

The International History of East Asia, 1900–1968

Trade, ideology and the quest for order

Edited by Antony Best

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6 Japan and pan-Asianism

Masataka Matsuura

In recent years a number of scholars have emphasized the possibility of cooperation and conciliation between Japan and Britain during the 1930s in order to maintain their mutually beneficial commercial relationship.¹ To be sure, a number of pro-British political and financial officials, such as Ikeda Shigeki and Yoshida Shigeru, did advocate compromise with Britain and argued that the Japanese economy was dependent on the stability of an international financial and Asian commercial order in which Britain played a central role.² But, as we know, reconciliation did not materialize and the two countries went to war. Why? From a Japanese perspective, though it is clear that many efforts were made to avoid war in Japan, contemporary political and economic conditions made the success of those efforts extremely unlikely. This chapter takes a viewpoint entirely different from the one I have taken in the past. Rather than thinking about this period from the perspective of those Anglophiles in political and financial circles who were trying to avoid war, it explains why the two countries went to war from a political and economic historical viewpoint. In particular it focuses on one of the primary reasons that made peace improbable, namely the rise of pan-Asianism, which brought about significant changes in 1930s Japan, a transformation that led the country towards a southern advance and the so-called 'Greater East Asia War'.

Earlier scholarship has tended to approach the subject of pan-Asianism from the perspective of intellectual history and has often attempted to trace continuities between the Asianism which appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the fascism and militarism of the 1930s and 1940s. Such work has largely ignored the relationship of ideas with the political and economic context of the times. In addition, many empirical studies have described in detail the events that led to the 'Greater East Asia War' from the standpoint of diplomatic and military history. Most of these studies are based on pluralistic models or bureaucratic politics and analyse political processes through the decisions of rational actors. However, few of these studies have concretely and empirically examined the meaning and the influence that ideology exercised on contemporary politics and foreign relations. There is almost no research that seriously considers why an illogical ideology that proclaimed a 'holy war' against the 'devilish Americans and British' gained ascendancy and contributed to its

leaders' irrational decision to launch a war that Japan had no chance, economically or militarily, of winning. If such studies exist, they are usually only in the form of making an ahistorical connection between the American anti-Japanese immigration restrictions of 1924 and the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

It is well known that the Shōwa emperor claimed in the introduction to his postwar monologues that the remote cause of the 'Greater East Asia War' was racial discrimination in the form of the rejection of the Japanese proposal for racial equality at Versailles and American anti-Japanese immigration restrictions.³ Although many Japanese may have shared such sentiments with the emperor, the connection between these attitudes and the invasion of Malaya and the attack on Pearl Harbor requires a huge historical leap. Pan-Asianism bridges this gap. John Dower has pointed out that government authorities deployed pan-Asianism to mobilize the population during the Pacific War.⁴ Pan-Asianism, however, was also an ideology that was used to mobilize people well before December 1941. It gradually accumulated in people's consciousness after the First World War and continued to develop in the 1930s so that it greatly contributed to the formulation of policy. In short, war did not only make pan-Asianism, but pan-Asianism also made war.

There were both continuities and ruptures between nineteenth-century Asianism and 1930s pan-Asianism. The former was in many ways a defensive reaction against the Western imperial aggression but the latter is more complex.⁵ Previous history studies have not sufficiently explicated these connections and discontinuities. During the inter-war period, through changes in international relations, such as anti-Japanese immigration policies, the unification of China by Jiang Jieshi, the Manchurian Incident and creation of Manchukuo, and Japan's departure from the League of Nations, and changes in the international commercial structure such as the Takahashi financial measures that allowed Japan to escape the Great Depression and the commercial frictions between Japan and Britain brought on by the economic downturn, pan-Asianism underwent a drastic evolution.

The post-First World War 'shocks'

At the close of the First World War Japanese leaders believed that their country had become a 'first-class' power. Japan had achieved revision of the unequal treaties in 1895 and in 1919 it became a standing member of the League of Nations. Under the Washington Treaty system, Japan's alliance with Britain ended. With the establishment of the League and the influence of Wilsonianism, the immediate postwar period presented Japanese leaders with the opportunity to choose what path to take. The journalist Ishibashi Tanzan called for 'small-Japanism' – for the renunciation of interests in Manchuria, independence for colonial Korea and Taiwan, the repudiation of economic privileges in China and peaceful coexistence with Asia. But the government led by Prime Minister Hara Takashi opted to keep in harmony with the big powers, maintain the mandate system, and continue Japan's march towards becoming a major imperial power.

The rejection of the government's proposed racial equality clause at the Paris Peace Conference came as a tremendous shock and caused Japanese to realize that their country had not been completely accepted as one of the major powers.

In the early 1920s the shock was heightened when American anti-Japanese immigration policies sparked protests in Japan. This anti-American movement became connected with other campaigns pressing for wider political participation and equality such as that by the three-party movement to protect constitutional government (*goken sanpa undō*), the labour movement, and the Suiheisha movement, and were bolstered by groups such as chambers of commerce, newspapers, Buddhist groups, and reservists associations.⁶ Anger over American racial discrimination continued to boil into the 1930s, as evidenced by a declaration from the Asia League Association (*Ajia renmei kyōkai*) on the 'Thirteenth Anniversary of our National Disgrace' on 1 July 1936.⁷

The immigration issue led to a reaffirmation among many Japanese that Japan was an Asian country of coloured people and to a widespread expectation that a pan-Asian alliance could improve relations with China in the wake of the Twenty-One Demands.⁸ At about this time there were moves to formally create a pan-Asian organization. In August 1926 the first All-Asian Race Conference (*Ajia minzoku kaigi*) opened in Nagasaki. It was led by Iwasaki Isao, the chief secretary of the Seiyūkai Party, and Chinese such as Huang Gong-su, a member of the Chinese national legislature from Jiangxi province. This meeting was of historic importance, as signalled by a Home Ministry Affairs police report which noted, 'This is the first time that an organization concerned with foreign relations and of a non-governmental nature has met in our country.'⁹

