army sources in Tokyo. Although the change of flag would not bring serious consequences right away, they said, it was an issue that Japan could not overlook lightly, because it would affect future negotiations. Japan's diplomacy was going to get busy with China, as matters relating to the Manchurian railways and all other pending issues were likely to pass into the hands of the Nationalist government (1/1, 2 [T 31/12]). Later on, the newspaper reported on a recent visit to Xueliang by consul-general Hayashi. The latter had asked for a meeting since December 28, but the commander in chief had pretended to be sick. There was evidence that he had led the political shift, keeping in check those who opposed it. Hayashi had voiced discontent with Xueliang's behavior, which disregarded the friendly relationship entertained so far (3/1 ev., 1 [sF]; cf. Hayashi to Tanaka, 1/1, in NGB 1928, 246).

After the "Blue Sky with a White Sun" flag had replaced the old five-colored one of the Republic, the *ManNichi* pondered the consequences in two editorials. In the first one (30/12), the writer could find no reason to rejoice about the event, as it was a "manifestation of the will to surrender to the National Revolutionary Army." The new flag and political rearrangement that would follow suit were not "a superficial formal change," but rather a shift from "an independent position" toward "subordination to the Nationalist government." Therefore, pending diplomatic issues would logically pass under central control, as well as other political matters. Allegedly, the deal would allow the Three Eastern Provinces to retain their autonomy in internal affairs. High-ranking officials there, though, might not necessarily trust Xueliang as the only leader of the region, and there were signs of

differences between Fengtian and Jilin men. Moreover, a struggle for power was going on within the Nationalist Party (as recently described in 25/12, 2 [S 23/12]; 29/12, 3 [sF]). It seemed too early, then, to conclude that the change of flag had brought peace to the Northeast.

The second editorial, published about a week later (1/8), reconsidered those arguments in a more dubitative tone. On the one hand, the change of flag was just "a kind of camouflage" that the Northeastern factions, with that of Fengtian at their center, had adopted to preserve their power. On the other hand, formal reform of the political structure would open the way to infiltration of the "Southern faction," with still uncertain effects. From this premise, the writer reflected on the possible impact on Japanese interests in the region.

First of all, it went without saying that no political change could subvert "the special character of Manchuria" and Japan's "special position" there, which had world recognition. This notwithstanding, the "Manchurian question" (*ManMō mondai*) would likely become even more "delicate." Issues such as railways and land leasing rights, which were already difficult to solve at the local level,[3] would become harder to negotiate if Nanjing got involved. Should the anti-Japanese campaign and the movement to recover China's sovereign rights by "crushing imperialism" advance into the Three Eastern Provinces, then Japan's policy toward Manchuria would be in trouble.

"Some people" claimed that, after the flag change, it had become impossible to treat those provinces as a special region distinct from

3 Just before the announcement of the change of flag, an article with an enclosed map had charted the progress of Chinese efforts to lay out railways around the Mantetsu lines (29/12, 2). The author noted that there was an overt aim to "encircle" the Japanese network in a way that would not just hamper its expansion, but also provide alternative routes. Yet, as China lacked the capital to run efficient lines, those projects might not pose such a grave problem. If foreign capital joined in, however, they could become "a big threat" to the Mantetsu.

"mainland China" (*Shina honbu*). The editorialist disagreed. Japan had to stick to its policy owing to historical and geographic reasons, along with its "special rights and interests." Furthermore, the current situation let him think that the Three Eastern Provinces would more than ever "build up a peculiar position" for themselves. Without leaning to either optimism or pessimism, Japan should uphold its policy principles and quietly watch the developments in China. If, by misfortune, some serious situation should occur in Manchuria, it was obvious that Japan would have to turn to "exceptional means" in order to protect its rights.

From the manner in which it covered the story of the flag change, it is evident that the *ManNichi* did not look favorably at the prospect of the actual integration of the Northeast with Nationalist China. The newspaper shared with Japanese authorities the view that the survival of a *de facto* independent regime would better guarantee the empire's interests in the region and was outspoken enough to warn the Northeastern establishment about Japan's determination to defend its vested rights. In hindsight, it is tempting to read the veiled threat of the use of force, along with doubts about the solidity of Xueliang's leadership, as part of a propaganda operation of the Kwantung Army to prepare the ground for military intervention. However, it has rather to be stressed that there was no contradiction between these articles and Tanaka's use of strong language to dissuade Xueliang from cooperating with the Nationalists. In their first meeting after the pledge of loyalty to Nanjing, Hayashi told Xueliang to keep in mind that, depending on his behavior, Japan "might have no choice but to take resolute measures" (Hayashi to Tanaka, 31/1, in NGB, 246).

The idea that the penetration of Nationalist influence into Manchuria might harm Japan's interests in the region found reason in Nanjing's agenda for the steady recovery of sovereign rights from the foreign powers. The *ManNichi* was keen on the problem of trade

boycotts and other anti-Japanese initiatives backed by the Nationalist Party.[4] In the editorialist's opinion, those campaigns would go on until the achievement of a fundamental rearrangement of bilateral relations. Therefore, it was useless to make piecemeal concessions in the hope of winning China's favor. Such an approach would rather turn the anti-Japan movement into a "despise Japan" one, thereby worsening the situation. What Japan should do, instead, was to stand firm (25/12).

Concerning the question of military withdrawal from Shandong (which had remained under partial Japanese occupation since the Jinan incident of May 1928), on January 10, the editorialist observed that Nanjing's hardening in the negotiations was just a temporary move against the Leftists' attempts to infiltrate in power. Implicitly, he meant that the Nationalist government was trying not to expose itself to domestic accusations of weakness, which might play to the advantage of its political rivals. He supported this view by pointing at several recent signs of the Nationalist leaders' willingness to reach an agreement with Japan. If bilateral relations improved, the effects on the Three Eastern Provinces would be "not small." In the past, the Fengtian group had repeatedly used discord between Tokyo and Nanjing to protect its own interests. With a détente, that trick would not work anymore. Through Japan's good offices, though, the region might secure a "peculiar position to a certain extent." As a result, there would be some progress toward the solution of local issues, which had been hampered so far by the lack of a clear responsibility (10/1).

In other words, the writer did not see the establishment of friendly relations between Japan and the Nationalist government as a means to reach an agreement on regional matters at a central level. What he meant to say was rather that easing tensions with Nanjing would facilitate its

4 In the period examined here, from January 9 onward the newspaper reported on an almost daily basis on the blockade of the Japanese concession in Hankou.

acknowledgment of the Northeast as an autonomous administration, and that the latter would then be obliged to resume negotiations with Japan.

In the meantime, the Tanaka cabinet avoided drawing public attention to the North-South deal. The topic was barely mentioned in a report about a ministerial meeting on China policy held on January 6, whose main conclusion was the decision to uphold the current line: there would be no treaty revision and no withdrawal of the army from Shandong until China changed its attitude (7/1 ev., 1 [sT]). In an interview, Tanaka touched on the "replacement of flag" along with other China-related issues. He explained that the cabinet did not oppose a compromise between North and South, as long as the rights and interests of the empire were not infringed and its "special position" in the region was acknowledged (10/1, 2 [Okitsu 9/1]). On the same day, however, the *ManNichi* reported that Xueliang had sent a long telegram to Chiang Kai-shek, asking for instructions to deal with "a rather hard demand" by Hayashi. On Tanaka's order, the consul had pressed for the implementation of an agreement that would enable the Mantetsu to extend one of its lines. This news, the journalist noted, showed that the "Manchurian question" had finally come under the influence of the Nanjing government (10/1, 2 [N 9/1]).

As another correspondent remarked, Xueliang's behavior proved that the North-South agreement had gone further than expected by Japan's foreign ministry, which had planned to negotiate about railways and other issues with the regional government, as before. At a time when relations between Tokyo and Nanjing were bad, it was highly doubtful that the latter would act with good faith toward Japan. Although the foreign ministry had adopted a policy of non-interference in China's domestic affairs, the government could not just stand by and watch while there was a risk that Japan's special relationship with Manchuria would be ignored, and its interests would suffer damage. It

seemed, therefore, that Tokyo would soon send a warning to the rulers of the Three Eastern Provinces (10/1, 2 [sT 9/1]). On the following day, however, news of Yang's execution cast further uncertainty on the scenario.

3. The "Yang-Chang Shooting Incident"

As a result of the formal adoption of the Nationalist system of government, the federal commission established in the aftermath of Zuolin's death was immediately replaced by a Committee for Political Affairs of the Northeast, with Xueliang as chairman. When the *ManNichi* published the full list of the 13 designated members, the article signaled in its title that Yang Yuting was not among them (1/1, 2 [sF 31/1a]; rumors of a possible exclusion had surfaced in the forecast of 31/1, 2 [sF 30/1]). Regarding the appointments at the provincial level, however, the commentator noted that Yang's faction kept its grip on Heilonjiang, with Chang Yinhuai as governor and Chang's trusted men in the other executive positions. The Jilin faction held fast to power in its home province under Governor Zhang Zuoxiang, while Xueliang's inner circle was strong in Fengtian and Rehe. Therefore, it seemed that "names have changed, but there is not any change in content." On the other hand, the same writer thought that Yang and some others would not join the Nationalist Party gladly, as required to obtain Nanjing's approval for appointment, and that a struggle for power might be unavoidable between new party members and non-party members (1/1, 2 [sF 31/1b]).[5]

5 In the meantime, Yang had told the Japanese vice consul that he disagreed with the sudden change of flag, whose consequences Xueliang had not considered properly, and that he did not intend to participate in the new system. Hayashi, however, thought that Yang was trying to cast Xueliang in a bad light, while pandering to the Japanese with "sweet words" (Hayashi to Tanaka, 31/12, in NGB, 245).

Nevertheless, news that Yang and Chang had been arrested (11/1 ev., 2 [sF a-d]) and shot (overprint on 11/1 ev., 1 [sF]) broke out abruptly on January 11. At first, a reporter speculated that the reason might have been the Yang faction's anti-Nationalist stance or its involvement in that "certain grave incident" of the previous spring (meaning the assassination of Zhang Zuolin; 11/1 ev., 2 [sF a]). The latter theory, which would then surface intermittently, is discussed further below. Another article argued that there were probably several concurrent motives. It could be a move by the Jilin faction to eliminate Yang's influence; a reaction to some conspiracy that Yang had crafted to maintain control of the Fengtian military arsenal; a consequence of Nanjing's protest against Yang's opposition to the North-South agreement; or Xueliang's intention to strike a faction that included former subordinates of Guo Songling (who had led a failed rebellion against Zhang Zuolin in 1925; 1/11 ev., 2 [sF b]). Over the next days, the *ManNichi* devoted much space to exploring the incident's background and its consequences.

The Northeastern Political Affairs Committee issued an official explanation on the same day the news appeared, in the form of a circular telegram addressed to all the main Nationalist government and party organs. It was signed by Xueliang and 11 other members, with the notable absence of the only one who would join from outside the local factions. The document claimed that capital punishment had been necessary to prevent Yang and Chang from carrying out a conspiracy, which would have put the country at risk. In a long premise, the committee explained that the two men had abused their position for money and power, and lay on them the blame for all sorts of troubles that had occurred over several years, including the delay in concluding peace with the Nationalists. Confronted with those charges, the two men had plead guilty, and the death sentence was carried out (Japanese

translation in Hayashi to Tanaka, 15/1, in GK a, 36–38); the court-martial sentence, published on January 15, specified that Yang and Chang had plotted with a communist leader to strike in March, during the Nationalist Party Congress (Japanese translation in NGB, 150). Of course, high officials interviewed in Fengtian confirmed this version; among them, Wang Jiazhen added a vivid account of the meeting in which the two culprits had acknowledged guilt and of their immediate execution (13/1, 2 [special envoy Takeda, F 12/1]; see also the interviews to Zhang Zuoxiang and Yuan Jinkai, [Takeda, F 12/1]; and to police chief Gao Jiyi, in 12/1 ev., 1 [sF a]).

