

# POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE MEIJI AND TAISHŌ PERIODS

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## I. EXTERNAL PRESSURE AND THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE LAST YEARS OF THE SHOGUNATE

**A**T approximately the same period Japan and China, both became subject to pressure from the Great Powers of Europe and America, were compelled to open their doors to foreign countries and were obliged to undertake the reform of their ancient economic and political institutions. However, the results differed to an extraordinary degree, for while Japan became an independent capitalist country and at length the only imperialist country in Asia, China lapsed into the condition of a semi-colony. What were the causes which produced this difference? This question has been asked repeatedly over the last thirty years in historical circles, but no fully persuasive answer has yet been given to it.

Contemporary historical studies have made clear that the causes of such a big difference existing between them were attributable to complicated combinations of multifarious elements, both international and internal, at each point in the historical process.

England's march towards the Far East from India was disturbed by the weakening of available military forces owing to the Crimean War and the disputes with China after the Opium War, although she took the initiative among the Great Powers in regard to their Asian policy. In particular her policy in regard to Japan was inevitably influenced by American diplomacy, as America was the first to open Japan's door. Even though, for Japan, this was fortuitous, no one can deny its significance in the actual process of history.

In the 1840's the report of China's defeat in the Opium War was a great shock to the authorities of the Shogunate, and a large number of related writings were published. It proved a great force for the development of knowledge of the foreign situation among the forward-looking elements in the clans of the feudal lords. Its influence made all

the more persistent wishes to 'expel the foreigners' (*Jōi* 攘夷) and served only to strengthen feudal anti-foreignism. Along with these developments other responses to the situation appeared. These consisted of Japanese attempts to make an objective survey of the difference between Japan and Europe and America in military force, and to take steps to reform Japan's military preparedness.

In 1841 the Shogunate summoned Takashima Shūhan 高島秋帆 to Edo 江戸 and caused him to train troops in accordance with western methods of infantry and artillery practice. That this policy of adopting western gunnery did not necessarily exhibit smooth progress thereafter is bespoken by the fate of Takashima, who was thrown into prison for the reason that he had the disloyal intention of inviting foreign troops into the country. Nevertheless, within ten years of Perry's arrival in Japan the Shogunate and the feudal lords had begun work on preparations for response to external pressure, and we must also note that the establishment of modern productive industry, military technology, and the reform of political and economic institutions were being studied from western models on a fairly wide scale, both by the Shogunate and the feudal lords.

How was it possible for these rational responses to external pressure to occur? To this question, too, it is dangerous to give a simple answer. However, among the relevant historical conditions we may be able to add the following two points. Firstly, as we have noted above, through the Opium War Japan was able to learn from China the experience of a military clash with the Great Powers. If Japan had been exposed to the intimidation of Perry's fleet all at once, without these ten years of grace, it is probable that there would have been great disorder among the feudal rulers and that as a result organization into the fanatical anti-foreign movement would have been overwhelming. Secondly, the coming to hand of the lessons of the Opium War coincided with the Reforms of Tempō era (*Tempō no Kaikaku* 天保改革) by the Shogunate and the feudal lords. This parallel development was fortuitous. Further, by this fortuitous occurrence it became inevitable that the feudal rulers should take these lessons to heart. Inasmuch as they could not fail to be impressed by the great dangers to the established order deriving from the impoverishment of finances, the insecurity of control over the peasantry, the collapse of morale among the *samurai* class—all of them serious contradictions in the system of feudal rule—it was natural for the undertakers of reform in the administrations of the Shogunate and the feudal lords to examine themselves regarding the deficiencies in military systems and weapons and in carrying out their reforms to seek

a way out of their difficulties not merely by reproducing the existing form of organization but by assimilating new knowledge and technology. We may describe the situation by saying that the depth of the contradictions in the system of feudal rule had provided the motive power which caused the leading elements in the ruling stratum to take the first step towards modern reform in the interests of resisting the threat of external pressure.

To all appearances the Shogunate was confused and at a loss what to do when confronted with the arrival of Perry's fleet. But what manner of response could the Shogunate actually have made? Its range of choice was extremely narrow. Not only was it not so ignorant of the force of foreign countries as to think that it could simply 'expel the foreigners', but it also had no faith in the military preparedness of its own country. There was no alternative but to open the country as slowly as possible and with as many restrictions as possible, as it were, piece by piece, on the one hand not breaking down the presupposition of the 'ancestral law' of maintaining the closure of the country to foreign intercourse and on the other hand avoiding a military clash with foreign countries. In the case of Tokugawa Nariaki 徳川齊昭, an adherent of the anti-foreign party who was critical of the Shogunate's policy, the policy of 'expelling the foreigners' was likewise regarded as a slogan for keeping up the morale of the *samurai* class at home and filling out Japan's military preparedness, and it was realized that until military preparedness which would make the expulsion of the foreigners possible had been filled out it would be necessary to compromise with the policy for the opening of the country.

The movement for the expulsion of the foreigners extended its power among the middle and lower ranks of the *samurai* class. Discontented as they were with the state of administration by feudal lords and the Shogunate, they were able to advocate the supreme principles of politics in spite of the constraints imposed by the feudal hierarchy. The supreme principle of politics, held by the middle and lower *samurai* class in their anti-régime opinions, was 'expelling the foreigners' in the interests of safeguarding Japan, the 'country of the gods' (*Shinkoku* 神國), and in essence it covers demands for reform in military, politics, and finance.

The foreign question was conceived as something which was of sufficient importance to transcend both questions of material interest among the feudal lords and the restrictions imposed by the hierarchy of feudal statuses. When considered as a view of 'name and statuses' in

feudal society, their idea of 'expelling the foreigner' was much more complex and tenuous. Because of their country's traditional culture, their belief in her ability to resist foreign culture was not so strong. Both Confucianism and Buddhism, the central entities in the traditional culture, were nothing other than cultural imports themselves. The *Shinron* 新論 of Aizawa Seishisai 會澤正志齋 of Mito 水戸 clan, a work regarded as the Bible of the anti-foreign party, contained matter to the effect that however advanced their material culture might be the countries of Europe and America must be despised as 'barbarians' because they were ignorant of the morality of Loyalty and Filial Piety, and that they must be repelled from Japan. But the weakness consisting in the fact that this morality of Loyalty and Filial Piety could not be put into theoretical form without borrowing Confucian theory transmitted from China had already been rendered a matter of common-sense knowledge among the intellectual elements in the form of the question of the difference between the Royal Road and the Way of the Lord Protector and its connexion with the inherent constitution of the state or National Polity (*Kokutai* 國體). What is more, unlike China Japan did not have the experience of having built great empires which from of old had kept alien races in relations of tributary dependency. Thus it was natural that although they were instructed to honour their own country as being at the centre of the world and to despise foreign countries this precept was unexpectedly weak outside the world of ideas. The enlargement of the movement for honouring the Emperor and expelling the foreigners led to a larger number of the members of the middle and lower ranks of the *samurai* class being brought into direct or indirect contact with central political circles in Edo and Kyōto 京都, and extended their opportunities of obtaining information regarding diplomacy and knowledge of the actual condition of national defence. The results of this were that from being a simple anti-foreign party they rapidly grew into a reforming party having the expulsion of the foreigners as its slogan.