Most of the conference participants were Japanese and there were few attendees from other countries. The most prominent were Rash Behari Bose, an Indian political exile, the legislator Huang and his Chinese associates, and a few representatives from the Philippines and the Korean peninsula. There was but one Japanese Diet member attending, Imazato Juntarō, a Seiyūkai politician from Nagasaki. There were several reasons for the absence of high-ranking Japanese public officials. The movement's most enthusiastic supporter, Yokota Sennosuke, had recently passed away and Seiyūkai chief-secretary Iwasaki had been imprisoned on bribery charges. Other powerful figures such as Gotō Shimpei and Tanaka Giichi distanced themselves from the movement, fearing criticism from Britain and the ruling Kenseikai party, led by the pro-British Prime Minister Katō Takaaki. Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials also discouraged other prominent politicians from participating in the meeting.

The meeting underscored the difficulties involved in defining 'Asians', to say nothing of unifying them. Chinese calls for the elimination of Japanese privileges acquired by the Twenty-One Demands competed with the Japanese emphasis on reconceptualizing Chinese-Japanese relations in the framework of a 'yellow Asian brotherhood' united to resist the white Western powers. Liu Hua-jui, a Chinese participant, for example, declared, 'I am confident that China is the birthplace of culture and has the power to rule the entire world. Asia, in particular, is the center of culture, and China is the greatest country within Asia. ...

Asians stand at the center of the world, and everybody knows that China is the center of Asia.¹⁰ The tensions evident at the meeting were expressed outside of Nagasaki as well. A Chinese pamphlet entitled *The Asian Continent* distributed in Kobe at the time accused Japan of using the Nagasaki gathering as a way to justify its invasion of other countries and lambasted Japanese rule of Korea, Taiwan and the Ryukyus. The pamphlet claimed that because 'Japan is an island country isolated by the ocean, and it bears no relationship to the continent', it was not qualified even to participate in a gathering of Asian countries. Japan was only doing so, they asserted, to advance its invasion of the continent. Instead, they insisted, the unification of the Asia continent was a principle of the Chinese state.¹¹

After the Nagasaki meeting organizers scheduled a second meeting in Shanghai for the following year in 1927, but it was called off because of intensified friction between China and Japan. A further meeting did not take place for another eight years. During this era of party cabinets pan-Asianism, which derived its energy from the rejection of the racial equality clause and the anti-Japanese immigration legislation, was forced into hiding. This marginalization was particularly severe during the cabinets controlled by the Kenseikai and Minseitō, which put great emphasis on maintaining good relations with Britain. It is thus impossible to draw a straight line between the rejection of the racial equality clause and anti-Japanese immigration laws and the 'Greater East Asia War' some twenty years later. Yet one cannot deny that these shocks contributed to hostilities on a sub-conscious level.

If nothing else, the first All-Asian Race Conference was symbolic and full of irony. The tone of meeting was organized to criticize Western governments for their racist policies, yet its venue, Nagasaki, had been the sole window to the outside world during the archipelago's two centuries of relative isolation from much of the Western world. Japanese organizers hoped that criticism of the West would unify Asia, but some Chinese used the event to condemn Japan and its policies.

In thinking about the emergence of pan-Asianism during the 1930s, it is useful to do so in the context of three trends: first, the progress toward the unification of China under Jiang Jieshi's leadership, the reorganization of commercial relations under Finance Minister Takahashi, and the 'Taiwan factor'; second, the economic frictions created by Takahashi's attempts to overcome the world depression and the 'India factor'; and third, Chinese attempts to create a modern state and the aid it received from Western countries.

The unification of China and the 'Taiwan factor'

China had served as the principal imperial model for Japan from the time of the Qin (221–206BC) and Han (202BC–AD220) dynasties. Until the modern era, Japan and other Asian countries understood the international order from the perspective of 'small Chinas'. The Chinese imperial model differed from the Western national and imperial model in that, within the former, nation-states did

not maintain clear boundaries. China was regarded as the 'civilized centre' on account of its tremendous economic and cultural resources and prestige, and countries on the 'barbarian periphery' paid their respect to China's virtue in the form of tribute and cultural emulation. As a result, Chinese merchants, who handled the payment of tributary goods, fulfilled an important role in supporting the empire.¹² As Japan entered the modern era, the Chinese imperial model was losing its appeal because of the decline of the Qing dynasty. Severe political fissures ruptured China, and Japan delivered another devastating blow to the Chinese imperial system with its victory over the Qing in 1895. Despite the decline of the Qing, the trading networks and commercial capacity of Chinese merchants remained unrivalled in Asia, and Japanese businessmen were largely unable to compete effectively.¹³ The Western imperial powers, too, had long maintained a parasitic reliance on Chinese merchants centred in Shanghai and used this relationship to turn China into a semi-colony.¹⁴

When Jiang Jieshi established a government in Nanjing and called for the unification of China in 1927, Japanese leaders felt a profound sense of crisis. In response, the Japanese government dispatched troops to the Shandong concession and, fearing a resurgence of Chinese identity in Taiwan, officials launched a full-fledged census registration and began to court Taiwanese merchants and their mainland Chinese partners. Since the mid-nineteenth century Taiwanese merchants had freely traded with the mainland coastal provinces of Fujian and Guangdong, where many of them had originated, and, since the beginning of Japanese colonial rule, had taken advantage of Chinese merchant networks and their own status as Japanese subjects to create a vast commercial network that extended across East and Southeast Asia. Therefore, Taiwanese merchants were indispensable to the Japanese attempt to control Asian trade.¹⁵ Recent scholarship has revealed that Sun Yat-sen and his successor, Jiang, attempted to recreate a Chinese empire like that of the Qin and Han, as well as build a modern nation-state, in the wake of the Qing collapse.¹⁶ This was highlighted by Sun's famous 'Greater East Asianism' talk in Kobe, which imagined the recreation of the traditional Chinese imperial model of a tribute trading system with a civilized centre and barbarian periphery. Since the Meiji period Japanese nationalism, which was grounded in *kokugaku*, regarded the resurgence of a Chinese empire as a threat. Japanese pan-Asianists feared that the new Chinese state might become an empire and extend its territorial authority to match the extensive reach of Chinese merchants. It was for this precise reason that Asianist activist Tōyama Mitsuru, who had supported Sun, turned against Jiang's drive to unify China.