It seemed from the start, however, that an internecine struggle for power lay behind the official justification. According to some "important person," Xueliang had wanted to get rid of Yang since the time Zuolin was heading the Beijing government. After the latter's death, Yang had challenged Xueliang's authority by constantly getting in the way of his initiatives, such as the attempt to reduce the deficit by cutting the expenditure for arsenals and railways. Under Yang, Chang had turned Heilongjiang into a factional stronghold, and was harboring similar ambitions toward Jilin. This had finally alarmed Zhang Zuoxiang, who had then agreed with Xueliang to eliminate both men (13/1, 2 [sF 12/1]; on widespread ill feelings against Yang, because of his opposition to military spending cuts, see also 12/1 ev., 1 [sF b]). "Chinese sources" pointed out that the decision to kill had been triggered by a discussion held in the wake of Hayashi's demand on the railway extension. Allegedly, Yang and Chang had advised the commander to comply, because disregarding an already sealed agreement would entail a loss of international trust. Xueliang and Zuoxiang nevertheless had taken a position against the start of works, fearing that Yang's faction would increase its influence at their expense (14/1 ev., 1 [sF a]).

Some articles emphasized that up-and-coming members of the Jilin

faction had instigated Xueliang with the support of the "old military clique." The *ManNichi*'s envoy gave credit to an anonymous source, who claimed that the Jilin faction would then try to take down the old faction, and ultimately aim at Xueliang's head. The Yang-Chang incident could, therefore, be "a prologue to a political crisis in the Three Provinces" (14/1, 2 [Takeda, F 13/1]). Yang's downfall had been so quick that now the old faction felt threatened by the Jilin group. Moreover, those divisions might play to the advantage of other northern factions (15/1, 2 [sF 14/1]). In Beiping, "many people" thought that Zhang had wanted Yang dead not because he opposed the Nationalist Party, but owing instead to the suspicious ties he had with some of its factional leaders, namely Bai Chongxi and Yan Xishan. In the end, however, Yang's execution would be for Fengtian "a suicidal act that has hastened its own splitting" (1/12, 2 [B 11/1]).

A "representative of Xueliang" in Beiping confirmed that Yang had plotted against the commander in chief and the old military clique, making direct contacts with the "South" to bring the Northeast under his own faction. His conclusion, however, was optimistic: Thanks to Yang's demise, political stabilization in the region would lead to an improvement in its relations with Japan (14/1, 2 [B 12/1]). Other "important people" in the same city had a still different opinion. They believed that Yang had secretly obstructed Xueliang's efforts for peace and plotted to overthrow him with the backing of Japanese military men and adventurers. Therefore, the execution would halt for some time Japan's aggressive intentions (13/1, 1 [B 12/1]).

According to another "reliable" source, Xueliang had not been hostile to Yang until very recently. Relentless slandering had persuaded first Zhang Zuoxiang and other members of the old faction, such as Sun Chuanfang (Nanjing's former warlord), to press the case against Yang with the young commander in chief. Just after the shooting, they said,

a regretful Xueliang had "thrown himself on his bed and kept sobbing" (15/1, 2 [sF 14/1]; on vague rumors about Zhang Zuoxiang and Zhang Jinghui, see also 15/1, 3 [sH]). Both Zhang Zuoxiang (13/1, 2 [special envoy Takeda, F 12/1]) and Sun denied any personal involvement in the decision to eliminate Yang. It has to be observed that Sun did not belong to the Fengtian faction in a strict sense, although he had fought on the same side against the Nationalists. After losing his territories and the war, he had taken refuge in Dairen. Sun had been on a short trip to Fengtian on January 6–12, apparently to join the celebrations for the birthday of Yang's father. Xueliang, he said, had called him on the phone only after the shooting (13/1, 2).

Annoyed by the rumors about his role, Sun asked the *ManNichi* reporter to visit him at home. He repeated his version of the facts, saying that Yang had been a close friend of his and that the execution had been Xueliang's decision alone, against Zuoxiang's previous advice to endure discontent. The young leader had summoned the high officials and Sun himself only on the morning of the 11th to discuss how to deal with the aftermath (16/1, 2).[6]

A few reports called directly into question the Nationalist government. An "important person" within it said that it had been chairman Chiang Kai-shek who ordered Yang's death, owing to his opposition to the change of flag (13/1, 2 [urgent, N 12/1]; 14/1, 2 [N 12/1]). Based on various unspecified sources, a telegram from Fengtian tied up internal and external causes as follows. Charges of conspiracy were hard to believe, as Yang's faction did not have a foothold in the military but rather in public enterprises, such as railways, arsenals,

6 Sun also said that he had explained the situation to Machino Takema, a former advisor to Zhang Zuolin, who had paid a call to the Marshal's headquarters on that day. However, earlier on, Machino had told the *ManNichi* that the decision to put Yang to death had resulted from a series of meetings among officials and did not depend on Xueliang's feelings of hatred or envy (12/1 ev., 1 [sF 11/1]).

and telegraphs. In any case, it was a conflict between Xueliang and Yang that had inevitably led to trouble. Besides the machinations of Sun Chuanfang and Zhang Zuoxiang, who were also on bad terms with Yang, behind the incident, there was Nanjing's concern for Yang's ability to control Xueliang. Therefore, the Nationalist government had been waiting for an opportunity to get rid of Yang. Now that he was dead, it was foreseen that the "infiltration of Southern influence will eventually become extreme, and internally, confusion shall also increase." This might also make Japan's diplomacy toward Manchuria "more difficult" (13/1, 3 [sF]).

The Nationalist government, however, gave no public sign of support for the double execution (14/1 ev., 1 [N 12/1]). On the contrary, the lack of a proper trial, and especially the absence of prior consent from Nanjing to proceed against the officially appointed Chang, aroused harsh criticism by the party press, which also advanced doubts about Xueliang's real motives (*Míngúo rìbào* in Shanghai, quoted in 13/1, 2 [sS 12/1], and 14/1, 2 [S 13/1]; *Jīng bào* in Beiping, quoted in 17/1, 3). In particular, the *Míngúo rìbào* observed that Yang and Chang had been opposing Japan's encroachment into China; if that were the reason for their death, it meant the young Zhang had taken the path of his father. To dispel suspicions, Xueliang should take a clear anti-imperialist stance. According to the *ManNichi*, "an influential party member in Fengtian" stated that such a "barbaric punishment" had damaged China's international reputation and had disqualified Zhang as a political leader, exposing his true nature as a child of a military clique (15/1 ev., 1 [sF]).

Chinese newspapers responded in various ways to Yang's death. In Beiping, the *Jīng bào* acknowledged the man's qualities, but saw his demise as progress for the Revolution; the *Shìjiè rìbào*, instead, wrote that Zhang and Yang should have cooperated at a time when Japan was trying to cause confusion in their region (both cited in 14/1 ev., 1, [sB

12/1]). In Shanghai, the *Shíshì xīnbào* lamented that factional intrigue had caused the loss of still another talented man (14/1, 2 [S 13/1]).

As for the reactions of the common people, the *ManNichi* had little to say. Its envoy in Fengtian, however, mentioned briefly that the incident had met with "great applause and delight," especially among university students, bringing Xueliang's popularity "to the highest point" (14/1, 2 [Takeda, F 13/1]). Concerning the students, another report explained that Yang had prevented Xueliang from donating part of his father's inheritance as funds in support of education (12/1 ev., 1 [sF c]). The only other article that tackled the issue of popular opinion in the aftermath of the incident was an interview with Masutomo Kurakichi, a company official in charge of labor affairs at the Fushun coal mines. The mines, located not far from Fengtian, were a strategic asset of the Mantetsu and employed "nearly 50,000" Chinese workers. According to Masutomo, the execution of Yang and Chang had made a profound impression on them, as well as on the many other Chinese living in the area. Whereas the change of flag had been for them just a formal agreement between North and South, the unexpected incident had given them an "unprecedented impulse." They thought that the real cause of the affair lay in the struggle between old and new forces, and the sudden fall of the big shots made them feel that the force of the young people was emerging throughout China. From "the bottom of their hearts," they now believed that the Three Eastern Provinces "would be tied certainly and completely" to the Southern government, which was "backed by the latent power of the young people." Labor issues would get more complicated, and care would be required not to go against the trend of times (19/1, 3 [s Fushun]).

To summarize, the *ManNichi* gathered a range of explanations, some of which were mutually exclusive, for the assassination of Yang and his right-hand man. While those put forward by identified personalities were

self-serving, it is noteworthy that the Nationalist camp seemed divided between opposed appraisals of the main victim's political stance. In the international press, a correspondent from Shanghai observed a similar contrast between the views of the diplomatic body in Beiping, which took Yang's death as "a serious blow to Chinese Nationalists," and those in Nanjing, where the event appeared "favorable to the Nationalist movement" (clipped article by Thomas F. Millard from the *Herald Tribune*, 20/1, in GK a, 128). Because of Yang's ambiguous behavior, it was possible to portray him as having been either pro or against the Nationalist cause. In the *ManNichi*, the arrangement of these articles in the page layout did not suggest a preferred interpretation. In any case, the overall impression emerging from the narrative was that factional conflict ran deep in the Northeast (as reminded in the editorial of 19/1).

Already on January 13, however, an editorial made sense of the information in a rather clear-cut way. The writer gave little credit to the official justification for the shooting and found its "real cause" in the machinations of the "Southern political group" (*nanpō seidan*), which had taken advantage of rivalries in Fengtian to eliminate Yang and so realize North-South unification. After Zuolin's death, the two factors that had prevented the Fengtian group from falling apart had been "indirectly Japan's force, and directly figures like Mr. Yang." The execution of such a "man of merit" under all sorts of charges showed the future direction of the Fengtian group. Although Yang and Chang had obstructed Japan's policy, it would be shallow to think that things were going to improve without them. The situation did not require a revision of Japan's stance, but it should be realized that North-South unification and the consequent transfer of authority over foreign affairs to the Nanjing government were "an already accomplished fact" (13/1). Thus, the author took up again the pessimistic view presented in the editorial of December 30.

With respect to the advance of Nationalist influence and the negative

outlook for Japan, this analysis matched with the overall view emerging from a survey of both the Japanese and international press, which the Information Department of the foreign ministry in Tokyo would compile in February. The survey, however, did not indicate that public opinion saw the Nanjing government as an instigator of the murders (GK a, 138–153; see also Neville to Secretary of State, 17/1, in FRUS, 57). In Japan, the double execution aroused much more interest than the previous announcement on the "change of flag." According to another confidential report prepared in January by the Information Department, only the *Chūgai Shōgyō Shinpō* (ancestor to the present *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*) had taken up that topic for an editorial, criticizing the failure of the cabinet's Manchurian policy (GK b, 581–583).

4. The Consequences for Japan and the Unity of Public Opinion

As a major shock within the Northeastern regime might affect its relations with Japan, the *ManNichi* enquired about the views of Japanese officials on that issue. Army sources could not predict whether the disappearance of Yang, who had performed the role of international mediator, would turn into an advantage for Japan or not; overall, they did not see any big consequences coming in the short term (12/1, 2 [T 11/1]). In the Mantetsu, Vice President Matsuoka Yōsuke (now best known for his role as foreign minister in 1940–41) neatly denied that Yang's death might influence negotiations with his company (12/1, 2). President Yamamoto Jōtarō was of the same opinion: the incident was the result of infighting, unrelated to Yang's stance either in favor or against Japan. However, he then raised some questions. If Xueliang grew stronger, would this facilitate bilateral negotiations on Manchuria? Or would they get more complicated, should the Three Provinces

rather get weaker owing to Yang's death, and responsibility for foreign relations be handed over to the Nationalist government? (12/1 ev., 1 [T 11/1]). The political police section chief of the Kwantung Territory, Ōba Kanjirō, simply stated that the incident would have no effect on the Japanese administration (13/1 ev., 1).