What helped this development was the effective operation of the following two conditions preventing the enlargement of the disputes with foreign countries between the years 1860 and 1862, during which time the movement for the expulsion of the foreigners flourished and acts of terrorism against foreigners were common. The first was relations of antagonism and mutual restraint among the Great Powers, namely between England and America and between England and Russia. On the occasion of the assassination of Heusken (Henry C.) in 1861, a member of the staff of the American mission, the plan put forward by England for

the withdrawal of foreign diplomatic representation from Edo in protest against the Shogunate's policy of suppressing foreign trade and the excesses committed by the anti-foreign party was opposed by America, the country whose support was the most required, out of feelings of rivalry, and its effectiveness was reduced. Again, when Russian warships occupied the island of Tsushima 對馬, the British Navy in the Far East was the decisive factor preventing the situation from worsening and finally causing the withdrawal of the warships.

The relations of antagonism and mutual restraint among the Great Powers did not necessarily operate only in the direction of relaxing the crisis of colonialization. There were also many instances in which these antagonisms expressed themselves in competition which operated in the direction of increasing crises. The reason why they did not operate in this direction in Japan in the years 1861-1862 was that for several years after the opening of the ports foreign trade increased at a more or less even pace.

This was because while the sudden expansion of exports, particularly exports of raw silk which accounted for more than half of the total exports, produced some temporary confusion in the economy, over the whole it proved possible to bring about an expansion of production—a 60-100 per cent expansion in the case of raw silk—and an enlargement of the merchandizing mechanisms which were sufficient to sustain the sudden rise in exports. Furthermore, this showed that the increase in the production of raw silk was carried out not in such economically advanced areas as the Kinki 近畿 region but in the Kantō 關東 and Chūbu 中部 regions and the southern areas of Ōu 奥羽 region; in other words, that even in the regions in the middle range of economic development which accounted for the greater part of Japan there were inherent conditions sufficient for the rapid growth of capitalistic productive relations in response to an externally given stimulus. Nevertheless, that the Great Powers were satisfied with this degree of expansion of foreign trade and made no demands for its tempo to be increased still further was due to the fact that their main mission was that of opening up the Chinese market and that in order to remove the political obstacles to this England and France were fully occupied in employing military force on the occasion of the Arrow Incident in 1856.

Joint measures for the employment of military force against Japan were brought to realization with the shelling of Chōshū 長州 by the Four-power fleet in 1864. However, this dispute was poor in possibilities of spreading to cover the whole country or of developing as far as the

cession of territory, as had happened in China. Under the agreement reached among England, America, France, and Holland immediately before the expedition against Shimonoseki 下關 it was laid down that no cession of territory or exclusive rights were to be demanded and that no attempts were to be made to mediate between conflicting factions in Japan. Further, the diplomats stationed in Japan, and particularly the English, who were in the leading position among them, considered it necessary that Japan should be given a blow which would cause the whole feudal ruling stratum to realize the impossibility of 'expelling the foreigners.' This view was based on the prospect that one blow would be sufficient and that the solution to the situation which would come into being with the dying down of the movement for the expulsion of the foreigners would rather be found in expanding foreign trade, that is, in the possibility of abolishing the Shogunate's monopoly and causing the clans of the feudal to take part in foreign trade. Why did they arrive at this appreciation of the situation? In regard to the answer to this question, too, we can find nothing of so decisive a character that a single answer will suffice. The first reason is that on self-examination England had found, after the experience of the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) in China and the Mutiny (1857) in India, that the employment of military force provoked resistance from the natives and did not necessarily bring about results which were profitable for her demands for the enlargement of markets, and the second is that they put their trust in a policy which was to take the place of the strong policy of employing military force, a policy under which the "enlightened party" (*Kaimeiha* 開明派) in the feudal ruling stratum was to be supported and urged on to undertake the removal of the feudal system by themselves. It was also actually due to the fact that the political movement aiming at the expulsion of the foreigners had been eclipsed by the political upheaval of the 18th of August, 1863, and that the direction of development leading to the opening of the country had been firmly established. The fact that both Satsuma 薩摩 and Chōshū clans, regarded as the main strongholds of the movement for the expulsion of the foreigners, took the opportunity of the struggle with the foreigners to change their attitude entirely and to exhibit eagerness to make contact with foreign countries and to participate in foreign trade was not a "revolution from *outside*" nor a "revolution from *below*," but a "revolution from *above*" which gave to the Great Powers of Europe and America the prospect that the line of a revolution at the hands of the reforming party within the feudal ruling class (this was hoped for by

the Great Powers) would be brought to realization.

Why was it that the enlightened reforming party in the feudal ruling stratum possessed sufficient strength to enable it to control the political situation? The answer to this question, too, is not an easy one. One answer may be found in the fact that the weakening of the hierarchical class structure within the *samurai* class resulted in opportunities of office-tenure and worldly success for those with knowledge of "substantial learning" and technological subjects, so that among the children of the lower ranks of the *samurai* class in the clans of the feudal there emerged a large number who studied "western learning" or western military technology. At the basis of this, however, there lay the situation in which participation in politics by opulent peasants and merchants increased as a result of a general movement for financial and military reform in the clans and their opinions and actions in political matters came to have a great influence on the line of advance followed by the clans, developments which caused the breakdown of the traditional political consciousness and forms of political behaviour among the *samurai* class. The leading elements in the enlightened reforming party were personalities of a kind unusual among the *samurai* class, in that they frequently attached value to substantial profit and substantial efficacy, and did not scruple to choose any means for the attainment of their ends.

Phenomenologically considered, during the critical period of the collapse of the Shogunate in 1865-1867 the concert of the Great Powers was broken and England and France adopted antagonistic positions, France aiding the Shogunate and England supporting Satsuma and Chōshū. This would seem to include the danger of bringing about foreign interference in Japan. But substantially this danger was slight. Neither England nor France was so ignorant of the political and economic situation in Japan as to give a blow to the continually expanding foreign trade by lending their powers to the enlargement and prolongation of the civil war. On the other hand, both on the side of the Shogunate and that of Satsuma and Chōshū there appeared among the leadership men who both made use of the antagonism between England and France and were clearly aware of the limits up to which this antagonism might be used. Together with the material interests of their clan or of the Shogunate these men also gave consideration to the material interests of their nation, and, taking their stand on these assumptions, they possessed sufficient sovereign consciousness and energy in diplomacy to make use of this antagonism between the Great Powers. Further, the political

order of the Shogunate and the subordinate feudal lords was collapsing, and the antagonisms between the Shogunate and the feudal lords, among the feudal lords, and also among their retainers, were becoming more acute, but at the same time a collective consciousness among the feudal ruling class in relation to external pressure, and through it, a national state consciousness, was coming into being.