In August 1933 Matsui Iwane, who two years later became the president of the Greater Asia Society, was appointed commander of the army in Taiwan. He soon launched a campaign to bolster support for pan-Asianism and organize the National Defence League in Taiwan. Around this time Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo implemented Keynesian economic policies that led to industrialization throughout the empire and increased demand for products from Japan. With unrivalled speed Japan was thus able to escape from the Great Depression.

The economic growth of Korea and Taiwan was particularly impressive. To Matsui and Ugaki Kazushige, the governor-general of Korea, the impressive economic performance of the Japanese Empire was a source of national pride, and served to strengthen their conviction that Japanese colonial management was vastly superior to that of the Western imperial powers.

Matsui's pan-Asian policies were closely linked to this economic strategy. Matsui teamed with other members of the Greater Asia Society, such as Wachi Takaji, a Canton official, and Taketō Mineji, a director of the South China Bank, to use Taiwanese and Chinese merchants to tempt the provinces of Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi away from the Chinese Republic. They attempted to create an independent economic sphere that was composed of the Japanese Empire and the provinces carved out of China. For example, they envisioned Manchuria producing soybeans, which could be used for fertilizer, Korea as a base for chemical fertilizers, Taiwan providing sugar and other agricultural products, and the coastal provinces contributing mineral resources, paper, tea, and porcelain. Manchuria's economy was once closely tied to that of central China, but after the Manchuria Incident its economy became linked with Japan, Taiwan, and the south-eastern provinces of China. The Manchurian Incident caused a rise in anti-Japanese sentiments and many Chinese merchants refused to conduct commercial relations with Japan, but Taiwanese and others quickly enlarged their trading activities. From 1932 to 1938 exports from Manchuria to Taiwan grew tenfold and doubled in the other direction.¹⁷ Matsui and Wachi sought to strengthen connections between the empire and the southern provinces, which were already a stronghold of anti-Jiang sentiment, even within the Guomindang (GMD), and to reach out to Chinese merchants as well.

Ironically, the symbol of this strategy became 'Greater Asianism', the slogan proclaimed by Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Chinese Republic. Matsui and other leaders of the Greater Asia Society used this slogan to appeal to anti-Jiang GMD members in the south and to further 'Japanese-Chinese goodwill'. They were opposed to the unification of China as envisioned by Chiang, and hoped to combine Southeast Asia with Manchuria, Mongolia, northern and southern China, Xinjiang, and Tibet to create an 'Asia for the Asians' with Japan as its leader. They wanted to drive Western capital out of Asia, and to extend the influence of pan-Asianism into such areas as the Philippines, where the influence of Chinese merchants was rather weak and Japanese settlers had done rather well.¹⁸ Matsui, for example, proposed that Japan push southward and drive out Britain, which had concentrated its interests in South China.

In summary, the issues that contributed most to shaping 1930s Japanese pan-Asianism included the drive to unify China, the related fear of a resurgence of Chinese power, and the reorganization of Asian commercial and economic relations after the Manchurian Incident. As a result, events in the Japanese colony of Taiwan and the activities of Taiwanese and Chinese merchants figured importantly in the attempt by Japanese leaders to create an 'oceanic empire' to complement Japan's 'continental empire'.

Finance Minister Takahashi's economic policies, commercial frictions, and the 'India Factor'

Why was the role of Indian exiles as important as that of Taiwanese in the spread of pan-Asianist ideas in Japan? First, many Japanese from before the modern era regarded India as one of the three major Asian countries (*sangoku*), as captured in the phrase, 'Honchō, Shindan, Tenjiku' (Japan, China, India). It is apparent that India was thought to be part of Asia even before the arrival of the Western powers. Second, by the 1930s commerce, which had a direct impact on people's standard of living, and culture, centred on Buddhism, became the principal pillars supporting a pan-Asianism that came to be regarded as a 'counter-civilization' opposed to Western imperialism. After the onset of the depression Japanese companies flooded India and other British colonies in Asia with low-priced light industrial goods in an effort to compensate for their troubles in the Chinese market brought about by the Manchuria Incident. Because the incident and the subsequent anti-Japanese movement alienated many Chinese merchants, Japanese businesses became dependent on Indian merchants as trading partners in Asia. Through this process, an increasing number of Japanese came to regard Indian merchants as warriors in Japan's anti-British trade war. At the same time, some Japanese envisioned Buddhism as the most important common cultural identity that bound Japan to 'Asia' from which it was seeking to drive out the Western imperialists. Because the ideology of modern Japan's empire (*kokutai*) lacked a universal religious core, Buddhism, which originally emerged in India and spread northward to Tibet, China, and Korea, as well as to Southeast Asia, became a culture symbol of 'Asian' civilization.¹⁹ It did not matter whether Indians and Chinese were actually Buddhists believers or not. Finally, India was the jewel of the British Empire that stretched across Asia and Africa and the symbol of the Western encroachment into Asia.