Kwantung director-general Kinoshita Kenjirō was less restrained in his statements. Although he too said that the affair would cause at most some delay in the negotiations, he also insinuated that Nanjing seemed to have instigated Zhang in some way; if it were so, then the Nationalist government "should bear half of the responsibility" for what had happened. Furthermore, he observed that the executions had caused a loss of international trust toward Fengtian and China as a whole. This was regrettable, since the Chinese people wished to recover their national rights through the abolition of extraterritoriality and so on, but criticism could not be helped, also in light of the bombing that had claimed Zhang Zuolin's life in the previous year (14/1, 1). In other words, Kinoshita not only took rough justice as proof that China was not ready yet for treaty revision, but also used the occasion to reiterate the Japanese version of the Huanggutun incident: the culprits were Southern agents.

A few days after the shooting, news came out that the Chinese press had announced as imminent a decision of the Nationalist government for the reversion of the Mantetsu (14/1, 2 [S 13/1a]). The text, which was an extremely short cable, got the prime space on the right side above the fold, together with two articles on reactions from Japan. In the remaining part of the upper half of the page, there were comments on the Yang affair and more news from China: it seemed that Nanjing had ordered Xueliang to immediately interrupt railway talks with Japan and that it would take over the task (14/1, 2 [S 13/1b]). The page layout thus established a visual connection between Yang's execution and hostile

moves from the South.

Concerning the Mantetsu, Japan's foreign ministry informally dismissed that news as mere propaganda, aimed at the Chinese people in view of the coming Nationalist Party Congress (14/1, 2 [sT 13/1]). Railway minister Ogawa Heikichi, too, did not believe the announcement had any substance. However, he added that if necessary the imperial government would take "self-defense measures" for the protection of its vested rights (14/1, 2 [s Koshigoe 13/1]). Vice president Matsuoka shared the opinion that the Nationalists were just obliged to say "dreamlike things" owing to their domestic situation. Although the central government had moved from Beijing to Nanjing, in the past, actual negotiations on Manchuria had always been managed locally with the authorities of the Three Eastern Provinces, and that would not change (15/1 ev., 1).

Still, the *ManNichi* took a vigilant approach to the matter. As Nanjing's order to hand over competence on relations with Japan was a precondition for reclaiming the Mantetsu, a writer noticed, such a plan could not be seen anymore as a simple fantasy. Some action might follow soon. It was reported that Japan's government had decided to watch quietly the behavior of the Three Provinces. Should the latter show the intention to transfer competence on foreign affairs to Nanjing, the cabinet would issue a warning and refuse to acknowledge the shift (15/1 ev., 1 [T 14/1]).

Indeed, as a result of a regular meeting held on January 14, the cabinet confirmed that Nanjing should not intervene in negotiations on Manchuria. Before resuming the talks, however, it would be necessary to wait until the political situation in the region had stabilized and North-South relations had cooled off as well. For the time being, the cabinet felt no need for a military expedition to Manchuria or other measures (15/1, 2 [T 14/1]). On January 15, high officials of the foreign ministry,

the military, and the Mantetsu met to discuss the issue of the transfer of responsibility from Fengtian to Nanjing. Considering that Japan had not yet recognized the latter as the new central government of China, and that the general policy was to deal with the authorities that ruled the area concerning specific issues, they agreed that there was no choice but to keep the Three Eastern Provinces as Japan's diplomatic counterpart for that region. It would be useless to negotiate with Nanjing in any case, because the Three Provinces lay outside its "range of influence." Should the Nationalist government interfere, or the Northeastern regime refer to it as an excuse to stall the talks, then Japan would react "with a resolute attitude" (16/1 ev., 1 [T 15/1]).

In practice, however, by the end of January, the Tanaka cabinet gave up the active pursuit of distinct policies for Manchuria and the rest of China and started looking for a comprehensive accommodation with Nanjing. This policy shift happened in response to Xueliang's dilatory tactics, but had its deeper causes in a combination of domestic and international circumstances that impaired the government's ability to take strong initiatives (Satō M. 2009, 344–348, 362–364). Among these factors, there was the resurgence of the issue of responsibilities in the Huanggutun incident. The main opposition party, the Rikken Minseitō, brought it up in the imperial Diet to harass the cabinet and force its resignation. At first, the Japanese press criticized the Minseitō for raising an issue that might harm the national interest. As the evasive attitude of the cabinet became clear, however, the newspapers started calling for an explanation that should dispel suspicions of Japan (Tamai Kenkyūkai 2009, 52–57).

From previous research, it is clear that the *ManNichi* defended to the last the cabinet's decision not to publish the results of its investigation (Revelant 2021, 153–154). In January, it severely condemned the attempt to use foreign affairs as a weapon for domestic power struggles.

Editorials made implicit or open criticism of the Minseitō (15/1, 17/1, 19/1), which a writer even called a "traitor to the country" (Sakaguchi, 17/1 ev., 1). At the same time, the *ManNichi* argued in broader terms for the need for unity in public opinion toward China. The editorialist guarded the Japanese against holding an optimistic view of that country (9/1). He mentioned the *Ōsaka Asahi Shinbun* as an example of "extremely optimistic discourse" and compared it to the *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun*, which was neither optimistic nor pessimistic to an extreme degree. If public opinion lacked unity, he continued, a stable China policy could not be achieved. It was lamentable that such disunion even led at times to divergences of views on Manchuria (15/1). The editorialist also reminded readers that one should distinguish the issues relating to "mainland China" from those that concerned Manchuria, which involved the "right of survival" of the Japanese nation (18/1).

It is not easy to explain, then, why the assassination of Zhang Zuolin did resurface in the *MaiNichi* in a way that could cause embarrassment to Japan. As mentioned above, right after Yang's execution, a reporter suggested that the reason might have been his involvement in the bombing incident. The hypothesis later reappeared as the opinion of Chinese sources in Jilin (12/1 ev., 1 [sC]) or as a generic assumption heard by "an important Chinese person" in the same area (17/1, 3 [sC]). The US consul in Fengtian dismissed this kind of reports as groundless and thought them "likely to have had a Japanese origin" (Myers to MacMurray, 14/1, in FRUS, 56). Indeed, putting the guilt on Yang might have had the purpose of deflecting suspicion from the Kwantung Army (the US chargé in Tokyo, though, wrote soon that the theory seemed "to have been generally rejected" in Japan: Neville to Secretary of State, 17/1, in FRUS, 57). However, because Yang's image was associated with Japan, it was easy to turn the argument around. Later on, it was Xueliang himself who publicly confirmed the rumors, adding

this charge to the already long list. Allegedly, Yang and Chang had killed Zuolin because he had resisted their pressures to seal the railway agreement with Japan (19/1, 2 [sF]). Thus, the story took a twist, as the assassination was put in connection to Japan's objectives.

A few days later, the *ManNichi* published an account of the discovery of the plot, as leaked by "a certain important person of Fengtian." The news, deemed "worthy of the greatest attention," went as follows. On January 10, the military police arrested five Russians, claiming that they had come to the Marshal's headquarters to call on Yang. They were carrying a note in his handwriting, which promised a large amount of money in the case that the bombing succeeded. Moreover, the police had found a pass for the transportation of the explosive, issued by Chang as head of the Beijing-Fengtian railway bureau. With such overwhelming evidence, Xueliang had lured the two men to a private meeting, had made them confess, and had even shot them himself. This time, the writer made no reference to Japanese interests and added instead that Yang had admitted he had long been waiting for a chance to take power (21/1, 2 [sF 20/1]). According to a Japanese police report, the story had been fed to the newspaper by Kobayashi Saiji, a notable of Dashiqiao, who said he had heard it from the governor of Fengtian (Yingkou consul Arakawa to Tanaka, 25/1, in GK a, 101–103).[7]

At that point, though, it took little to turn Yang's guilt into an argument against Japan. On January 28, news came out in China that the Beiping garrison command had sent its report on the conspiracy to

7 Kobayashi also said he had first shared the information with Itō Kenjirō (another local businessman), who seemed to be involved in the bombing incident with someone from the army. From his reaction, however, Kobayashi had inferred that Itō had only told the army that killing Zhang Zuolin would be good for the achievement of national policy. Itō's alleged role in the assassination plot is outlined in Satō M. 2009 (278–279).

the government. The investigation confirmed that Yang and Chang had plotted with Japanese officials, first to halt the Northern Expedition, then to eliminate Zhang Zuolin and finally to take control of the Northeast as a separate country (acting minister Hori to Tanaka, 31/1, in GK a, 117–119). The Rengō press agency relayed the news to Japan (clipped article from the *Tōkyō Nichinichi Shinbun*, 29/1, in GK a, 114), just when the cabinet was facing interpellations on the Huanggutun incident in parliament. In this manner, over a few weeks, a theory that might have originated as a distraction away from Japanese responsibilities developed into a weapon for Nationalist propaganda.

5. Conclusion

The findings presented here prove that the *ManNichi* fully supported the dualistic policy of the Tanaka cabinet toward "Manchuria" and "mainland China," which it considered necessary for the protection of Japan's vital interests in the Northeast. This stance was distant from that assumed by the *Ōsaka Asahi Shinbun* in response to the progress of Chinese reunification under the Nationalist Party. Although the *Asahi* did not go as far as to argue that a special position in Manchuria could not be maintained for long, it did speak in favor of its partial renegotiation with the new central government of China. On the other hand, the *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun* substantially agreed with the *ManNichi* about the separate character of the Northeast, which had been a customary assumption in Japanese diplomacy. In this respect, the *ManNichi* shared with one of the largest newspapers in Japan a policy approach that may be defined as conservative imperialism.

However, there was also a sharp divide between the *ManNichi* and both of the big newspapers when it came to evaluating "Tanaka diplomacy." While agreeing on the objectives, the *Ōsaka Mainichi*

had a poor opinion of Tanaka's method and attitude, which had rather worsened problems. Such criticism was absent in the Mantetsu newspaper, as it may be expected from a semi-official press organ. Nevertheless, the fact that the *ManNichi* continued to advocate a dualistic policy after the Minseitō rose to government and Shidehara came back to office, indicates that the press agenda in Dairen did not necessarily originate from the foreign ministry. Although some articles gave voice directly to the Mantetsu, the Kwantung administration, and the army, the relative influence of each agency in the process of discourse formation below the surface remains unclear.

It deserves attention that in the first weeks of 1929, a recurrent theme was the instability of the Fengtian regime, seen as a weakening factor in the face of Nationalist penetration. Instead, through the latter half of that year the Northeast was portrayed as a relatively stable region in comparison with the rest of China, even at the peak of the Sino-Soviet conflict. Consequently, the argument that Japan might have to intervene with "resolute measures" to protect its interests almost completely disappeared from sight. An aim for further research is to investigate whether the *ManNichi* shifted to a more aggressive posture during the following year, when the chances for a satisfying outcome to Sino-Japanese negotiations grew thinner.