China concluded the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 and Japan her Treaties of Friendship in 1854, so that there was a gap of more than ten years between them and we may describe the situation by saying that China was always in the front line in the encounters with foreign pressure, and thanks to this fact external pressure on Japan was less, came at a later time, and gave Japan enough space to get ready her posture for responding to it. In the extent and depth of their influence the taking of Peking by the Anglo-French force and the attack on Chōshū by the Four Powers are scarcely to be compared with one another, while the Treaty of Tientsin gave much greater facilities for invasion by foreign capital than the Commercial Treaties concluded by Japan in the Ansei 安政 period. In the period of domestic and international disorder during the ten years following the arrival of Perry, Japan successfully avoided a colonialization crisis, took the first steps towards national unity, and built the foundations for the development of national economy.

## II. THE INTERNATIONAL CONDITIONS SURROUNDING THE MOVEMENT FOR THE CIVILIZATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

From the latter half of the 1860's up to the first half of the 1880's the external pressure on East Asia by the Great Powers of Europe and America was somewhat relaxed. That is to say, in the period of approximately twenty years from the suppression of the Taiping Rebellion in China in 1864 and the conclusion of the incident of the attack on Chōshū by the Four-power Fleet in Japan in the same year up to the Franco-Chinese War of 1884 direct external pressure on East Asia was relaxed, and as well as causing the T'ung Chih revival in China this gave Japan sufficient space to bring the Meiji Restoration and the movement for Civilization and Enlightenment (*Bunmei Kaika* 文明開化). Considering the situation as a whole during this period, the demands for colonies from the part of the capitalist Great Powers, and the antagonisms among the Great Powers, were strengthened, and there was an increasingly imperialist colouring in the foreign policies of the Great Powers. However, the principal stage for antagonism among the



Great Powers was in Europe, in the Balkans, and the Middle East, while the chief directions taken by the Great Powers in their acquisition of colonies were in Africa and Asia, and in Asia in the area peripheral to Japan, China, and Korea.

This characteristic of the international situation imparted certain distinctive features to the political consciousness and political behaviour of the leaders of the Meiji government. On the one side they had a lively sense of crisis in regard to aggression by the Great Powers and stressed the necessity of responding to a situation which required Japan to "stand up to all the countries of the world," and with this they provided a rationale for their policies aiming at unity in military preparedness and in politics. The sense of crisis in regard to foreign countries had clearly become a means for the realization of quite separate political aims. Actually, the national crises were in process of developing in the peripheral area of East Asia, but within East Asia it was more relaxed, when compared with the first half of the 1860's. Further, the confidence that they understood the "world disposition of affairs" in which Japan was standing up to all the countries of the world—the sermons counselling the people to "know the world disposition of affairs" or to "follow the principles valid throughout the world"—endowed these leading members of the Meiji government with the power of leadership in relation to the people. As well as referring to the crisis of Great Power aggression to which we have referred above, the expression "the world disposition of affairs" had another and more optimistic side, the view that if Japan followed the principles valid throughout the world and adopted the institutions of Europe and America it would be possible to build a wealthy and powerful state and to stand on terms of equality with the Great Powers. To express it in other words, a two-layered consciousness had been formed, comprising a consciousness of resistance to the Great Powers of Europe and America and a consciousness of subordination to them.

This being the case, what manner of political policies and political behaviour were produced by this kind of international environment and the international consciousness of the political leaders who were cognizant of it?

The first is that of the overseas military expedition as an instrument in domestic politics. Neither the agitation for the invasion of Korea, the expedition to Taiwan of 1874, nor the Gwan Hua Island Incident in the following year were occasioned by any serious international dispute of a kind which would make Japan's use of military force inevitable. It

is more proper to consider that it was necessary for Japan to undertake military action against foreign countries out of the necessities of the political strategy which aimed at directing outwards the discontent of the *ex-samurai* class in matters of domestic politics, or at concentrating public opinion along the line of militarism and causing it to turn in the direction of supporting the government. Furthermore, not only did the leaders of Japan believe that these armed disputes with Korea and China would not invite interference and aggression from the part of the Great Powers of Europe and America, but, as was shown at the time of the Taiwan Expedition and the Gwan Hua Island Incident, they expected to be supported by England and America. This being the case, was Japan trying to perform the role of a catspaw of England and America in their invasion of East Asia? The question of "The Military Policeman of the Far East" belongs to the period of imperialism dating from 1900, and it is unhistorical to take it back to the 1870's and 1880's. Those supremely responsible for these foreign military expeditions—Saigō Takamori 西郷隆盛, Iwakura Tomomi 岩倉具視, Ōkubo Toshimichi 大久保利通, Kido Takayoshi 木戸孝允, and Saigō Tsugumichi 西郷從道—were men who ten years before had been vexing themselves over the way in which Japan should react to the military threats and interference of the Great Powers in order to maintain her independence. Further, they were men who in the 1870's and 1880's located the centre of their policy aims in the question of how Japan might secure revision of the unequal treaties of the Ansei period and attain an international position of equality with foreign countries. It is unthinkable that these men would consciously act as agents of European or American aggression, or would run the risk of inviting interference from the part of the Great Powers. What provided a rationale in their consciousness for the military expeditions overseas undertaken out of the necessities of domestic politics was the theory that Japan was making known to Korea and China the "impartial laws of the world" and was causing these countries to carry them into effect, thus leading on Korea and China to development as modern civilized countries, and that this action on the part of Japan must naturally receive the sympathetic support of England and America, the apostles of such development. Further again, in the event Japan's action did not invite the danger of bringing about aggression or interference from the part of the Great Powers. In connexion with this, consideration must be given to the fact that the colonial pressure of Europe and America had relaxed to some degree in East Asia.

These overseas expeditions were still on a very small scale, both

financially and militarily, but nevertheless they had their successes. The incidents in question were small in scale. However, the political effectiveness of the success of these expeditions, undertaken shortly after the establishment of the unitary state, was great. They were the occasion of converting the feudal particularist consciousness of the *ex-samurai* class into a national state consciousness. They gave Japan the self-confidence to succeed in the unification and westernization of the military system. They also served to increase the authority of the Meiji government.

The fact that at this period not only the leaders of the government but also the intellectual classes at large could regard Europe and America as being the apostles of modern development, that is, of a wealthy and strong national state, rather than as aggressors, constituted a very profitable historical condition for the carrying out of reform by means of a bold transplantation of the institutions and culture of Europe and America.