Indian merchants, like Chinese and Taiwanese merchants, actively engaged in commercial activities in the Western powers' Asian empires. Even before the end of the First World War, Japanese cotton products flooded the Indian market, driving out the British textile industry and overwhelming domestic production.²⁰ When Finance Minister Takahashi abandoned the gold standard, the value of the yen fell drastically and cheap, light-manufactured Japanese products poured into India and the British colonies in Southeast Asia and Africa. The redirection of goods to these areas resulted in part because of the boycott of Japanese goods in China after the Manchurian Incident. Merchants who were less inclined to be hostile to Japan, such as Indians, Taiwanese, and some Chinese, played a key role in opening these new channels for Japanese goods.²¹ As a result, the number of Indians who came to Japan increased dramatically. In particular, Kobe, a major Japanese port focused on Asia, became a favoured location for Indians. Its Indian population increased by approximately six times from 1918 to 1938. The expansion of trade with India led to an increase in the influence of Indian political refugees living in Japan, and the inclusion of anti-British, pro-independence rhetoric in the language of Japanese pan-Asianism.

Among the Indian immigrants were a number of prominent Indian exiles. For example, R.B. Bose, the exile who participated in the 1926 All-Asian Race Conference, had been involved in the attempted assassination of the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, and in the Lahore rebellion. Raja Mehendra Pratap, an Indian prince who had acquired Afghani citizenship and became an independence activist, also sought political asylum in Japan. In addition, A.M. Sahay and others, following the direction of Nehru to establish independence movements overseas, set up commercial offices in Japan. Assisted by Japanese right-wing organizations and student groups, led by Tōyoma and his right-wing colleague Ōkawa Shūmei, these activists disseminated news about Britain's brutal rule and exploitation of India and solicited help for the anti-British independence movement. Support for the movement in Japan grew especially after the civil disobedience marches against the salt tax along the Ganges River in 1930. Money was funnelled through Indian clubs in Kobe and gradually more Japanese became aware of Indian complaints. However, members of the establishment – such as Foreign Ministry bureaucrats, police officials, and the ruling Kenseitō and Minseitō party politicians – viewed the Indian independence movement unfavourably. Even the British intelligence officers who kept Indian activists under surveillance thought that Japanese society was friendlier towards Britain than towards the Indians.²² The Japanese government's priority was on maintaining good relations with Britain in order to optimize the benefits of cooperation among the imperial powers. Bose, too, complained on the pages of the *Voice of India*, a publication of the Nationalist Group's Japanese Branch, that the Japanese were uninterested in Indian political affairs.²³ However, after Britain announced that it would scrap the Japan-India Commercial Pact in April 1933 Japanese support for the Indian activities suddenly began to flourish.

As soon as Britain clamped down on trade from Japan, members of the Osaka business community identified Britain as Japan's primary enemy in Asia, and suggested that because its Achilles heel was India, pan-Asianists ought to support the independence movement.²⁴ Tsuda Shingo, the president of the leading textile firm Kanebō, and Greater Asia Society members promoted this line of thinking. The exiled Indians took no time to react to this opportunity. They interpreted the commercial friction between Britain and Japan as another example of the British persecuting Asians, and in activities throughout Japan charged that the Lytton Commission's investigation of the Manchuria Incident and boycott of Japanese goods in China were evidence of Britain's oppressing Japan.

Several groups became a new sounding board and source of financial support for the Indians. The Osaka and Kobe chambers of commerce, which represented light industry and shipping businesses competing against British companies, Buddhist officials and newspaper journalists, particularly in Kobe and Kyoto, offered their help. Two prominent examples were Kobayashi Gidō, a Jōdoshū Buddhist official at the Gokuraku Temple in Kobe, and Igawa Jōkei, a priest and professor at Nishiyama Buddhist College. In September 1931 just as economic tension between Japan and Britain began to rise, dissatisfied with the Tokyo-

based Japan-India Society, which promoted friendship between Japan and Britain, Sahay created the Kansai Japan-India Society with the help of the Kobe Chamber of Commerce, the Kobe Buddhist Association, and Kobe Commercial College. Two years later in October 1933, with assistance from the Kyoto Industrial Association, the Kyoto Buddhist Forum, and Buddhist colleges such as Ryūkoku and Ōtani in Kyoto, Sahay established a branch of the society in Kyoto. With Japanese backing, the Indian activists launched their anti-British campaign. They delivered fiery speeches to large crowds at meetings that were publicized by various newspapers, organized by Kokumin Dōmei political renegades who had left the Minseitō party, and supported by textile manufacturers in Osaka and Nagoya. Pratap spent his time participating in these events and travelling across Manchuria, China and throughout Asia to raise a volunteer army to free India from British rule. As a result of these activities, an image of the Western imperialist, as represented by the British in India, conquering and ruthlessly exploiting Asia, permeated nearly every corner of Japan and pan-Asian thought began to coalesce. A subtle but important shift in the attitude of Foreign Ministry officials towards the Indian activists is apparent in the language of their official memoranda. The Indians were transformed from 'an Indian under surveillance' and 'an Indian that we should be careful of' to 'an Indian patriot' and 'an Indian revolutionary'.

Ex-patriot Indians in Japan, such as Bose and Sahay, struggled with the contradiction that they were relying on Imperial Japan to free India from the British Empire. After all, their host country had colonized Korea and Taiwan and was waging an aggressive war against China. These concerns were particularly severe for Sahay, who was familiar with anti-Japanese sentiments in India, and who was closely aligned with the Congress Party, whose leaders, Nehru and Gandhi, were critical of Japan for its invasion of China. In the end, however, Sahay made Indian independence his top priority and hoped that the war with China would not weaken Japan, that it would upset British machinations in China, that the Japanese and Chinese would overcome their differences, and that reconciliation would lead to an Asian unity strong enough to combat British imperialism.²⁵