Acknowledgement

This chapter was produced with the contribution of Next Generation EU – M4.C2.1.1 – project "Imperial Entanglements: Latecomer Colonial Empires and the 'Politics of Comparison' (1880s – 1940s)" - CUP H53D23000120006

References

Primary sources

FRUS: Fuller, V. Joseph (ed.). 1943. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1929, Vol. 2*. Washington: United States Government Printing Office. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1929v02>

GK: *Gaimusho Kiroku [Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]*. Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo.

a. A.6.1.2.1-5. ManMō Seikyō Kankei Zassan: Yō Utei, Jō Inkai Shasatsu Mondai [Miscellaneous Documents Relating to the Political Situation in Manchuria and Mongolia: Problem of the Shooting of Yang Yuting and Chang Yinghuai]. <https://www.jacar.go.jp/> (Ref. code B02031765600). (In Japanese)

b. A.6.1.5.2-8-2. Shina Nairan Kankei Ikken: Kokumin-gun no Hokubatsu Kankei: Chō Gakuryō no Tai-Nanpō Dakyō Mondai: Tōsanshō Ekishi Mondai [Documents Relating to the Chinese Civil War: Related to the Northern Expedition of the Nationalist Army: Problem of Zhang Xueliang's Compromise with the South: Problem of Flag Replacement in the Three Eastern Provinces] <https://www.jacar.go.jp/> (Ref. code B02031864100). (In Japanese)

NGB: Gaimushō (ed.). 1990. *Nihon Gaikō Bunsho: Shōwa-ki I, Dai Ichibu [Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy: Showa Era I, Part 1]*, Vols. 2 [1928], 3 [1929]. Tōkyō: Gaimushō. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/annai/honsho/shiryo/archives/s21-3.html> (In Japanese)

Manshū Nippō. Accessed in microfilm.

Secondary sources

Cao, Jianping. 2016. Manshūkoku-ki no Nikkei Shinbun ni okeru Tabako

Kōkoku to sono Naiyō Bunseki: *ManNichi* wo Taishō ni [Tobacco Advertisements in the *ManNichi*, a Japanese Newspaper in the "Manchukuo" era]. *(Hokkaidō Daigaku Bungaku Kenkyūka) Kenkyū Ronshū [Research Journal of Graduate Students of Letters, Graduate School of Humanities and Human Sciences, Hokkaido University]*, 15, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.14943/rjgsl.15.l1> (In Japanese)

Higuchi, Hidemi. 2004. Tōsanshō Seiken wo meguru Higashi Ajia Kokusai Seiji to Yō Utei [The Sandongsheng Regime, Yang Yuting and Far Eastern International Relations in Pre-World War II Nationalist China]. *Shigaku Zasshi [Journal of Historical Science]*, 113(7), 1223–1258. <https://doi.org/10.24471/shigaku.113.7_1223> (In Japanese)

Ikeda, Kazuyuki. 2000. *Kishatachi no Manshū Jihen: Nihon Jānarizumu no Tenkaiten [Journalists' Views on the Manchurian Incident: A Turning Point in Japanese Journalism]*. Tokyo: Ningen no Kagaku Shinsha. (In Japanese)

Iriye, Akira. 1960. Chang Hsueh-Liang and the Japanese. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 20(1), 33–43. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2050070>

Kwong, Chi Man. 2017. *War and Geopolitics in Interwar Manchuria: Zhang Zuolin and the Fengtian Clique during the Northern Expedition*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Ma, Jia. 2015. Mínguó shíqī dōngběi rìwén bàozhǐ yúlùn dǎoxiàng yánjiū: yǐ "Mǎnzhōu rìbào" Huánggūtún shìjiàn bàodào wéilì [A Study on Public Opinion Guidance by Japanese-language Newspapers in the Northeast in the Republican Period: The Case of Coverage of the Huanggutun Incident in the Manshū Nippō]. In Ni Yannan (ed.), *Mínguó xīnwénshǐ yánjiū [Studies on the History of Journalism in the Republic of China]*, Nanjing, Nánjīng shīfàn dàxué chūbǎnshè, pp. 253–268. (In Chinese)

Matsushige, Mitsuhiro. 2013. "Hokubatsu"-ki ni okeru "Manshū Nichinichi Shinbun" Shijō no Shō Kaiseki Ninshiki ni kansuru Oboegaki: "Gaichi" Nihonjin Shakai no Shō Kaiseki Ninshiki ni kansuru Ichi Jirei to shite [Notes on the Perception of Chiang Kai-shek in the *Manshū Nichinichi Shinbun* (Manchuria Daily Newspaper) during the "Northern Expedition": A Case Study on the Perception of Chiang Kai-shek in the Japanese Communities of the "Overseas Territories"]. In Yamada Tatsuo, and Matsushige Mitsuhiro (eds.), *Shō Kaiseki Kenkyū: Seiji, Sensō, Nihon [Studies on Chiang Kai-shek: Politics, War, and Japan]*. Tokyo: Tōhō Shoten, 35–56. (In Japanese)

Mitter, Rana. 2000. *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

Nishimura, Shigeo. 1996. *Chō Gakuryō: Nicchū no Haken to "Manshū" [Zhang Xueliang: Sino-Japanese Hegemony and "Manchuria"]*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten. (In Japanese)

Revelant, Andrea. 2021. Framing the Manchurian Question: The Manshū Nippō and Regional Autonomy After the Return of Shidehara Diplomacy in 1929. *Aoyama Keizai Ronshū [The Aoyama Journal of Economics]*, 72, 133–192. <https://opac.agulin.aoyama.ac.jp/iwjs0011opc/TF01309814>

———. 2023. Gauging the Tide: The Rise of Nationalist China in Japan's Leading Newspapers, 1928–29. In Laura De Giorgi, and Sofia Graziani (eds.), *The Historian's Gaze: Essays on Modern and Contemporary China in Honour of Guido Samarani*. Venezia: Edizioni Ca' Foscari – Venice University Press, 96–124. <http://doi.org/10.30687/978-88-6969-723-4/006>

Ri, Sōtetsu [Li, Xiangzhe]. 2000. *Manshū ni okeru Nihonjin Keiei Shinbun no Rekishi [History of Japanese Journalism in Manchuria]*. Tokyo: Gaifūsha. (In Japanese)

Rong, Yuan. 2021. *Soshakuchi Dairen ni okeru Nihongo Shinbun no Jigyō Katsudō: Manshū Nichinichi Shinbun wo Chūshin ni [Organized Activities of Japanese Language Newspapers in Leased Land Dalian: With a Focus on the Manchurian Daily News]*. Kyōto: Kōyō Shobō. (In Japanese)

Satō, Katsuya. 2009. Manshū Jihen Boppatsu Zengo no "Manshū Nippō" ni kansuru Ichi Kōsatsu: Kokusaku Kaisha-Mantetsu no Kikanshi no Ronchō no Henka to sono Haikei [An Analysis of News Reports from "The Manchuria Daily Newspaper" (Manshu Nippo) before and after the Outbreak of the Manchurian Incident: Changes in the Tone of a Press Organ of the National Policy Company Mantetsu, and their Background], *Nihon Daigaku Daigakuin Sōgō Shakai Jōhō Kenkyūka Kiyō [The Bulletin of the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies Nihon University: Nihon University GSSC Journal]*, 10, 11–22. (In Japanese)

Satō, Motoei. 2009. *Shōwa Shoki Tai-Chūgoku Seisaku no Kenkyū: Tanaka Naikaku no Tai-ManMō Seisaku [A Study on Japan's China Policy in the Early Shōwa Period: The Tanaka Cabinet's Policy toward Manchuria and Mongolia]*. Tokyo: Hara Shobō. (In Japanese)

Tamai Kenkyūkai (Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Hōgakubu Seiji Gakka Tamai Kiyoshi Kenkyūkai). 2009. *Chō Sakurin Bakusatsu Jiken to Nihon no Masu-Media, Kindai Nihon Seiji Shiryō No. 15 [The Assassination by Bombing of Zhang Zuolin and the Japanese Mass Media, Documents on Modern Japan's Politics No. 15]*, Tokyo: Tamai Kenkyūkai. (In Japanese)

Tsuchida, Akio. 1992. Tōsanshō Ekishi no Seiji Katei (1928 nen) [The Political Process of the Flag Replacement in the Three Eastern Provinces (1928)]. *Tōkyō Geijutsu Daigaku Kiyō 3 Bumon Shakai Kagaku [Bulletin of Tokyo Gakugei University, 3rd Division: Social Sciences]*, 44, 71–108.

Zhang, Liang. 2016. Kaku Shōrei no Hanran to Chō Gakuryō no Gunji Shisō: "Tōhoku Ekishi" eno Michi [Guo Songling's Rebellion and Zhang Xueliang's Military Thought: The Road to the Northeast Flag Replacement]. PhD thesis, Kitakyūshū Shiritsu Daigaku. <https://kitakyu.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/497> (In Japanese)

Chapter 4
Colonial and Overseas Development Policies of Imperial Japan under Internationalism: Reading the Policies of the Kenseikai Cabinet from the Perspective of Economic and Cultural Integration

Kazutaka SOGO

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I would like to present the relationship between the colonial governance policy and the diplomatic policy of the Kenseikai party cabinet, which was one of the two major political parties in prewar Japan and actively promoted the line of international cooperation.

The purpose of this study is to elucidate the tripartite interrelationship among diplomatic responses to the international collaborationist system, the development process of party politics, and colonial rule in modern Japan. In particular, I would like to analyze the South Seas and Manchuria regions, which are the colonial-adjacent zones where these three interests are expected to intersect sharply.

The period covered in this chapter, the Kenseikai period, is from June 1924 to April 1927. In prewar Japan, alternating transitions of power by the two major political parties (the Rikken Seiyūkai party and the Kenseikai party — after, renamed Rikken Minseitō) were achieved between 1924 and 1932. The formation of the Kenseikai Cabinet was an opportunity for colonial rule to suffer the strong aftermath of party

politics, as well as the development of Kijūrō Shidehara's foreign policy, which actively promoted international collaborationism. I would like to consider how they tried to solve the problems that arose in the areas adjacent to the colony during this period.

2. Background

First, as a prerequisite background, I would like to confirm the perspective of the conflict between imperialism and internationalism in the 1920s. The international situation in the 1920s was an era of international economic competition, while at the same time it was an era of international cooperation in politics and diplomacy. The question of how this ambivalent international situation affected Japanese politics, diplomacy, and colonial rule is an important background for this discussion. Imperial Japan was a small but densely populated country, and furthermore, it did not have a promising colonial market like Britain and America. Against this background, Japanese politicians were challenged with how to respond to international economic competition.

Therefore, strong executive power had to be exerted to establish a policy framework at the imperial level, including the colonies, while at the same time curbing the traditional imperialistic approach to territorial expansion. This was the essential condition for the establishment of party politics in prewar Japan, as well as for the realization of a democratic political system. In fact, the failure to accomplish this led Japan in the 1930s to the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident, the collapse of party politics, and the expansion of the military's political influence.

3. Literature Review

The previous research on this topic is so vast that there are many excellent studies. However, with regard to the Kenseikai Cabinet, interest has focused mainly on the policy toward China of Foreign Minister Kijūrō Shidehara and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereafter, MOFA) from the perspective of diplomatic history (Sakai 1989; Hattori 2001; Nishida 2005). As a result, the main focus has tended to be on the diplomatic negotiation process and the policy-making process of the MOFA, leaving out issues such as the concept of integration throughout the Empire. It is unclear to what extent the international cooperation policy of Foreign Minister Shidehara was linked to the other policies of the Kenseikai cabinet, especially the colonial administration policy.