In the 1870's the Meiji government undertook the planned transplantation of capitalist economic institutions, capitalist political institutions, and the capitalist system of law. The firm conviction that Japan could not become a wealthy and strong national state and gain an international position of equality in relation to Europe and America unless she carried out reform by this transplantation of institutions was common to the members of the Meiji government and to the politicians who were not in office. Only the Great Powers of Europe and America were put forward as models of the wealthy and strong national state. This was because they had seen with their own eyes how cruel a defeat had been suffered by China, formerly the wealthy and strong state in Asia. The necessity of having institutions of representative government and a Constitution was already a matter of common knowledge among the forward-looking elements in Japan in the latter years of the Shogunate, and within the Shogunate plans were made for drawing up a Constitution. Furthermore, the Meiji government did not decide to make a Constitution only when it came under pressure from the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement, but had decided on this as a basic line of policy some time previously. Thus the struggle between the Meiji absolutist government and the Liberty and Popular Rights party did not take place over the rightness or wrongness of constitutional government, for both sides accepted the inevitability and necessity of the adoption of constitutional government. The struggle between them was waged over the questions of which side was to bring the Constitution to realization and what its contents should be. Why did this

common view of the Constitution come into being? Rather than being regarded as the things prescribing the rights and limits of rights between the government and the people, a Constitution and representative assembly were regarded as fulfilling the role of producing a wealthy and strong national state by bringing about the spontaneous co-operation of the people in the policies of the government. What kind of political institutions should the unitary state have after the abolition of the clans and their replacement by Prefectures in 1871? Should absolutist institutions be adopted, or capitalist institutions? They were not confronted with such a choice as this. The only model they had was that of the institutions of the Great Powers of Europe and America which had already passed through their bourgeois revolutions and industrial revolutions. Further, the capitalist institutions were not adopted as institutions which would fulfil capitalist functions. Considering this matter in respect to the Constitution, this institution was adopted as one which would strengthen the authority of the central government and produce a wealthy and strong national state. We may describe the situation by saying that they positively adopted capitalist institutions as the means for the realization of absolutist ends.

What functions were fulfilled by these institutions and laws, the products of European and American societies which had passed through their industrial revolutions, when they were adopted in the Japanese society of those years, a society in which the 'manufacture' stage of economic development had just begun? The educational system established in law in 1872, for example, was based on American and French educational thought. At a time when the peasants had not been liberated and were still responsible for the payment of an excessively heavy Land Tax which was at roughly the same level as the feudal taxes of the Tokugawa period, it was natural that the modern principles in education—that the state should not interfere in education, and that the costs of education should not be made up by the state but should be borne by the local residents or parents—should be greeted by the nation, and by the peasantry who made up the greater part of the nation, as being nothing more than a cause of increased economic burdens. That was why peasant uprisings in opposition to the establishment of primary schools occurred in all parts of Japan at this time. If the children of these peasants were to be made to attend school it would be necessary to strengthen the compulsory powers of authority. Because of the state of society the original and true intention of an educational system—that all the members of the nation should possess the right to receive education,

regardless of sex or social class—was reduced to a legal duty required of the nation under the blind compulsion of authority. The more modern the educational system established by law became, and the more closely it imitated foreign models, the more necessary was the compulsion of authority for its operation, and the result was that it was brought to realization in the form of forceful extension of the authority of the central government and the strengthening of a social atmosphere in which government officials were held to enjoy personal superiority in relation to the common people. Thus from this side, too, the transplantation of capitalist institutions into Japan functioned in the interests of a strengthening of the absolutism centred around the Imperial House.

As has been said above, from the first there was no conflict between the government and the Liberty and Popular Rights party over the rightness or wrongness of carrying out reform by transplanting capitalist institutions into Japan. The points at issue between them were at whose hands the reform should be carried out, at what time it should be carried out, and what the content of the reform should be. As regards constitutional government the first point to be argued between them was the question of the time—principally, whether a deliberative assembly should be opened at once, or whether the time when national political consciousness had at length reached a higher level should be awaited—and later, with the development of the controversy, questions regarding the content of constitutional government came to be discussed—whether a unicameral or bicameral system should be adopted, the extent of the franchise, and whether the Constitution should be delivered by the Emperor or laid down by the Diet. This took place in correspondence with the political process in which the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement set out as a movement of an opposition party within the ruling class comprising former Councillors and high officials who had supported the agitation for the invasion of Korea, later spread to become an anti-government movement among the members of the *ex-samurai* class who were not in office, that is, among the intellectuals, and from this developed until it acquired the character of a national movement in which the opulent peasants and merchants were incorporated. In the case of imported institutions in particular, the question of by whose hands and to what ends the institutions were to be operated had a great influence on the functions which the institutions fulfilled. For example, in the case of the parliamentary system of government, advocated by both sides in the interests of producing a wealthy and strong national state,<sup>27</sup> the clash between the course which the government put forward

and proposed to bring to realization and the course which the popular government party put forward and proposed to bring to realization was a political struggle possessing the substantial significance of a choice between modernization from above and modernization from below. That is to say, we may be able to regard this clash as having been capable of developing into a political antithesis over the principles of modernization, over the questions of what was meant by 'enriching the state and strengthening its armed forces' (*Fukoku Kyōhei* 富國強兵) and how this end was to be attained.

However, it was after 1880 that the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement began to acquire the character of a national movement and hold up before the world the concrete political aim of switching the government's reform from above, the reform for the strengthening of government authority, to a reform for the benefit of the people to be carried out by the hands of the people themselves.

Further, in the latter half of the 1880's the temporary situation created by the relaxation of direct external pressure in East Asia began to disappear. The situation in which importation or transplantation of modern institutions served, by itself, to strengthen the authority of bureaucratic absolutism, was now subject to change over much of its extent.

### III. MODERNIZATION AND ITS CONNEXIONS WITH IMPERIALISM

In the second half of the 1880's the situation in East Asia changed greatly. The partition of the peripheral area of East Asia among the Great Powers was more or less brought to a conclusion with the occupation of Annam by France after the Franco-Chinese War of 1884 and the British annexation of Burma in the following year. China, Korea, and Japan became completely surrounded by the Great Powers, to the west by England and France and to the north by Russia, who was taking steps to expand its development of Siberia and to move southwards. Further, African partition was more or less settled by the Berlin Conference of 1885, and the remaining principal area of virgin territory was East Asia. For a second time the pressure of the Great Powers was applied to East Asia.