Buddhist aid for the Indian independence movement was not limited to Kobayashi and Igawa, but was also supported by a number of high-ranking priests and temple officials in Kyoto and elsewhere, whose influence on their parishioners should not be underestimated. As suggested by his slogan, 'Great Asia is strung together like beads on a Buddhist rosary', Kobayashi stressed that Buddhism must play an important unifying role in the defence of Asian nations and in the cultural revival of Asian culture by reaching out to the various peoples of Asia.²⁶ Later, at the request of the army, Kobayashi assisted Subhas Chandra Bose in organizing Indian activists and an Indian national army with the goal of bringing about the destruction of the British Empire.²⁷ It was not only Jōdoshū Buddhists who supported Indian independence fighters and backed pan-Asianism, though. Many prominent Buddhist leaders of other sects, such as Ōnishi Ryōkei, Ōtani Kozui, and Ōtani Sonyū, did so as well.²⁸ They envisioned links between Tibetan

Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism to combat Western imperialism. A few Christian and Shinto believers also supported pan-Asianism. An examination of pan-Asianism is incomplete without a consideration of the influence of religion. Japanese used religious networks as a tool to combat Western imperialism, which claimed to represent the universal values of civilization. The close relationship between pan-Asianism and religious groups such as Buddhist sects is undeniable.

After Prime Minister Tōjō called for Indian independence in a speech in May 1942 a few months after the fall of Singapore, several large parties were held in honour of Resh Behari Bose in Japan before his departure to join an army of Indians based in Southeast Asia, which hoped to drive out the British from the subcontinent. In addition to private right-wing radicals and army officers who backed Bose in Tokyo, textile company executives and shipping company officials, university officials, top Buddhist priests, chamber of commerce leaders, and regional politicians in Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe lent their support to Bose.²⁹ Anti-British sentiments after the outbreak of the China War were most intense in the Kansai (greater Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe) area, and Buddhist officials and commercial and manufacturing business leaders, especially in the textile and shipping industries, provided the strongest support for pan-Asianism in the region. Why did commerce and religion, which are both characterized by cooperative action based on harmony and expansionism fuelled by competition, become bound together in support of pan-Asianism, and why was this particularly so in Kansai? The explanation for the close relationship between Buddhism and business, and the vibrancy of pan-Asianism, in Kansai is fairly simple: Osaka and Kobe had strong commercial ties with Asia; neighbouring Kyoto and Nara were the home of many Buddhist temples, many Kansai textile and general trading company leaders were Ōmi merchants (business people who hailed from the Ōmi region of adjacent Shiga prefecture); and Ōmi merchants were overwhelmingly members of the Jōdo shinshū, Jōdoshū, and Tendaishū sects.³⁰ Furthermore, Kansai hosts many famous Shinto shrines, Ise, Kashihara, Ikuta, and Minatogawa, which are strongly associated with Japanese nationalism. Many people in Kansai became intensely interested in politics and advocates of pan-Asianism after commercial frictions flared after the onset of the world-wide depression, and business ties between Ōmi and Indian merchants contributed to a rise in such attitudes.

Sahay and Bose often met with Greater Asia Society thinkers and newspaper writers to describe their philosophy and activities. These exchanges seem to have deepened hostility towards Britain for a number of Japanese. Mutō Teiichi, for example, a well-known military analyst at the time, as well as an editorialist for the Osaka *Asahi* newspaper and member of the Greater Asia Society, came away from his meeting with Sahay an avowed anti-British ideologue. In the introduction to his *Kōei sekai sensō* (the world-wide war against Britain), a diatribe published just after the outbreak of the China War with a large first print run of 30,000 copies, Mutō declared, 'I am taking aim at the British empire with this book. ... He (the British Empire) is seeking a war against Japan. This is not

simply a "Japanese-British War," though, but a "world-wide war against Japan" which is of a much worse nature. ... The Japan-China incident being played out in China now is no other than a "Japanese-British War".³¹ In another book, Mutō repeated his assertion that the Sino-Japanese War was actually a war between Britain and Japan, noting, 'The basis for Japan striking China is that this is actually a holy war to save China from the clutches of a white invasion.'³² As their relationship with Indian activists deepened, Japanese journalists, like Mutō, served as important mouthpieces to spread the pan-Asianist ideas and anti-British hostility. They alleged, for example, that Britain was manipulating China to make war on Japan.

To Japanese leaders, the British imperial model had served as an alternative to the Chinese imperial model since the Meiji Restoration. While British imperialism was based on the premises of equality between sovereign states that were 'civilized' and 'modern' (which meant they were based on Western laws, administration, financial systems, and culture), it had been shown to be a model that justified white rule over Asian and other coloured peoples. It used war and the threat of military might to obtain unequal treaties, secure key ports, create concessions and colonial settlements, and then gradually move up rivers and railroads into the interior, and gain political and economic control of territory. Based on this model, Western countries had gained control over the resources and economies of many Asian countries, and obtained new capital and markets. Modern Japan had emulated this model with great fervour, using the export of light industrial goods to accumulate capital and taking advantage of the Asian 'treaty port' system to secure territorial concessions, until it collided with Britain during the world-wide depression. Perhaps it should come as little surprise that the Japanese were angered by the Lytton Commission, which found Japan guilty of aggression during the Manchurian Incident, and saw the commission's conclusions as a sham.