There has also been a great deal of research on the intersection of colonial rule and foreign policy. This includes the southward expansion policy of the Governor-General of Taiwan, the issue of police jurisdiction over Koreans in Manchuria, and the negotiation process over land and commercial tax rights for Japanese nationals in Manchuria, whose legal position in the region was unclear (Schneider 1998; Esselstrom 2009; Kitano 2020; Shirane 2022). All are excellent studies depicting the conflicts and complexities between the MOFA, local consuls, and colonial governing authorities. Taking these exceptional findings on the issues into account, I would like to approach the orientation of the Kenseikai cabinet toward foreign policy as much as possible.

Of particular importance to this study is the research on the issue of the unification of administrative agencies in Manchuria, as represented by Kiyofumi Katō (Katō 2000). Since prewar Japan set up colonial administrative agencies in each of the areas acquired in the war, the MOFA and each colonial power pursued their policies separately. Katō argues that it was essential for the MOFA to achieve

a connection to the Washington system by reducing the powers of the various colonial agencies and by acquiring supervision of the South Manchurian Railway Company (hereafter, SMR). And it is the fact that this was not achieved until the end that was the limiting factor in the integration of the colonies by the MOFA, he argues. However, from the perspective of a party cabinet, the SMR was controlled to a considerable degree by partisan personnel. With this in mind, there may be different factors that ultimately contributed to the failure to carry out the principle of international cooperation. I would like to consider this point as well.

4. Kenseikai-Appointed Governor-General's Governing Policy

(1) Removal of Japanese Bureaucrats in Taiwan

Let us take a look at the relationship between the policy of southward expansion in Taiwan and the Kenseikai Cabinet's policy for governing Taiwan. As mentioned earlier, from 1924 to 1932, the era of alternating administrations between the Seiyūkai and the Kenseikai (later becoming Minseitō) was in full swing. However, as Table 1 shows, there were frequent changes of government between the opposing parties within a short period of approximately two to three years. It was customary during this period for the Governor-General to be replaced in parallel with the removal of the Cabinet. Therefore, by analyzing what policies the Governor-General had put in place when each party was in power, it should be possible to identify the approximate governing policies of the party.

Table 1. Linkage between the 2-party system and colonial governors

Party	Prime Minister	Period
	Gonbee Yamamoto ~Keigo Kiyoura	1924.6~1926.1
Kenseikai	Takaaki Katō	1924.6 ~ 1926.1
Kenseikai	Reijirō Wakatsuki	1926.1 ~ 1927.4
Seiyūkai	Giichi Tanaka	1927.4 ~ 1929.7
Minseitō	Osachi Hamaguchi	1929.7 ~ 1931.4
Minseitō	Reijirō Wakatsuki	1931.4 ~ 1931.12
Seiyūkai	Tsuyoshi Inukai	1931.12 ~ 1932.5

Governor-General	Period
Kakichi Uchida	1923.9 ~ 1924.8
Takio Izawa	1924.9 ~ 1926.7
Mitsunoshin Kamiyama	1926.7 ~ 1928.6
Takeji Kawamura	1928.6 ~ 1929.7
Eizō Ishizuka	1929.7 ~ 1931.1
Masahiro Ōta	1931.1 ~ 1932.3
Hiroshi Minami	1932.3 ~ 1932.5

Source: Author

Let us examine this in detail. With the temporary decline of Western powers' commercial rights in the "South China and South Seas" due to the First World War, the Governor-General of Taiwan instituted a variety of policies aimed at countering the re-entry of the powers' commercial rights. This was led by Motojirō Akashi, who was the last military governor-general before the civil governor-general period. He led the construction of the Sun Moon Lake hydropower project in Taiwan. In his letter, Akashi stated that the production of trade goods not only for the island of Taiwan but also for overseas must be made by this power[1]; in other words, it was to be positioned as the root of Taiwan's trade policy toward the South Seas.

Fig 1. Takio Izawa, 11th Taiwan Governor-General
Source: <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/datas/475/>

Based on the above situation, I

1 Letter of Motojirō Akashi to Giichi Tanaka, October 29, 1918, Documents of Tanaka Giishi, No. 527, held by Yamaguchi Prefectural Archives.

would like to look at the characteristics of the policies of the Governor-General appointed by the Kenseikai Cabinet during the period 1924–1927. First, a large number of Japanese officials who had ruled before 1924 were removed, and then the hiring of Taiwanese officials in the provinces was expanded during the Takio Izawa Governor-General's term (Okamoto 2008). And he was described by his contemporaries as being aware that all southward expansion policies were the work of the MOFA (Nihon Gōdō Tsūshinsha 1932). On the other hand, the government was active in the development of unexplored areas on the island and the provision of funds for agriculture. It is also of note that they were reluctant to take on the Sun Moon Lake hydropower development project.

(2) Establishment of Taipei Imperial University

Fig 2. Mitsunoshin Kamiyama, 12th Taiwan Governor-General
Source: <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/datas/466/>

A further notable policy was the promotion of the establishment of Taihoku Imperial University. Here, the Department of Literature was established with the goal of enabling Taiwanese to acquire humanities knowledge about the South China and South Seas. What is important here is that the plan was to develop the South by making good use of Taiwanese tastes and preferences to make cultural facilities even more effective.[2] They also shifted the policy of extending education to the interior and expanded business education institutions

2 Documents of Izawa Takio, No.479-480, held by National Diet Library.

that matched Taiwan's actual conditions (Sogō 2020). Therefore, Governor-General Mitsunoshin Kamiyama, who succeeded Izawa, based his policy on the promotion of agricultural policy and cultural integration, as symbolized by his policy of "promoting cultural and economic integration with ethnic fusion" as its core.[3]

(3) MOFA's Policy on Cultural Projects in China

Next, based on previous research, I would like to confirm the MOFA's cultural projects in China. This was the characteristic policy of the MOFA in the 1920s, which rejected conventional political and economic, or imperialistic, advances and became the central policy of imperial expansion under a system of international cooperation (Kumamoto 2013). In this light, it can be said that Izawa and Kamiyama's policy of rejecting Taiwan's program of southward expansion through industrialization, promoting agricultural policies on the island, and looking toward southward expansion through cultural policies was truly a policy linked to the MOFA's international cooperation policy. In fact, the amount of the Taiwan Governor-General's subsidies for southward expansion, which had been increasing during the Taisho period, declined after 1924. Personnel changes in the Taiwan Governor-General due to party politics were a major factor in the stagnation of the Governor-General administration's southward expansion policy (Schneider 1998). In other words, the Kenseikai had a policy of restraining economic development to the South Seas, which was prone to international criticism, and developing overseas in a cultural way. This orientation becomes even clearer when compared to Takeji Kawamura, the Governor-General appointed by the Seiyūkai Cabinet, who attempted to fully promote economic southward expansion

3 Documents of Kamiyama Mitsunoshin, held by Hōfu City Library.

through industrialization on the island of Taiwan from 1928 to 1929 (Sogō 2020).

(4) Ministry of Colonial Affairs (*Takumushō*)

Next, we need to turn our attention to the Cabinet. In June 1929, the Ministry of Colonial Affairs (*Takumushō*) was established by the Tanaka Giichi Cabinet, whose ruling party was the Seiyūkai, in order to supervise the various colonial administrative agencies and to take charge of immigration and economic development affairs overseas. It differed from Western colonial ministries in that it was largely unique as it was responsible for economic development policies outside the official imperial sphere (Sogō 2023). This Ministry of Colonial Affairs was also being seriously considered for establishment by the Kenseikai Cabinet in 1924. In the case of the Kenseikai, however, the main focus was to establish a general policy for colonial administration within the Empire. Therefore, immigration and economic development affairs overseas were excluded from the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs.[4] It should be considered that this concept of establishing the Ministry of Colonial Affairs was clearly linked to the aforementioned Governor-General Izawa and Kamiyama's policy of emphasizing agricultural development within the Taiwan island and the diplomatic policy of Shidehara Kijūrō. From the above, it can be pointed out that the Kenseikai Cabinet's orientation toward colonial administration clearly distinguishes between imperial territory and overseas administration.

4 Gyōsei Chōsakai Shorui, No.13 *Iinkai Gijiroku*, held by National Archives of Japan (Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, National Archives of Japan (JACAR), Ref: A05021078100).

5. The Governing Orientation of the Kenseikai in the Context of the Korean and Manchurian Issues

(1) Kenseikai's Orientation Toward Korean Rule

Next, I would like to clarify the governing orientation of the Kenseikai Cabinet from the Korean and Manchurian issues and discuss its problems. I would like to confirm the orientation of the Kenseikai toward governing Korea. Their main characteristic is that they were oriented toward a change in the "Metropole extensionism" (*Naichienchō-shugi*) that had been the policy for governing Korea since 1919. Among the members of the Kenseikai, including those at the executive level, there were many who recognized that the assimilation policy was impossible and insisted that the policy should be implemented in line with the actual situation in Korea, rather than forcibly imposing an internal system from Japan.[5] Similar to Taiwan, there was also an orientation to switch from education as a metropole extension to business education (Sogō 2020). It is also noteworthy that they were willing to establish the Korean Assembly, albeit with some restrictions (Lee 2013). In other words, they were willing to expand suffrage in the Korean region, although only to a limited extent. From the above, it can be seen that the Kenseikai had the orientation to shift the meaning of Korean "cultural politics" from a metropole extensionist conception to a relatively loose union of the entire Empire. The government also placed a high priority on the stability of the Korean people's livelihoods and put great emphasis on plans to increase the amount of rice produced and improve infrastructure. Thus, it was unique

5 "Fukumeisho" written by Tsunenosuke Hamada, Colonial Bureau of the Cabinet, August 30, 1925, *Kōbun Zassan*, Vol.4 of 1925, held by National Archives of Japan.

in that it contemplated, to some extent, the independent operation of Korea. Then, why was the Kenseikai able to tolerate this?

First, the reason why the Kenseikai was able to adopt a stance of respecting ethnic and indigenous realities and customs was the concept of strengthening the economic ties between the interior and Korea. What is more important, then, is their emphasis on a different way of approaching the challenges of solving overpopulation problems and dealing with international economic competition. Rather than imperial expansion, it was in the Kenseikai Cabinet's policy of proximity to world markets and its emphasis on trade policy.

(2) Measures to Cope with International Economic Competition

For example, it envisioned the creation of a new Trade Bureau in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the establishment of a Commercial Officer under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry lineage in each consular office. Thus, the Kenseikai were very aggressive in terms of expanding their trade policies. That is why they were able to distance themselves to some extent from the task of developing Japanese residents in Manchuria and the South Seas enterprises. The emphasis on the connection between the home country and the colony, rather than on the closeness of the colony and its neighbors, is also closely related to this. This was a very compatible orientation with the international cooperation line of Shidehara's foreign policy.

Furthermore, with regard to the SMR, which was the central institution for economic development in Manchuria, the Kenseikai cabinet decisively implemented personnel changes of the president and senior executives. As a result, it succeeded in guiding the SMR toward the pursuit of managerial rationalization rather than the pursuit of economic development. However, due to the stagnation of Japan's

overseas activities under the chronic recession, the local side strongly requested government subsidies and financial support, as well as aggressive loans from financial institutions. Interestingly, the move most emblematic of this demand came from within the MOFA, not from colonial agencies.