However, relations between Japan, Korea, and China in East Asia now differed from what they had been in the 1860's and 1870's. The relationship of these three countries was not that of equality, as between oppressed countries whose independence was threatened by external pressure. By

the Korean-Japanese Treaty of Friendship which Japan concluded in 1876 as the fruits of the Kanghwa Island Incident, Japan became possessed of a position of superiority to Korea in foreign trade and in politics, and thereafter Japan gained economic and political concessions by using this superior position. This penetration from the part of Japan caused China's traditional rights of overlordship in relation to Korea (formal relations of submission between the sovereign of Korea and the sovereign of China) to be changed into substantial rights, and in this way the situation in which Japanese militarism and Chinese militarism contended over the political control of Korea came to reveal itself clearly in the *émeutes* of 1882 and 1884 (*Jingo Jihen* 壬午事變 and *Kōshin Jihen* 甲申事變). It was this 1884 Incident which was the opportunity causing the Japanese government to decide upon setting up plans for the expansion of naval and military armaments in expectation of operations on the continent in the form of a war with China and to begin work on preparatory plans in the financial and other spheres which would give the necessary support to this expansion of armaments.

Further, the characteristic feature of the period dating from the second half of the 1880's is to be found in the fact that it was not confined to the simple situation in which the antagonism between Japan and China over political control of Korea became more acute. A new situation arose, the situation in which antagonism among the Great Powers, namely the world-wide antagonism between England and Russia, became linked with the Korean question. The Russo-Korean Treaty of 1884 and the Russian demand for the use of the Yongfung Bay, together with the English occupation of the Kyomom Islands in 1885 in opposition to this demand, bespoke the fact that an age was in the process of arriving in East Asia in which the Korean question would not merely be the focus of antagonism between Japanese and Chinese militarism but would develop into a world Imperialist focus of antagonism.

At the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 the government leadership in Japan and China located the main emphasis in their foreign policies on the question of how to utilize the antagonism among the Great Powers such as England, Russia, America, France, and Germany in respect their relations with China and Japan and Korean, and they decided to declare war when these relations appeared to offer the prospect of developing favourably to their own countries. In particular the Japanese government, which adopted the policy of "taking the position of a moved party in the realm of foreign policy and of always being forestalled

in the realm of military matters"<sup>1</sup> was especially nimble in making use of the conditions of Imperialism. In the year preceding the War Yamagata Aritomo 山縣有朋 predicted in a memorial calling for the expansion of armaments that a calamity in the East would explode on the Chinese stage before ten years were out. It was presupposed that the coming war with China would be the decisive parting of the ways after which the vanquished would be exposed to the aggression of the Great Powers and the victor would be admitted to their company.

Consequently, the Sino-Japanese War merely resulted in rendering Imperialist antagonism in East Asia more acute, and in causing both vanquished China and sacrificed Korea to be made subject to colonial partition. After the Sino-Japanese War the rulers of Japan came to raise the Korean question in the form of the Manchurian-Korean question. That is to say, political control of Korea and the invasion of Manchuria were conceived as indivisible questions. Not only did the rulers of Japan think so subjectively, but this reflected the objective regularities inherent in the age of Imperialism in which political control of Korea was inevitably connected with the partition of China. Sustained by this world Imperialist order Japanese militarism rapidly developed into Imperialism.

In the period of the formation of Japanese Imperialism, the period between the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars in which Japan consciously chose the direction of Imperialism in foreign policy, the character of the running of Japanese parliamentary politics was formed, the Industrial Revolution was carried out, and the capitalist economy was firmly established. This fact endowed the modern and contemporary history of Japan with unique features.

Japan passed through a period in which a unitary state was successfully built and the authority of the central government strengthened by importing the institutions and culture of Europe and America, which were outstandingly different in nature and outstandingly more advanced when compared with the character of the traditional culture and the stage of development in Japanese society, and forcing them on the nation. Whatever the intentions of the government may have been, the imported institutions, law and culture, after they had been put into effect and a certain period allowed to elapse, could not but possess the function original to the institutions and culture of capitalism. The government leadership, which decided to transplant a Constitution into Japan, expected that by

<sup>1</sup> Mutsu Munemitsu 陸奥宗光, *Kenkenroku* 蹇蹇錄, (1895) Iwanami Bunko Series, Tokyo, Iwanami-shoten, p. 29.



this means it would be able to bring about unitary discharge of government functions and concentration of political authority, as well as inviting the positive co-operation of the nation. Further, in the actual drafting of the Constitution the government was careful to see that in spite of the adoption of constitutional government, the authority of the sovereign and the bureaucracy should not be made subject to any important restrictions in substantial matters, and it made extraordinary efforts to bring this to realization. However, after the Diet was actually opened in 1890 and the political parties began their activities on the stage thus provided them it was impossible for the Diet merely to remain an organ supporting the absolutist government, and in the event it indeed exploited its original functions and proved to be a meeting-place in which the nation's criticism of politics and attacks on bureaucratic government could take place. By one dissolution after another the government resisted this from the first Diet up to the third Diet of 1892, but even so it was unable to suppress the offensive of the anti-government parties and it became clear that the bureaucratic government could not run politics without the assistance of the political parties. The earliest occasion for the tendency to a succession of compromises between the feudal clique bureaucratic forces and the parliamentary party forces, and to the mutual utilization between these forces being strengthened was the incident in 1893 when an Imperial Rescript was issued regarding the clash between the government and the political parties in the fourth Diet over the budget, centred on the warship construction estimates, as a result of which the two sides were brought to a compromise. The content of this Rescript consisted of a call to the government and the Diet to come to a compromise, since, because the construction of warships was considered urgent in the then circumstances, one-tenth of official salaries would be contributed to the defrayment of the expenses involved, and a sum of 300,000 yen would be paid out of the palace estimates. This may be described by saying that it was a compromise reached under the assumption that the expansion of armaments was the supreme principle in politics, and the fact that the political parties and the nation accepted this granting of priority to the expansion of armaments with comparative ease was due to the coming of Imperialism into East Asia and to the utilization of these conditions by the Emperor and the bureaucratic forces in their counter-measures to opposition from the Diet.

After the Sino-Japanese War there was formed the first party administration, that of the Ōkuma-Itagaki 大隈-板垣 Cabinet in 1898. The feudal clique bureaucratic forces were obliged, albeit much against their will,

to give recognition to the effective role of the political parties in securing collaboration between the government and political parties for the purposes of building the war-time order of national unity and in mobilizing the nation in support of the war. That was why the Elder Statesmen (*Genrō* 元老) consented, contrary to their political principles, to give recognition to the birth of a party administration in this case. At the same time, however, it was also due to the fact that the political parties assured the feudal clique bureaucratic forces that they were not opposed to the basic principle of government foreign policy, the expansion of the armaments was required in carrying it out. Further, these conditions which brought about the establishment of the Ōkuma-Itagaki administration also caused the party administration to be short-lived and the only one of its kind at this period, and to ensure a succession of military or bureaucratic administrations thereafter. Nevertheless, immediately after the end of the Russo-Japanese War an administration of a character near to that of a party administration was formed, namely the Saionji 西園寺 administration. But just as the Ōkuma-Itagaki administration had been replaced by the Yamagata administration ten years before as the result of a bureaucratic plot, the Saionji administration was squashed by the Army over the question of establishing two more army divisions. The political parties expanded their power by utilizing the conditions of Imperialism, and succeeded in gaining some share in political authority. That was why the enlargement of their power meant coming to terms with the bureaucracy and made inevitable the situation in which the right of direction in such compromises and collaboration remained in the hands of the bureaucracy.