Japan became a 'continental empire' through the establishment of Manchukuo. The next conference of the All-Asian Race Conference, whose meetings had been suspended since the Shanghai conference was cancelled, took place in Dalian in Manchukuo in 1934. After seizing Dalian from Russia, Japan made use of it to develop its trade in Asia through so-called 'Dalianism'.³³ The Manchurian Incident and commercial frictions in India, however, gradually changed the primary enemy of the pan-Asianists from the USSR to Britain, and presented Japan with an opportunity to become an 'oceanic empire'. The Dalian meeting focused on the British Empire, and afterwards work was undertaken to organize Japan, Taiwan, South China, and Southeast Asia into a Japanese 'oceanic empire' with Dalian as one of its hub ports.³⁴ Japanese leaders established Manchukuo as one of Japan's colonial bases and began the economic reorganization of the entire empire and the industrialization of the country's colonies. Japanese pan-Asianists sought to create an alternative co-existence, co-prosperity empire, which differed from the Chinese and British models that had not implemented industrialization and education in their realms.³⁵ As Japan overcame the depression, Japanese pride in their empire deepened and confidence in their ability to rule colonies grew, as evidenced by the words of Ugaki Kazushige, the

governor-general of Korea, Matsui Iwane, the commander of the army in Taiwan, and Takahashi Kamekichi, a popular private economist. Matsui, in particular, boasted of Japanese accomplishments. He expressed satisfaction that Japan had been able to shift its foreign exports, much of which went from Osaka, to Southeast Asia and India and away from China because of the anti-Japanese boycott staged in the wake of the Manchurian Incident. At the end of his tenure as governor-general, he stated that the Taiwanese were indebted to and ought to be thankful to Japan for protecting them from the depression and for generously blessing them with economic benefits. In Taiwan, Matsui encouraged members of the Greater Asia Society to promote pan-Asianism.³⁶ This strategy was the pride of pan-Asianists, who believed Japan could become a 'super-empire'. For this reason, in 1935 Japanese authorities began to use the word *tennō* instead of 'emperor' and to only use the 'Greater Japanese Empire' (*Dai Nippon teikoku*) to refer to Japan in all diplomatic exchanges to communicate the idea that their ruler was the world's only sovereign of a super-empire. 'Co-existence, co-prosperity' was intended to lead to different colonial relations than those that existed within the Western empires. In summary, the conditions that contributed to and shaped the rise of pan-Asianism during the 1930s were the reorganization of the world economic system because of the global depression, and alliances between exiled Indian, Buddhists, and industrial capitalists.

Japanese opposition to British aid to China

As a result of the rise of the Japanese Empire, which sought to overcome the Chinese and British imperial models, these two opponents appeared to pan-Asianists to come together to defend their interests against Japan. Britain and China were seen as mutually dependent on each other. British imperial rule relied on the Chinese commercial network, and the creation of a unified China seemed to depend on British economic assistance.³⁷ Chinese currency reform, carried out on the advice of Sir Frederick Leith-Ross in 1935, became a symbol of this mutual dependency. Many Japanese observers believed the reforms put the core of Chinese financial matters under the control of Britain.³⁸ In addition, many Japanese pan-Asianists and newspapers perceived Jiang's borrowing for the construction of railways in Guangdong and elsewhere in south China, and the creation of iron works companies as a defeat for Japanese interests in the commercial war with Britain in China. General Matsui tried to persuade leaders in south China to cooperate with Japan against Jiang in February and March 1936, but his attempt failed. After the south Chinese leader Hu Hanmin died in May 1936, Jiang's government quickly toppled Hu's allies. The Xi'an Incident in December led to a rise in anti-Japanese sentiments throughout China. As a result, many Japanese believed that Britain was sowing anti-Japanese sentiments throughout China and furthering its own policies even as it continued to export raw materials to Japan.

Just as these sentiments were coming to the surface, an all-out war with China broke out in July 1937. Matsui, the former commander of the army in Taiwan

and pan-Asianist, returned to active duty and was dispatched to direct the fighting in China. Matsui thought the war in China was an excellent opportunity to apply the principles of the Greater Asia Society. When he departed for Shanghai to assume his post, he claimed that the true nature of the war between Japan and China was an 'Asian family fight'. Japan, as the older brother, was beating up its proud younger brother, China, not because of hate, but because this was the only way that it could bring it to reflect on its actions.³⁹ Matsui believed that the way to bring about real goodwill between Japan and China was to cause the Chinese to regret their actions by driving the British and other Western capital out and toppling the Jiang regime, which depended on British aid. He felt that Japan's real enemy was Britain and advocated advancing southward to attack Nanjing, Guangzhou, and Hankou, which were centres of the alliance between China and Britain. The first Konoe cabinet, which initially leaned toward Britain, had Matsui recalled, but when the cabinet failed to resolve the war it was no longer able to constrain pan-Asianism.⁴⁰

On 3 November 1938 Prime Minister Konoe declared a 'New Order in East Asia', and from this time Japan's China war policy became guided by pan-Asianist principles. It was perhaps especially apt that Konoe became a spokesman for pan-Asianism, because he was the son of and ideological successor to Konoe Atsumaro, a nineteenth-century spokesman for Japanese Asianism. In a speech delivered at the Nihon Club on 18 January 1939 Kurihara Shō, the East Asian Bureau Chief at the Foreign Ministry and director of the Greater Asia Society, declared that the war in China, which 'until now had been a semi-colony of the powers', was a battle between Japan and the Comintern, as well as Britain, France, and the United States. Sahay and his fellow Indian exiles probably felt like they were reaping the fruits of their activities when they learned of such statements.⁴¹ The Konoe cabinet's pan-Asianist policies were modelled on those promoted by the Greater Asia Society. Nakayama Masaru, a director of the Society, drafted three central Konoe policies, including the East Asia New Order.⁴² Colonel Kagesa Sadaaki, a behind-the-scenes engineer in the creation of the Wang Jingwei government, was also a member. Japanese government officials hoped that Chinese in south China and in Southeast Asia would support the Wang regime and be sympathetic to Japanese aims. The Greater Asia Society was also deeply involved in the Tianjin blockade, the attempt to shut down the Burma Road, and in anti-British demonstrations within Japan and in its colonies. Fearing the collapse of British power in Asia, the United States decided to impose economic sanctions against Japan.⁴³ As a result, Japan embarked on a path to war with the country it most wanted to avoid.