(3) Discussion at the Meeting of Consuls in Manchuria in 1926

In May 1926, a meeting of consuls in Manchuria was held, but the Governor-General of Korea was not invited. Unlike in the past, economic issues were the most important issues in the discussion, and measures to overcome the current situation of Japanese residents in Manchuria were discussed. This was a move that emerged in the context of a response to international economic competition, based on a sense of crisis over the increased economic activity of the UK, the US, Germany, and Russia against China in the post-WWI period. In other words, factors included the stagnation of the economic activities of Japanese residents in Manchuria, along with the economic expansion of the Western Powers and the Chinese Nationalist government into Manchuria. Therefore, it was proposed that an authoritative investigative body be established in Manchuria to guide and supervise general entrepreneurs.[6]

The proposal was to establish a Commercial Officer at the Mukden (*Hōten*) Consulate General, which was the center of the Manchukuo consulate. This was envisioned as a steppingstone for the future direct supervision of the operations of special companies such as the SMR, the Yokohama Specie Bank (*Yokohama Shōkin Ginkō*), the Bank of Korea, and the Oriental Development Company (*Tōyō Takushoku*), which were

6 Zaiman Ryōjikaigi Zakken/Zaiman Ryōji Kaigi Vol.1, held by Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, (JACAR Ref: B15100138500).

expected to serve as the brains behind the Consul General in Mukden to implement policies toward Manchuria and China. The chief consul would be selected from among the young staff of the Ministry of Finance, and the vice consuls would be recruited from the SMR, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Furthermore, at the same, time it was proposed to establish a central organization to guide the Koreans in Manchuria. It was planned as an agency to lead an aggressive economic development policy that would include Korean associations, education, health care, financial unions, and the encouragement of side jobs. In other words, an independent policy of imperial expansion, different from that of the central government, was envisioned here. This concept was unique and could not be found in the SMR or the Governor-General's Office of Korea.

(4) Problems in the Governance Structure of the Kenseikai

Now, I would like to point out the problems in the governance structure of the Kenseikai cabinet as seen from the above discussion, together with the results of my research. The Meiji constitutional system of prewar Japan was characterized by a high degree of decentralization. In particular, the state of separation of the colonial administrative organs in Manchuria was symbolic of this. So, what did it take for party politics to take hold under these circumstances? I consider that for party politics to take root in prewar Japan, it was essential to establish a political system centered on the cabinet, or ministers of state who were responsible to the emperor and parliament, and to utilize the strength of political parties as groups to penetrate the divided ministries and agencies through personnel affairs. This was necessary as a prerequisite to promote a unified and strong policy and to respond to global economic competition while maintaining a system of international

cooperation.

I believe that in Japan, under the international order of the 1920s, it was inevitable that demands for the promotion of economic development policies to adjacent colonial areas would be activated. In this context, previous studies have pointed out that after the First World War, the MOFA established a system of exclusive policy establishment by the foreign affairs bureaucracy (Chiba 2008; Kumamoto 2013). This must have been an obstacle to the stability of party politics. Furthermore, although at first glance it appears that Shidehara's diplomacy enabled the Kenseikai cabinet to form a stable integrated order in line with the responsible cabinet, previous studies have pointed out that there was always tension between the regional consuls and the MOFA (Sakai 1989; Esselstrom 2009).

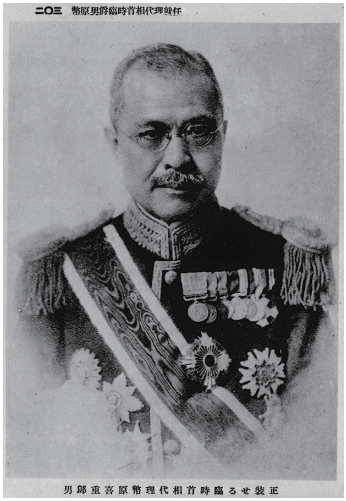


Fig 3. Kijūrō Shidehara, Foreign Minister
Source: <https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/datas/274>

Considering the above, it seems that a split in Shidehara's foreign policy was inevitable unless the independence of the MOFA was controlled in some way. However, although the Kenseikai cabinet was oriented toward partisan appointments in politics within the Empire, it was not willing to take steps to improve the structure of the MOFA (Naraoka 2006). On the other hand, it was the Giichi Tanaka Seiyūkai Cabinet that strongly recognized this problem and actively attempted to establish the Ministry of Colonial Affairs and control the MOFA. In this light, as Hattori points out, the failure to establish a party-led diplomatic

system was a serious problem for party politics (Hattori 2006).

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed the line of international cooperation by the Constitutional Council cabinet from the perspective of its relationship with colonial rule. The Kenseikai cabinet used partisan personnel to influence colonial administration, modified cultural policies to emphasize local realities, and stressed the stability of colonial administration by encouraging agriculture. It was also envisioned that the establishment of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs would provide a power base for the Cabinet to set the policy for governing the colony as a whole. From the above, I think it can be evaluated that the colonial government was successful in encompassing colonial rule under the logic of international cooperation.

This policy of relatively loose imperial cohesion based on cultural fusion was made possible by the fact that, as a countermeasure against international economic competition, the emphasis was on expanding exports by competing in the global market rather than on establishing a self-sufficient sphere. So, instead of trying to connect the colonies with the adjacent areas of the Empire economically, the direction was toward ensuring cultural independence and economic closeness between the mainland and the colonies.

However, the problem was the Cabinet's inability to integrate the MOFA and its dependence on the integrating power of Kijūrō Shidehara. Furthermore, this meant that the Kenseikai Cabinet was unable to fully meet the demand for economic development in the adjacent colonial areas. This resulted in a desire for consular independence, which loosened the integrating power of Shidehara's diplomacy. In addition, the policies of the Kenseikai, with its instability that forced it to depend

on the economic conditions of countries around the world, suffered directly from the impact of the Great Depression.

As a result of the severe decline in the consolidation power of the Kenseikai, which had become Minseitō, the idea emerged in 1931 to include economic development policies for overseas countries in a newly established Ministry of Industry (Sogō 2021). This means that the Kenseikai's policies came down to a concept that, in principle, encompassed an orientation toward imperial expansion. This, I believe, also brings to light the importance of the contradictory meanings of international cooperation and economic competition.

References

Chiba, Isao. 2008. *Kyū Gaikō no Keisei: Nihon Gaikō 1900~1919 [The Formation of Old Diplomacy: Japanese Diplomacy 1900-1919]*. Tokyo: Keisō Shobō. (In Japanese)

Esselstrom, Erik. 2009. *Crossing Empire's Edge: Foreign Ministry Police and Japanese Expansionism in Northeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Hattori, Ryūji. 2001. *Higashi Ajia Kokusai Kankyō no Hendō to Nihon Gaikō 1918–1931[Japanese Diplomacy and East Asian International Politics, 1918–1931]*. Tokyo: Yūhikaku. (In Japanese)

———. 2006. *Shidehara Kijūrō to Nijusseiki no Nihon: Gaikō to Minshu Shugi [Shidehara Kijuro and Japan in the 20th Century: Dipromacy and Democracy]*. Tokyo: Yūhikaku. (In Japanese)

Katō, Kiyofumi. 2000. Shidehara Gaikō ni okeru Manmō Seisaku no Genkai: Gaimushō to Mantetsu Kantokuken Mondai [The Limits of the Policy to Manchuria and Mongolia by Shidehara Diplomacy: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Management of the South Manchuria Railway]. *Waseda Daigaku Daigakuin Bungaku*

Kenkyūka Kiyō [Bulletin of the Graduate Division of Letters, Arts and Sciences of Waseda University]. 4, 47–58. (In Japanese)

———. 2006. *Mantetsu Zenshi: Kokusaku Gaisha no Zenbō [Complete History of the SMR]*. Tokyo: Kōdansha. (In Japanese)

Kitano, Gō. 2020. Tochi Shōsoken Mondai Saikō: Sen-Kanki no Nihon Gaikō to "Manmō Mondai" [The Usufructuary Right of Land in Southern Manchuria: A Reconsideration]. *Nihonshi Kenkyū [Journal of Japanese History]*, 689, 30–58. (In Japanese)

Kumamoto, Fumio. 2013. *Taisenkanki no Tai-Chūgoku Bunka Gaikō: Gaimushō Kiroku ni Miru Seisaku Kettei Katei [Cultural Diplomacy toward China during the Interwar Period: Policy-making Process through the Records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan. (In Japanese)

Lee, Hyungsik. 2013. *Chōsen Sōtokufu Kanryō no Tōchi Kōsō [Concept of Governance of the Korean Governor-General's Office Bureaucracy]*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan. (In Japanese)

Naraoka, Sōchi. 2006. *Katō Takaaki to Seitō Seiji: Nidai Seitōsei heno Michi [Takaaki Katō and Party Politics].* Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha. (In Japanese)

Nihon Gōdō Tsūshinsha (ed.). 1932. Taiwan Taikan. Tokyo: Nihon Gōdō Tsūshinsha.

Nishida, Toshihiro. 2005. Daiichiji Shidehara Gaikō ni okeru Manmō Seisaku no Tenkai: 1926~1927nen wo Chūshin toshite [Development of the Policy to Manchuria and Mongolia in Shidehara's Foreign Policy in the First Stage]. *Nihonshi Kenkyū [Journal of Japanese History]*, 514, 1–27. (In Japanese)

Okamoto, Makiko. 2008. S*hokuminchi Kanryō no Seijishi: Chōsen, Taiwan Sōtokufu to Teikoku Nippon [A Political History of the Colonial Bureaucracy: Government-General in Korea, Taiwan and Imperial Japan]*. Tokyo: Sangensha. (In Japanese)

Sakai, Tetsuya. 1989. "Eibei Kyōchō" to "Nicchū Teikei" [Cooperation with the West or Collaboration with China]. *Nenpō Kindai Nihon Kenkyū [Annual Report of Research on Modern Japan]*, 11, 61–92. (In Japanese)

———. 1992. *Taishō Demokurashī Taisei no Hōkai: Naisei to Gaikō [Collapse of the Taisho Democracy System: Domestic Politics and Diplomacy]*. Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai. (In Japanese)

Schneider, Adam. 1998. The Taiwan Government-General and Prewar Japanese Economic Expansion in South China and Southeast Asia, 1900-1936. In Harald Fuess (ed.), *The Japanese Empire in East Asia and Its Postwar Legacy*. München: Iudicium-Verl, 161–182.

Shirane, Seiji. 2022. *Imperial Gateway: Colonial Taiwan and Japan's Expansion in South China and Southeast Asia, 1895–1945*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Sogō, Kazutaka (Translation into Chinese by Xu Qian Ci). 2020. Wenguan Zongdu zhi Shishi Hou de Zhimindi Tongzhi Gouzao [Colonial Rule Structure after the Implementation of the Civil Governorship]. *Taiwan yu Dongya Jindai Shi Kuayu Qingnian Xuezhe—Yanjiu Lunji di 4ji*. Taipei: Dao Xiang Chuban She, 271–318. (In Chinese)

———. 2021. Dainiji Wakatsuki Naikaku no Gyōsei Seido Kaikaku Kōsō to Seitō Naikakusei: Takumushō Haishi Mondai Saikō [The Second Wakatsuki Cabinet's Framework for Administrative System Reform and the Party Cabinet System: Reconsidering the Issue of Abolishing the Ministry of Colonial Affairs]. *Nihonshi Kenkyū [Journal of Japanese History]*, 709, 17–45. (In Japanese)

———. 2023. The Bottleneck in the Formation of "Imperial Japan" under International Cooperation Principle after WW I: Focusing on the Tanaka Giichi Cabinet's Concept of Establishment of the Takumushō. *Journal of the Asia-Japan Research Institute of Ritsumeikan University*, 5, 84–105.

Fig.1–3: Kindai Nihon no Shōzō (Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures), National Diet Library, Japan. (https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/)

Chapter 5
Britain and the Difficulty of Anglo-Japanese Military Collaboration, 1902–1928

Takeshi SUGAWARA

1. Introduction

The 1920s is generally referred to as the Era of International Cooperation. Given the catastrophes in the 1930s and the 1940s, it is not surprising that the 1920s is regarded as a stable decade. However, if Anglo-Japanese relations in the 1920s were investigated from the military point of view, it would be necessary to revise this historical image.

