

## 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.

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#### **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).