In sum, the role fulfilled by the Diet in the modernization of Japan produced the following characteristics. Firstly, the parliamentary system was transplanted into Japan under the pre-modern mode of acceptance in which it was taken to be a means for strengthening the political authority of the central government, and as a result of the defeat of the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement it proved impossible to make any change in it in this respect. Secondly, since the time at which the Diet aspired, in spite of this, to assume modern functions coincided with the entry to the Imperialist stage of world history and the beginning of the formation of Imperialism within Japan itself, the running of the Diet was modernized and the power of the political parties increased, and the modernization thus constituted operated wholly in the interests of the formation of Imperialist relations. To this we may add the fact that the pre-modern understanding and running of the Diet by the bureaucracy

was subject only to partial changes in its nature, and it reproduced itself and persisted into the age of Imperialism.

That it is characterized by the combination of conditions surviving from the feudal system and the newly-formed conditions of Imperialism is something which can be said of the establishment of capitalism as well as of the modernization of Japan. The government's policies for the encouragement of industry in the 1870's—the provision of capital to enable *ex-samurai* to set themselves up in business and the policy of establishing government-operated factories associated with it—resulted only in passing on knowledge of machinery and technology in the fields of agriculture and industry directly imported from Europe and America, and as a whole it was a failure. Its failure was not only due to the fact that the conditions for accepting these policies and causing modern industry to develop were lacking in the *ex-samurai* and in the money-lenders and commercial capitalists among the inferior orders of society, but to the fact that the nation's criticism of the government's protection policies which inclined only to the side of relieving the distresses of the *ex-samurai* and protecting a certain section of favoured political merchants became outspoken in the form of the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement. In the 1880's which followed—the period of the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement—the “manufacture” stage industries and the domestic industry of the putting-out system in the agricultural villages developed in place of the government's policies for the encouragement of industry. The power which brought about this dense growth of rural industry resulted from capital accumulation and increased eagerness for enterprise being made possible for landlords by the increase in the agricultural productivity resulting from improvements in technology and by a virtual lowering of the Land Tax caused by the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement standing in the way of the government's intention to raise the Land Tax and by the inflation of local prices for rice.

However, conditions for these small private enterprises to grow smoothly were poorly provided. In the 1880's the mechanization of production in the spinning industry was considered an urgent necessity for preventing a sharp rise in imports of cotton goods. For this reason the spinning industry was required to take-off from the stage of “manufacture” as soon as possible. The silk-reeling industry was pressed by the necessity of carrying on mass production and improving quality because of the sharp rise in foreign demand. For both to meet the demands made upon them from outside it was necessary to carry out a

rapid—a spectacularly rapid—modernization of technology and management. This could not be done by private landlord capital alone, and government subsidies or assistance from the political merchants were indispensable. The fact that the promoter of the Ōsaka Spinning Company, a plant of 10,000 spindles which was the point of departure for the modernization of the spinning industry, was Shibusawa Eiichi 澁澤榮一, one of the chief political merchants, and that more than one-fifth of the capital funds was contributed by former feudal lords indicated that by the second half of the 1880's the rights of direction in the modernization of industry, even in the case of light industry, were no longer following the line of independent development by private enterprise but were once more under the control of the government and its political merchants. In spite of this, up to the first half of the 1890's the factories which were set up after the Ōsaka Spinning Company found it difficult to continue their growth because of the contradictions involved in their growth up to that date, a growth which may be described as having been a forced growth in response to external conditions. In 1890 domestic production surpassed imports, but at the same time the industry experienced its first slump as a result of the narrowness of the domestic market, and it at once became necessary to curtail production and to open up foreign markets.

It was after the Sino-Japanese War that this barrier was more or less removed and the capitalist system of production firmly established in the spinning industry. Needless to say, this meant the monopoly of the Korean market and the invasion of the Chinese market as a result of the victory in war and the acquisition of concessions, as well as the enlargement of the concessions in China resulting from victory in the following war with Russia. The conditions represented by victory in these wars and the economic invasion of Korea and China were an important cause of the successful modernization of the spinning industry. Another element which made it possible for Japan to stand up to competition in the international market was the night working and low wages of the female factory operatives. That it was possible to impose such poor conditions of labour was due to the firm establishment of the parasitic landlord system in the agricultural villages, the source of the labour supply. It was no accident that the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and the firm establishment of the parasitic landlord system occurred at the same time. It was exactly the same necessity and relation of mutual dependence which existed in the simultaneity of the Industrial Revolution and the formation of Imperialism, and in that of

the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars and the firm establishment of the parasitic landlord system.

That the landlords were able to divorce themselves altogether from agricultural management and take to parasitism was not merely due to their character as receivers of semi-feudal rent but was due to the firm establishment of an order of society in which it was possible for them to invest these rents in shares, etc., and become the receivers of capitalist profits, an order of society in which the interests of landlords were securely safeguarded in policy and legislation through the Diet, and in which direct interference by political authority in the form of the "police agrarian policy" was supported by the military, who were interested in preserving the established order in the countryside as the source of supply of brave soldiers for the enlargement of the armed services, assured the landlords of their interests even should they divorce themselves from agricultural management and live away from the villages. Further, the condition which made it possible for the tenant peasants to put up with the excessive rents under this system of society was the widespread form of temporary work by the younger members of the family as a means of supplementing the family budget, and this was an important factor producing the prosperity of the mechanized spinning industry which was described above. In sum, the establishment of Japanese capitalism was also made possible by the conditions represented by the beginning of the world stage of Imperialism, and Japan's progress towards Imperialism characterized by the Emperor system and militarism which occurred in response to it.

#### IV. THE TAISHŌ DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT AND CHINA

It is very significant that the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War was marked by the outbreak of popular violence known as the Hibiya Incendiary Incident (*Hibiya Yakiuchi Jiken* 日比谷焼打事件) in 1905. Firstly, as Prime Minister Katsura Tarō 桂太郎 feared, it heralded the strengthening of pronouncements about politics by "people of the lower classes." As was noted above, the war brought about a spectacular development of capitalism. The development of capitalism inevitably brought about the growth of bourgeois democracy and raised the level of political consciousness among the national masses. Further, since this phenomenon came into being after great sacrifices in war had been made by the masses the growth of political consciousness among the masses had many possibilities of developing in the direction of opposition to the

established order. Inasmuch as they were acquainted with the contradictions of the war, the rulers of Japan had grave apprehensions of the future. On a world scale, the period of the rise of revolutionary movements, a product of the contradictions of the capitalist order, began with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution of 1905. There were great possibilities that the political activities by the national masses inaugurated by the Hibiya Incendiarism Incident should develop precociously in the direction of the socialist movement.