While both Britain and Japan realized the importance of collaborating militarily because they had both faced common threats since before the First World War, it was not easy for them to cooperate in Asia. In the historiography, many scholars such as Harumi Gotō-Shibata, Ian Nish, and Antony Best have investigated Anglo-Japanese relations from the 1900s to the 1920s, but there is a gap in the literature on Anglo-Japanese military collaboration during this period (Gotō 2006; Gotō-Shibata 1995; Nish 1972, 1966; Best 2021).

This chapter discusses the difficulties of Anglo-Japanese military collaboration not only after but also before and during the First World War, mainly analyzing the ideas and policies of British policymakers. This chapter discusses how the perspective of imperial defense, namely the defense of the British Empire, is important to understanding Britain's difficulties in its military cooperation with Japan.

2. Before the First World War: 1902–1907

Before the First World War, both Britain and Japan faced Russia's expansion into Asia. Russia was seeking to strengthen its influence not only in East Asia but also in India, which brought about the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in January 1902. Although they saw Russia's expansion into East Asia as a threat, many British policymakers prioritized Britain's interests in India over those in East Asia. The defense of India and the countries on its northwest border, namely Afghanistan and Persia, was the main theme of the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) established by the Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Balfour in 1902.[1]

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904 changed the geopolitical situation in Asia. Russia's defeat by Japan in the war encouraged the Amir, the ruler of Afghanistan, to defy not only Russia but also Britain. This caused relations between Britain and Afghanistan to deteriorate, increasing concern about Britain's defense of India (Wyatt 2011, 114–139). Japan's victory increased its reputation as a great power and demonstrated the efficiency of its army. Britain's Conservative government decided to revise the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and utilize Japanese soldiers in India against the Russian threat. Anglo-Japanese military collaboration was regarded as an important solution to the defense of the British Empire. Nevertheless, the tough negotiations over the revision of the Alliance showed that Japan was reluctant to send forces to India.

The British Liberal government established in December 1905 reviewed the defense of India and cast doubt on the practicality of Japanese military assistance. The General Staff insisted that supply

1 For the establishment of the CID, see. Johnson (1960), d'Ombrain (1973).

and transportation difficulties would make it impossible to deploy large numbers of Japanese soldiers to India's northwest frontier and that enlisting help from Japan would risk damaging Britain's prestige in Asia.[2] The Government of India agreed. In February 1906, the CID concluded that Britain should not ask Japan to send troops to India.[3]

However, not all CID members shared this negative view of Anglo-Japanese military collaboration. A conference between British and Japanese military representatives was to be held to discuss their potential military cooperation. In April 1907, the CID again discussed enlisting Japan's military assistance in India. Foreign Secretary Edward Grey argued that Britain might employ Japanese troops on India's border with Persia. The CID decided that the possibility of utilizing Japanese military assistance there should be discussed at the forthcoming conference.[4] However, the British military representatives did not discuss this matter at the conference because they strongly doubted the utility of Japanese military assistance. Moreover, the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 improved Anglo-Russian relations, reducing Russia's threat to India and its neighbors, and in 1907, Britain discarded the idea of Japanese troops in India.

3. The First World War: 1914–1918

During the First World War, Germany became a common enemy of both Britain and Japan, and they fought Germany not only in Europe but also in Asia. Immediately following the declaration of war in August 1914, Britain and Japan launched concerted military operations against

2 Memo. by the General Staff, 4 Nov. 1905, CAB 4/1/68B, The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA).

3 Minutes of 84th Meeting, 15 Feb. 1906, CAB 2/2/84, TNA.

4 Minutes of 97th Meeting, 25 Apr. 1907, CAB 2/2/97, TNA.

the Germans in China. Although Britain considered Japan's cooperation strategically essential to win the war, it feared that Japan might use the war to expand Japan's sphere of influence in East Asia. However, the Japanese army was unwilling to cooperate because they did not want to be dictated to by British officers. The two armies did not share operational plans and were critical of each other (Nish 1972, 136–137). Although they succeeded in eliminating the German base in China, their military collaboration was not productive.

By December 1916, the war was locked in a stalemate in both Europe and Asia. Britain suffered from a shortage of manpower, increasing Japan's value to the Allied Powers as a potential source of military assistance. While the shortage of transport ships and the poor condition of the railways made sending Japanese troops to Europe unviable, Britain considered the usefulness of Japan's military aid in Asia instead.

Mesopotamia was the most promising theatre for this operation. Britain had to defend Baghdad from an expected German-Turkish attack and judged the use of Japanese forces in Mesopotamia less injurious than losing Baghdad to Turkish occupation, which would severely damage Britain's prestige in Asia. As Arthur Balfour, the then Foreign Secretary, insisted, there was no objection from the Foreign Office to accepting Japan's military assistance in Mesopotamia.[5]

However, the India Office and the Government of India were also important in the question of Mesopotamia, which was regarded as part of India's security. Japan's increased volume of exports to India and espionage activities there had deepened Delhi's distrust of Japan, and the Government of India had strong objections to the idea of Japanese forces in Mesopotamia. When the India Office asked the Government of India about the use of Japanese troops in Mesopotamia, it received an

5 Cf. Foreign Office, 6 Oct. 1917, FO 371/2955/186492, TNA.

unfavorable reply with a wide range of political and military reasons. The India Office concurred.[6]

India's objections discouraged the Anglo-Japanese military collaboration in Mesopotamia. Moreover, Japan unofficially indicated that it had no intention of dispatching soldiers to India, citing a shortage of supplies and public opposition to sending troops abroad.[7] Forcing official negotiations with Japan in the face of India's opposition was not an option, as military assistance from Japan might conflict with India's security, and Britain could not sacrifice its imperial interests.

Even so, Britain did not abandon the idea of using Japanese forces in Asia. Siberia, where the Russian Revolution of 1917 had caused turmoil, emerged as a place where the presence of the Japanese army would be acceptable to the Allied Powers. Indeed, since the Russian Revolution, the situation in the Caucasus and Persia had been so unstable that British policymakers were deeply concerned about the German threat to India's border.[8] Employing Japanese soldiers in Siberia would be useful in stopping the Germans' eastward advance and would protect India.

However, Britain had to consider the United States' attitude toward a Japanese military presence in Siberia. Anglo-American cooperation was essential to winning the war, and the United States did not want Japan to expand its influence in East Asia. Therefore, it was not surprising that the United States did not support a Japanese military intervention in Siberia. Britain had to try to persuade the United States to accept Japanese soldiers in Siberia, while at the same time protecting

6 Cf. Shuckburgh, 13 Dec. 1917, CAB 25/48, TNA; Minute by Islington on Shuckburgh's memo. of 13 Dec. 1917, 18 Dec. 1917, CAB 25/48, TNA.

7 Balfour to Greene, 15 Nov. 1917, FO 371/2955/217082, TNA.

8 Cecil to Balfour, 8 Jan. 1918, Balfour MSS, Add. MSS. 49738, British Library, London; War Cabinet 369, 21 Mar. 1918, CAB 23/5, TNA.

the Anglo-American relationship.

In the end, Britain succeeded in carrying out an Allied military intervention into Siberia. The rescue of Czechoslovakian soldiers who had deserted from the Austrian army and were now stranded in Siberia providing an unexpected pretext, Britain, the United States, and Japan finally moved into Siberia in August 1918. Nevertheless, the First World War abruptly ended in November of that year and with it the Allied intervention in Siberia, which Britain regarded as Japanese military assistance, did not produce an effective result.

4. After the First World War: 1923–1928

After the First World War, both Britain and Japan sought to tackle the rise of Chinese nationalism. The Kuomintang, led by Sun Yat-sen, played a significant role in intensifying China's nationalist movement. Cooperating with the Soviet Union, the Kuomintang aimed to revise unequal treaties with Western powers and Japan, and to that end, supported the Chinese workers' strikes and boycotts. At first, Britain was the Chinese nationalists' main target (Gotō 2006, 55). On May 30, 1925, Chinese workers and students holding a demonstration calling for boycotts were killed by the Shanghai Municipal Police Force under British command. This May Thirtieth Incident caused general strikes and anti-British boycotts that damaged British economic activities in Shanghai.

Britain needed international cooperation, especially collaboration with Japan, to deal with the anti-British movement in China. Moreover, Britain considered Japanese military assistance essential to protect British interests there. After the First World War, Britain curtailed its military spending due to financial stringency and the British public's inclination toward pacificism, which weakened its military capability in

Asia. As the nearest power to China, Britain expected Japan's military support with restoring order and stability in China. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance had terminated in 1923, but British policymakers considered that the spirit of the alliance between Britain and Japan remained (Hosoya 1982, 10–11).

Although willing to cooperate with Britain, Japan objected to intervening militarily in China, where it had various interests and was not sympathetic to the Chinese nationalist movement. Foreign Minister Kijūrō Shidehara declined to collaborate with Britain militarily, emphasizing the importance of Japan's non-intervention in China and the promotion of Japan's economy through trade with China. Eventually, Japan unilaterally reached a settlement with Chinese workers to avoid damage to Japanese enterprises in China. Britain was surprised by Japan's separate settlement and finally realized the difficulty of the Anglo-Japanese military collaboration.

Britain had to request Japan to cooperate militarily in China again. After seizing the power of the Kuomintang, Chiang Kai-shek started the Northern Expedition to unite China in 1926. Although Britain's December Memorandum insisted that it was ready to negotiate with the Nationalists, this newly declared policy did not immediately improve Anglo-Chinese relations (Gotō 2006, 94–98). When the Kuomintang army attacked Hankow and Nanking in 1927, the CID discussed how to defend Shanghai by force. The lack of Britain's military capability in Asia was so clear that a joint military action with other powers, in particular Japan, was essential. To achieve military collaboration with Japan, the CID even proposed that British soldiers should be under Japanese command.[9]

However, Japan's reaction was again half-hearted. Shidehara

9 Cf. Beatty, Milne and Trenchard, 11 Jan. 1927, CAB 4/16/756B, TNA.

refused to send Japanese forces to Shanghai, repeating the importance of Japan's non-intervention in China and Sino-Japanese economic cooperation. The Japanese Foreign Ministry feared that dispatching Japanese troops might provoke Chinese hostility towards Japan. Prime Minister Reijirō Wakatsuki agreed with Shidehara, criticizing Britain for treating Japan as "a watchdog in the East." "If the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had existed, we must have done our duty by sending troops," he insisted, "but since it was not the case, we could not accept such a self-seeking plan (Wakatsuki 1950, 327–328; Gotō-Shibata 1995, 52)." In the end, Britain was compelled to give up the idea of Anglo-Japanese military collaboration.

When Britain and Japan tackled the rise of Chinese nationalism, they could not ignore the influence of the Soviet Union. Some British policymakers considered that Britain and Japan could and should cooperate militarily because both were affected by the Soviet threat, which was not confined to China but extended to India and its adjacent regions. In the 1920s, the War Office was the most sympathetic of the British ministries to this view (Best 2002, 90). Indeed, in February 1928, the War Office issued a memorandum insisting that a revived Anglo-Japanese alliance would assist Britain's defense of India against Soviet aggression. Moreover, it would make Anglo-Japanese military collaboration in China easier and make the defense of British interests there more efficient and economical.[10]

However, Britain's enthusiasm for Anglo-Japanese military collaboration faded due to geopolitical changes after 1928. The Northern Expedition was almost complete, and the domestic situation in China was stabilizing. This improved Anglo-Chinese relations, reducing the value of Britain cooperating with Japan. Once the anti-British

10 "Memorandum on the desirability, from a military point of view, of reviving the Alliance with Japan," Feb. 1928, WO 106/129, TNA.

movement in China appeared to be waning, Britain's concern about the Soviet threat also subsided.