Conclusion

The final point to make in this chapter is that the Greater Asia Society was not a government entity, but what we today would call a non-governmental organization. The members of the Society created a network that did not operate as an institutionalized government organization; but the Society utilized and exercised

influence on military, bureaucratic, political, and economic circles, as highlighted by the work of Matsui, Wachi, and Taketō. This chapter has only detailed a few aspects of the group's activities. Other examples include the endeavours of Suzuki Teichi and Hōsei University Professor Nakatani Takeyo, who were both officials in the Asia Development Board (Kōain) and officers of the Society. They spearheaded propaganda, cultural, and pacification campaigns in occupied China by founding Society branches in Tianjin and Shanghai, cooperating with Sahay and other members of the Indian National Congress in China, and collaborating with the Wang government to promote anti-British sentiment and pan-Asians ideas. As historian Prasenjit Duara has pointed out, Japanese attempts to placate the Chinese met with a degree of success.⁴⁴

However, it must be emphasized that these non-governmental organizations, such as the Greater Asia Society and Buddhist groups, created connections with Chinese and Indian exiles and, in doing so, co-opted the arguments and energy of these groups and used them to support the aims of Japanese pan-Asianism throughout the empire. Pan-Asianism was an ideology that competed with the British Empire for the cooperation of Chinese and Indian merchants, and the Japanese war for pan-Asianism, that is, the 'Greater East Asia War', brought about the downfall of the British Empire, and, ultimately, the Japanese Empire. After the establishment of Manchukuo, Japan sought to control the Asian commercial network run by Chinese and Indian merchants and to become an 'oceanic empire' and advance southward.

Supporters of pan-Asianism promoted the ideology through speeches, textbooks, radio broadcasts, and newspapers and magazine articles throughout Asia and gradually many average members of the population became sympathetic to the mentality. For example, in a teaching manual published in 1941, Murakawa Kengo, professor emeritus in Western history with a speciality in ancient Greek history at Tokyo Imperial University, who also served as the vice-chair of the Greater Asia Society, wrote that the purpose for studying Western history was to learn of the wars, oppression, and exploitation prosecuted by the West and to rectify them:

Whites used science and culture as a weapon to conquer much of the world and have achieved global supremacy. We cannot deny that Western culture has made great contributions to the improvement and progress of human life, but we must not overlook the fact that the welfare of all humans has not flourished. Rather we should understand that many conquered humans cry out as the result of their oppression and exploitation in the shadows of white people's vitality and prosperity... Now that over four full years have elapsed since the outbreak of the China Incident, and our great, unrivalled army has been engaged in a holy war on the continent, their might shining throughout the whole world, it is time for us to begin the great work of establishing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. As long as the emperor's country moves forward to accomplish its magnificent mission, it is inevitable that there will be friction with the strong white powers that seek

to guarantee their supposed superiority, so it is imperative for us to prepare for difficulties far more severe than those we face today. Our nation's goal of establishing the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, more than anything else, is the first step in accomplishing our mission to bring true peace to the world. We, at this moment, must follow the grandeur of our ancestors and our recent development, believe in our nation's potential, and harden our determination to fulfil this mission to overcome every kind of hardship and ensure the prosperity of the imperial throne.⁴⁵

Previously, Murakawa claimed that all of Japan's modern wars – the Sino-Japanese, Russo-Japanese, the Manchurian Incident, and the China War – were the result of friction and rivalry between Japan and either the white powers, who were intent on maintaining or extending their worldwide hegemony, or the Chinese, who were acting as proxies for the white races.⁴⁶ Murakawa's writings, which depended on his status as an emeritus professor of Western history in the college of humanities at the foremost university in the country, and on his so-called understanding of history, probably had a substantial impact on the formation of a pan-Asianist historical consciousness among teachers and students. Yano Jin'ichi, professor emeritus in Asia history at Kyoto Imperial University, who also served as vice-chair of the Greater Asia Society, probably had a similar influence. In this manner, the Greater Asia Society spread the message of pan-Asianism throughout Japan.

In February 1940, Minseitō politician Saitō Takao delivered what became a famous anti-military speech. He plainly criticized the efforts of the Konoe cabinet's attempts to resolve the China war through policies based on pan-Asianism, disparaged the Wang government, and railed against those who 'hid behind rhetoric that glorified holy war, made light of the sufferings of the people, and deployed vague expressions such as so-called international justice, moral diplomacy, and "co-existence, co-prosperity"'. Saitō's speech pointed out that pan-Asianism was the mentality of Japan at that time. His words, however, did not lead to any debate on these issues, but to his expulsion from the Diet and to the formation of the League of Diet Members Supporting the Prosecution of the Holy War, which sang the praises of Konoe's 'New Order'. Soon the Japanese government formed the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and moved closer to war with Britain and the United States.

It is imperative that we consider the relationship between ideology and the political and economic context, and not simply rely on an analysis of systematic political processes in order to understand accurately Japanese politics during the 1930s and any period. On the path toward and in the expansion of the Pacific War, we must understand the degree to which pan-Asianism influenced political events.

Notes

This chapter was translated by Aaron Skabelund.