But the Hibiya Incendiarism Incident also demonstrated that a natural explosion of discontent among the masses also possessed great possibilities of use by the militarists in a way exactly converse to that of the socialist movement. In fact this incident was mobilized in the service of the militarist agitation against the Treaty of Portsmouth. This is its secondary significance. As a result of Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War feelings of contempt for the nations of Asia had been fostered in the national masses, and statist ideology was strengthened among them by their being told that the war with Russia was in the nature of an act of revenge for the Three-Power Intervention. In the 1870's and 1880's the system of compulsory education first promulgated in law in 1872 did not yield the attendance figures expected, in spite of government encouragement with the aid of compulsory powers, because of the poor condition of livelihood of the national masses, and it was after the beginning of the period of Imperialism that the attendance rate rose to 88 per cent in 1901 and to 97 per cent in 1907. Consequently, the spread of education which provided the basis for the raising of the level of the political consciousness of the national masses was at the same time inextricably involved with the thoroughgoing enforcement of government control over education, and from this side, too, militarist ideology was injected into the political consciousness of the masses.

The tendency towards an increasing intensity in political pronouncements and political activities on the part of the masses became all the more marked in the period of the First World War. On top of this tendency there developed the so-called Taishō democracy movement. However, the two possibilities inherent in the Hibiya Incendiarism Incident—that of the development of the political consciousness of the masses resulting in a rapid advance to the socialist movement, and that of its being used in the service of mobilization for militarism—became more and more complex. There were three tendencies which manifested themselves on a world scale after the First World War—firstly, the rise of democratic ideology, secondly, the development of the Communist

movement, heartened by the birth of the Soviet Union, and thirdly, the rise of national consciousness and nationalist movements in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. These three currents flowed into Japan, too, and provoked sharp reactions. Particularly in regard to the revolution in Soviet Russia and the independence movements among the nations of Asia, the connexions between these two exercised a profound influence on developments in Japanese politics.

As a result of the Russo-Japanese War Japan came to have colonial control over Korea and China, two nations which had high level of economic development and strong consciousness of national independence in Asia. In order to carry out this difficult task of colonial rule, Japan, which was so poor in capital resources that export of capital to China was impossible without the aid of foreign capital brought into the country from England and America, had no alternative but to trade with the Great Powers for Anglo-American recognition of Japanese rights and interests in Manchuria and Mongolia and to rely upon pitiful exhibitions of military force and the exercise of military force to China and Korea. Not only was Japan in a state of financial dependence on England and America, but she was also obliged to compromise politically with England and America in her China policies. This, however, was only one aspect of Japanese Imperialism. There was another aspect. Korea and Manchuria constituted the bases from which the military maintained, and exercised, their independence of command, and these countries were the base of operations at which military plots were planned in contemptuous defiance of the government. The exercise of their powers of command by the military was directed towards the suppression of the nationalist movement and to the enlargement of Japan's concessions.

At the time of the Chinese Revolution of 1911 the Japanese government decided to send arms to the Ch'ing court in China and even envisaged positive military intervention, but Japan was unable to obtain the support of England, who had adopted a policy of neutrality, and the Japanese plans came to nothing. Furthermore, when it became apparent that they could not suppress the revolutionary armies the Japanese government now sought to mediate between the Ch'ing court and the revolutionary forces on the basis of the adoption of the system of constitutional monarchy, but in this matter, too, Japan found herself internationally isolated and the affair was concluded in accordance with English plans by agreement between Yüan Shih-k'ai and the revolutionary armies under the condition of the overthrow of the Ch'ing dynasty and the adoption of the institution of the presidency.

In this way Japan chose for herself the role of the most reactionary Imperialist country confronting the Chinese revolutionary movement. It is said that Japan chose this role for herself out of consideration of the facts that, she did not do so because she was subordinated to the foreign policies of England and America but rather embarked on these policies in opposition or resistance to England and America, that neither the Japanese government nor Japanese capitalism was in so straitened a condition that this was the only course they could choose, and that Japan's China policies at this time followed no consistent line but repeatedly vacillated from one side to the other.

From the point of view of the relations between Sun Yat-sen and Japan, a temporary compromise between Japanese Imperialism and Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary movement was possible at this time. Sun Yat-sen had a plan for seeking Japanese military aid in return for concessions in Manchuria, and he communicated this proposal to the Japanese authorities. In spite of this, the Japanese government still sought to act as the enemy of the Chinese revolution, even to the extent of alienating itself from Chinese public opinion and from the Great Powers. Why was this? Firstly, the fabrication of "the Treason Incident" (*Taigyaku Jiken* 大逆事件) out of a fear that the development of the class struggle after the Russo-Japanese War would produce in the nation a consciousness critical of the Emperor system had occurred in the year preceding the Chinese Revolution, and from this point of view, too, the government could not give tacit recognition to the abolition of the monarchical system in a neighbouring country. Secondly, in the period between 1905 when Korea was a protectorate and the annexation of 1910, the Japanese government had been sharply disconcerted by widespread and persistent nationalist resistance which included the rulers of Korea, the soldiers, and the peasants, and they feared that the success of the Chinese Revolution would exercise an influence on the Korean nationalist movement. It is worthy of attention that at this period plans for the independence of (that is, for aggression against) Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia were drawn up by the military and the right-wing political adventurers. It may be said that the foreign policies of Japanese Imperialism in the 1930's already had their archetype in history before the 1920's, or, in other words, that the Manchurian Incident, rather than being a product of the situation in the 1930's, was begotten out of the very physical constitution of Japanese Imperialism.