On the contrary, Japan needed Britain's cooperation all the more. After Shidehara and Wakatsuki resigned, the new Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka sent Japanese forces to the Shantung Peninsula to protect Japan's interests there. In May 1928, an armed clash between China and Japan further damaged Sino-Japanese relations. Growing Chinese hostility to Japan shifted the main target of the Chinese boycotts from Britain to Japan (Gotō 2006, 164–166). Japan requested the help of other powers, particularly Britain, to deal with this arduous situation. Nevertheless, Britain no longer needed Japan's military assistance, and the Foreign Office concluded that Britain should not cooperate with Japan to avoid being drawn into a Sino-Japanese confrontation. All in all, Anglo-Japanese military collaboration was not realized after the First World War.

5. Conclusion

Although both countries realized the importance of Anglo-Japanese military collaboration, it was difficult for Britain and Japan to cooperate militarily. Their common threats, namely Russia before, Germany during, and Chinese nationalism after the First World War, did not produce an effective collaboration. This chapter has presented two difficulties in the realization of their military cooperation.

First, British policymakers disagreed about the usefulness of military assistance from Japan. The CID tended to support Anglo-Japanese military collaboration, but the Government of India and India Office continuously opposed it due to the negative effects a Japanese military presence would have in India. While the Foreign Office was ready to accept Japan's military assistance during the First World War,

they changed their attitude after the war. On the other hand, whereas the General Staff was not enthusiastic about such a collaboration before the war, the War Office advocated strengthening the military ties between Britain and Japan after the war. British policymakers had to resolve their policy differences before they could decide their policy on Anglo-Japanese military collaboration.

Second, Britain and Japan had different priorities. Given the indispensability of India to the British Empire, India was a strong factor in Britain's deliberations over Anglo-Japanese military collaboration. Britain attempted to link Japanese military assistance to the defense of India, but this was not acceptable to Japan, whose particular emphasis was on East Asia rather than India. Moreover, after the Russo-Japanese War, Japan tended to seek its interests in East Asia unilaterally. Thus, the two countries' different priorities made Anglo-Japanese military collaboration much more difficult, even though both countries faced common threats.

References

Best, Antony. 2002. *British Intelligence and the Japanese Challenge in Asia, 1914–1941*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

———. 2021. *British Engagement with Japan, 1854-1922: The Origins and Course of an Unlikely Alliance*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Gotō-Shibata, Harumi. 1995. *Japan and Britain in Shanghai, 1925–31*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press.

Gotō, Harumi. 2006. S*hanhai wo meguru Nichiei Kankei 1925–1932 nen: Nichiei Dōmei-go no Kyōchō to Taikō [Partners or Competitors: Anglo-Japanese Relations in Shanghai, 1925–1932]*. Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai. (In Japanese)

Hosoya, Chihiro. 1982. Britain and the United States in Japan's View of the International System, 1919-37. In Ian Nish (ed.), *Anglo-Japanese Alienation 1919–1952: Papers of the Anglo-Japanese Conference on the History of the Second World War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3–26.

Johnson, Franklyn Arthur. 1960. *Defence by Committee: The British Committee of Imperial Defence 1885–1959*. London: Oxford University Press.

Nish, Ian. 1966. *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894–1907.* London: The Athlone Press.

———. 1972. *Alliance in Decline: A Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations 1908–23.* London: The Athlone Press.

d'Ombrain, Nicholas. 1973. *War Machinery and High Policy: Defence Administration in Peacetime Britain, 1902–1914.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wakatsuki, Reijirō. 1950. *Kofūan Kaiko Roku [Memoirs of Kofuan]*. Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbunsha. (In Japanese)

Wyatt, Christopher M. 2011. *Afghanistan and the Defence of Empire: Diplomacy and Strategy during the Great Game.* London: I.B. Tauris.

Concluding Remarks

Mahon MURPHY

1. A Brief Summary

All five chapters fix us on a Japanese perspective of its empire. In Chapter 1, Kubota maps out the overlooked southward expansion of the Japanese empire from the Sino-Japanese War to the post-First World War via the Boxer Rebellion. Empires are concerned about their public images, and in Chapter 2, Sommen shows how the Japanese foreign ministry took this seriously with the establishment of the Department of Information. A further voice, we could hazard to say semi-state, was presented by Andrea Revelant in Chapter 3, through his analysis of the *Manshū Nippō*. Bringing us back to Japan's southward imperial expansion, but into the 1920s Sogo analyzed the Kenseikai and its policies with regard to Taiwan in particular in Chapter 4. Finally, reminding us that in addition to commercial and political interests, armies are a vital aspect of imperial expansion, Sugawara in Chapter 5 casts his gaze onto the limits of imperial cooperation via the withering military relations between Japan and Britain in China.

2. What was the Overriding Theme?

The key connecting thread is imperial management. If we are to understand how Japan's imperial management functioned in the 1920s, we have to see what came before it. As Antony Best and Oliviero Frattolillo remind us on the outbreak of the First World War, Japan had a dual identity: one as an up-and-coming empire with a growing military

and economy (Frattolillo and Best 2015, 2). If Japan was not considered a Great Power before the First World War, it certainly was one by 1918. Beneath the surface, however, there were broad social issues that were the reverse side of the coin of this modernization project; industrial revolution and imperial expansion created its own tensions. Indeed, Best and Frattolillo point to Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War as a double-edged sword: success cemented Japan's position in East Asia but almost crippled the Empire financially, leaving Japan burdened with heavy loans that restricted the Imperial Japanese Army's appetite for further expansion. We could say that the First World War is where we really see this intersection of imperial expansion and international cooperation at its most Machiavellian. Excluding the central powers, we could propose the notion that the 1920s was an era of international cooperation extending from the mid-1910s.

3. Avenues for Further Exploration

The contributions to this text have given us plenty of food for thought on Japan's creation of its empire. Here, perhaps it will be useful to widen our focus to see where this all fits together. Sugawara shows us a new perspective on Japan's declining relationship with Britain in the 1920s, but I wonder if we can extend the analysis further. A couple of directions that have been hinted at in this book may be useful for exploration.

The First World War is, I hope, now recognized as a pivotal moment in the history of imperialism in East Asia. As Sommen points out, it also led to a re-working of how states thought about their public image: propaganda (which had not by then gained its negative connotations) was seen as an important wing of international diplomacy. Maintaining a positive image of the empire, both to Japanese citizens and further

afield, was seen as essential in the post-war new diplomacy. This links to Revelant's discussion on the *Manshū Nippō* as an organ of pushing a conservative voice with a former army intelligence officer in charge of the newspaper.

The First World War, as Sugawara and others have pointed to, changed the security makeup of the empire in East Asia. Kubota reminds us of how vital maintaining security was in guaranteeing the profits of Japanese companies. Perhaps we could consider the imperial security apparatus further to connect Manchuria, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, private companies, Kenseikai policies to colonial rule, and Anglo-Japanese relations. This connecting tissue is the Japanese policing of East Asia. Erik Esselstrom's excellent work on the police administration in Manchuria hints at this (Esselstrom 2009). Further, Isabella Jackson shows us how the First World War drastically altered the makeup of the police force in Shanghai's international settlement, with a slew of Japanese recruits replacing Germans, but mainly British who moved to the Western Front (Jackson 2018). As Sugawara points out, the British Municipal police force rather than military were the main force used to deal with quelling the 30th of May Movement. What can looking at Anglo-Japanese police relations add to this story and to today's discussion as a whole?

Another avenue I believe would be useful for further exploration would be to borrow from our colleagues at Doshisha University, who are conducting research into trans-imperial history (Doshisha University n.d.). From the police perspective, we can also shine a light on another aspect that has been overlooked here: those who were in the firing line of imperial expansion. China's attempts to push back at Japanese imperial expansion were a main factor in China entering the First World War. How did Japanese imperial planners take into account the local population? In constructing imperial propaganda, to what extent is the

foreign ministry thinking of a Chinese audience, and does the *Manshū Nippō* cater for a local audience?

It can also help us to understand how Japan faced the ideological challenges to its empire. Shanghai, apart from London, was the only city outside Japan's empire to have its own branch of the Tokkō (thought police), attached to the consular police. Tensions of different models of empire come into focus in the city's divided landscape, the international settlement, the Chinese section, and the French concession.

From my perspective as someone who has done extensive research on German Africa and the First World War, I would be really interested in how the discussions in this book could be further linked into 1920s international cooperation. The Washington conference, of course, has been discussed, but I was a little surprised that the League of Nations received scant mention. The 1920s is often viewed as the heyday of international cooperation, centered around the League of Nations. However, this view has been challenged by Tara Zahra's excellent work on interwar anti-global movements (Zahra 2023). However, we should not discount it completely, as it did remain an important public forum for Japan to defend and justify its imperial expansion while, at the same time, partaking in the global management of borders (in particular in the 1920s).

Japan was also a mandate power, and I think there may be much merit in taking a comparative angle. Sogo points to an interesting connection between Taiwan and the Nanyo mandates. Could we look at the relationship between Nanyo and Taiwan as described by Sogo in a similar way to that of the Union of South Africa and what was German Southwest Africa, or that of Samoa and New Zealand or New Guinea and Australia? These were the "class C" mandates. For the Union of South Africa, possession of a Mandate represented a successful outcome of the "sub-imperial mission" it undertook during the war by taking

control of neighboring territory. Certainly, there are many differences, but it would be interesting to investigate the links forming between Taiwan and Nanyo as a similar sub-imperial expansion, with Tokyo delegating responsibility for aspects of the mandates' management to the imperial government in Taipei.

Management of Mandates was done in a public manner with annual reports compiled and sent to Geneva. While Nanyo was tightly under Japanese control, how did the international scrutiny of the Mandate affect decisions made in other parts of the empire? I am thinking here of how Sogo's chapter reflects arguments Michael Callahan makes with reference to the French management of the Mandates of Cameroon and Togo. Callahan highlights French frustrations with the League prying into its imperial policies, but also how having to compose different policies for its mandates of Cameroon and Togo affected its actions in other areas of West Africa and even Indochina (Callahan 1999).

4. Conclusion

The 1920s were a period of changing imperial strategy, and here we see Japan changing its mind from the need to "Get out of Asia and turn to the West" to instead deciding to "Return to Asia and leave the West": a cultural re-embrace of Asia certainly, but a vision of Asia's closer economic dependence on Japan (Frattolillo and Best 2015, 6). As this book's five enlightening chapters show, imperial management and international cooperation could not always work hand in hand, challenging the often-held assumption that the 1920s were a high point of international cooperation, only to be disrupted by the economic collapse and the Great Depression.

References

Callahan, Michael. 1999. *Mandates and Empire: The League of Nations and Africa 1914–1931*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press.

Doshisha University, Organization for Research Initiatives and Development. n.d. *Center for Transimperial History*. <https://research.doshisha.ac.jp/research_center/center-for-transimperial-history/>

Esselstrom, Erik. 2009. *Crossing Empire's Edge: Foreign Ministry Police and Japanese Expansionism in Northeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Frattolillo, Oliviero and Antony Best. 2015. Introduction. In Oliverio Frattolillo and Antony Best (eds.), *Japan and the Great War*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jackson, Isabella. 2018. *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zahra, Tara. 2023. *Against the World Anti-Globalism and Mass Politics Between the World Wars*. New York: WW Norton and Company.

ONLINE ISBN 978-4-910550-55-8
PRINT ISBN 978-4-910550-54-1

Asia-Japan Research Institute, Ritsumeikan University