If we assume it ever to have been possible to change the basic direction of these Japanese policies in relation to China, possible factors might



be sought in the<sup>3</sup> period before the financial panic in 1927 and the world slump in 1929 during which it was possible for the power of the political parties, against the background of the support of the nation, to restrain the adventuristic policies of the military and the bureaucracy, the period from 1910's up to the first half of the 1920's during which the Taishō democracy movement rose to prominence. Before 1924, however, when the democratic forces behind the electoral reform movement and the movement for the protection of the Constitution won something in the nature of a victory over the militarist and bureaucratic forces and established the custom of party cabinets, Japan had already presented the Twenty-one Demands to China, suppressed the March First Incident in Korea, and engaged in the War of Intervention against the Soviet Union. That is to say, the characteristics of the physical constitution of Japanese Imperialism which, as we have seen above, were to be seen in full array as early as 1911, had moved from the archetypal stage of full-scale development. Further, all these were acts of a political authority consisted of a coalition of the military and bureaucrats and the political parties. The Elder Statesmen, the military, the right-wing, the political parties, and the capitalists were practically all agreed in regarding the First World War as a heaven-sent opportunity for Japan to extend her influence in the East. The Ōkuma Cabinet considered this heaven-sent opportunity a good occasion for presenting to the Chinese government its Twenty-one Demands for an over-all enlargement of Japanese concessions in China. The results of this produced the situation in which Sun Yat-sen, who had adhered so steadfastly to the ideal of collaboration between Japan and China, was at last obliged to make clear his critical attitude in relation to Japan. It is of course true that this change in Sun Yat-sen's view of Japan was based on the development of a mass nationalist movement of students, intellectuals, and workers which was of a character different from the nationalist movement of the past, exemplified in the May Fourth Movement demonstrations of 1919, but we cannot ignore the shock to Sun Yat-sen and the pro-Japanese party in China which resulted from the forcing through, with the backing of an ultimate, of this illegal policy of aggression by Ōkuma, who was thought to have a sympathetic understanding of Sun Yat-sen's political movement.

At home, the Twenty-one Demands were an encouragement to the forces of militarism. Although it was not carried into effect, the second plan for the "independence" of Manchuria and Mongolia drawn up by the General Staff Office in 1916 was one manifestation of this, and the

conclusion in the same year of the Fourth Russo-Japanese Agreement, a secret Russo-Japanese military alliance for the partition of China, was a result of it. There was a chain reaction produced in which Japan began by collaborating with the most reactionary Tsarism on the eve of its overthrow by the Revolution because Japanese Imperialism, the worst enemy of the Chinese nationalist movement, had aggravated the antagonism between itself and England and America over China policy, as a result of which the reactionary character of Japan's China policy came to be rendered all the more clear and precise; further more closer collaboration with Russia led to action which caused the Terauchi military-clique cabinet to take the lead in prosecuting the War of Intervention against Revolutionary Russia in 1918. It was therefore natural that the Hara Takashi 原敬 Cabinet, the first party administration to be formed for some time, coming to office in the situation which comprised the Rice Riots of 1918, the fierce outbreak of the March First independence movement in Korea and the anti-Japanese movement of the May Fourth national liberation struggle in China in 1919, should have adopted the policy of expanding armaments and strengthening monopoly capitalism, and should have crudely revealed its anti-popular character in its opposition to the movement for electoral reform. Further, it was no different from the successive military and bureaucratic administrations in its close adherence to the protection of Japan's rights and interests in Southern Manchuria, Eastern Inner Mongolia, and Shantung Province. The demands of monopoly capitalism under the conditions of post-war slump of 1920 called ever more strongly for the military and political protection and enlargement of Japan's rights and interests overseas.

Yamagata Aritomo, one of the Elder Statesmen who held the highest political power at this period, was afraid that after the Chinese and Russian revolutions there would appear "unenlightened and propertyless" persons who would fail to understand the meaning of the Japanese national polity, "would doubt the institution of monarchy, and would speak against militarism, heedless of the fact that this would invite the submergence of the state."<sup>2</sup> That this old-fashioned and at first sight anachronistic view of the situation should have had so real and pressing an influence was due to the fact that both internationally and at home there were possibilities that revolution would expand further and further. Yamagata made the safeguarding of the monarchy and adherence to militarism the keynote of his policies both at home and abroad, and the

<sup>2</sup> Tokutomi Iichirō 徳富猪一郎 ed., *Kōshaku Yamagata Aritomo Den* 公爵山縣有朋傳 (Biography of Prince Yamagata Aritomo), Vol. 3, Tokyo, 1933, p. 1201.

political parties could not gain access to political power unless they supported this basic line of policy or compromised with it. Inukai Takeshi 犬養毅, too, a former friend of Sun Yat-sen and one regarded as a democrat, was in agreement with both Terauchi Masatake 寺内正毅 and Itō Miyoji 伊藤巳代治 regarding the basis of Japan's China policy. Yoshino Sakuzō 吉野作造, one of the most penetrating among the democrats in matters of theory, was sympathetic to the Chinese revolutionary movement and argued that the people of Japan and China were alike in their orientations and aims in that they desired liberation from the military and the bureaucracy. However, these democrats, too, were unable to gain a true understanding of the Chinese revolutionary movement. Granted that Yoshino's democracy and Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People approached one another at a certain time and were sympathetic and responsive in relation to each other, in the end they were fated with the passage of time to diverge greatly and to follow opposing courses.

The Chinese revolutionary movement and the Taishō democracy movement were not of the same substance, as Yoshino had supposed. After the Second Campaign for the Defence of the Constitution (*Dai-ni-ji Goken Undō* 第二次護憲運動) in 1924 the Japanese political parties ceased to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people and took their places in the seats of power in alliance with the military, the bureaucracy, the capitalists, and the landlords, and embarked on the suppression of popular movements by means of the Peace Preservation Law (*Chianiji-Hō* 治安維持法). In contrast to this, on the occasion of the May Fourth movement of 1919 the Chinese revolutionary movement finally broke away from the policy of making use of the antagonisms among the Imperialist powers of Europe, America and Japan and looking for assistance from these countries which it had followed in the past and struck out along the way of the May Thirty Incident of 1925, a way which relied on the power of the people, on combining with the people, the workers, peasants, students, etc. The development of these movements took place in the opposite direction, and its further development was undertaken in the guise of the hostile relation between the way of Imperialist aggression and the way of the anti-Imperialist and national liberation struggles.

The international conditions which caused Japan to carry through the Meiji Restoration, to establish a unitary state at an early date, and to bring to realization at a rapid pace the fostering of capitalism, the establishment of constitutional government and the arming of the land and sea forces, were a complex combination of a variety of factors. But from the point of view of the main lines of development they were

special conditions peculiar to East Asia contained in the period beginning from the eve of the stage of the Imperialism in world history and continuing on into the stage of Imperialism, conditions under which Japan was able to make provision against the eastward advance of external pressure at the expense of the Chinese and Korean nations, and to respond to and resist this external pressure. Further, this produced only a partial modification of absolutist political authority in Japan, made it possible for it to transform itself into Imperialism political authority, and was the reason for it possessing effective functions. As for the results of this, however, Japanese capitalism was obliged to come into being and develop as the power possessing the most militaristic role in East Asia and to deepen the antagonisms between itself and the nations of Asia, the Socialist Soviet Union, and Imperialist England and America. The international conditions which made Japan an Imperialist power were the international conditions which brought about Japan's defeat in the Second World War.