- 1 See, for example, the work of Sugihara Kaoru, Akita Shigeru, Kagotani Naoto, and Kibata Yōichi, in Akita Shigeru and Kagotani Naoto (eds), *1930 nendai no Ajia kokusai chitsujo*, Hiroshima: Keisuisha, 2002.
- 2 Masataka Matsuura, *Nicchū sensōki ni okeru keizai to seiji* (Economics and Politics during the Sino-Japanese War), Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1995; and *ibid.*, *Zaikai no seiji keizai shi*, Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2002.
- 3 Terasaki Hidenari and Mariko Terasaki-Miller (eds), *Shōwa tennō dokuhakuroku – Terasaki Hidenari, go-yō gakari nikki*, Tokyo: Bungei shunjū, 1991, pp. 20–1. The English version of the monologues, which was created in preparation for the Tokyo Trials, naturally deleted these comments. Higashino Makoto, *NHK supesharu serekushon – Shōwa tennō futatsu no dokuhakuroku*, Tokyo: Nihon hōsō kyōkai, 1998, p. 130.
- 4 John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*, New York: Pantheon, 1986.
- 5 Some prominent figures of nineteenth-century Asianism included Honda Toshiaki, Satō Nobuhiro, Katsu Kaishū, who called for an alliance among Japan, China, and Korea, Tarui Tōkichi who endorsed the merger of Japan and Korea, Konoe Atsumaro who promoted an alliance between Japan and China, and Miyazaki Tōten, Okakura Tenshin, and Tōyama Mitsuru of the Black Dragon Society.
- 6 See, for example, Kodama Masaaki, 'Amerika 1924 nen imin hō no seiritsu ni taisuru imin ken no dōkō', in Miwa Kimitada (ed.), *Nichibei kiki no kigen to hainichi imin hō*, Tokyo: Ronzasha, 1997; and Miwa Kimitada, '1924 hai-Nichi imin hō no seiritsu to beika boikotto', in Hosoya Chihiro (ed.), *Taiheiyō, Ajia ken no kokusai keizai funsō shi*, Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1983.
- 7 Gaimushō gaikō shiryōkan archive, Tokyo, *Kakkoku imin hō ki narabi ni seisaku kankei zakken. Beikoku no bu [zokuryō chi o fukumu]*, Vol. 6, J.1.1.0.XI-U1, Yasui (Osaka) to Ushio, Arita, Terauchi, Nagano, Nagata, and prefectural governors, 'Ajia renmei kyōkai no beikoku hainichi imin teppai kigan undo ni kansuru ken', 2 July 1936.
- 8 See, for example, 'Shinajin no tainichi kansō kōka', *Jiji shinpō*, 13 May 1924.
- 9 Gaimushō gaikō shiryōkan archive, Tokyo, *Minzoku mondai kankei ikken, Ajia minzoku mondai*, Vol. 2, Naimushō keiho kyoku hoan ka, 'Taishō 15 nen 10 gatsu, zen Ajia minzoku kaigi tenmatsu'.
- 10 *Minzoku mondai kankei ikken, Ajia minzoku mondai*, Vol. 1, pp. 539–41.
- 11 *Minzoku mondai kankei ikken, Ajia minzoku mondai*, Vols 1 and 2, Yamagata (Hyogo) to Hamaguchi, Shidehara, designated prefectural officials, and Yukizawa, 'Ajia minzoku taikai ni kansuru hantai gekibun haifu no ken', 5 and 6 August 1926.
- 12 Hamashita Takeshi, Ronald Toby, Arano Yasunori and others have all shed light on the Chinese imperial model. For a more recent analysis, see Kawashima Shin, *Kindai Chūgoku gaikō no keisei*, Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku shuppankai, 2004.
- 13 Kagotani Naoto, *Ajia kokusai tsūshō chitsujo to kindai Nihon*, Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku shuppankai, 2000.
- 14 Motono Eiichi, *Dentō Chūgoku shōgyō chitsujo no hōkai*, Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku shuppankai, 2004.
- 15 Lin Man-houng, 'Nihon shokuminchi ki Taiwan no zai-Manshū bōeki sokushin to sono shakaiteki igi', in Akita and Kagotani (eds), *1930 nendai no Ajia kokusai chitsujo*.
- 16 Wang Ke, "'Teikoku' to 'minzoku'", in Yamamoto Yūzō (ed.), *Teikoku no kenkyū*, Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku shuppankai, 2004.
- 17 Lin, 'Nihon shokuminchi'.
- 18 The Philippines, an American colony, were excluded from the anti-Japanese immigration regulations.
- 19 Watanabe Hiroshi, "'Oshie" to Inbō – "Kokutai" no ichi-kigen', in Watanabe Hiroshi and Bokū Chūshaku (eds), *Kankoku Nihon "Seiyō"* (Nikkan Kyōdō Kenkyū Sōsho, vol. 11), Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppan, 2005.
- 20 Nishikawa Hiroshi, *Nihon teikokushugi to mengyō*, Tokyo: Mineruva, 1987, chap. 5.
- 21 Kagotani, *Ajia kokusai tsūshō chitsujo to kindai Nihon*.
- 22 The National Archives, Kew (TNA), FO371/14755 Tilley (Tokyo) to Henderson, 10 May 1930 and *ibid.*, 13 October 1930.
- 23 TNA FO371/14755 Snow to Henderson, 5 November 1930.
- 24 Snow to Simon, 23 June 1933, in A. Trotter *et al.* (eds), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Part II, Series E Asia, 1914–1939*, Washington, DC: University Publications of America, 1992, vol. 12, pp. 274–5.
- 25 Masataka Matsuura, 'Han-Ajiashugi ni okeru "Indo yōin"', in Ishida Ken (ed.), *Teikoku no bōchō*, Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2007.
- 26 Kobayashi Gidō, 'Nenju de tsunage dai-Ajia', *Kachō* (December 1939).
- 27 Kobayashi, *Raimu ibunshū*, Kobe: Higashi gokuryakuji, 1982.
- 28 For more about the contribution of Zen priests to the war effort, see Brian Victoria, *Zen at War*, New York: Weatherhill, 1997.
- 29 R.B. Bose Papers, Daitō Bunka Daigaku, Saitama, Notebook VI 1942; and Nakajima Takeshi, *Nakamura no Bose*, Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 2005, pp. 286–8.
- 30 Itsuki Hiroyuki, *Tariki*, Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2000, pp. 168–9; Arimoto Masao, *Shinshū no shūkyō shakai shi*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1995; Ogura Eiichirō, *Omishōnin no keifu*, Tokyo: Nihon Keizai shinbunsha, 1980; Serikawa Hiromichi, *Nihon no kindai ka to shūkyō rinri*, Tokyo: Taga shuppan, 1997.
- 31 Mutō Teiichi, *Kōei sekai sensō*, Tokyo: Shimizu shoten, 1937, pp. 1–4.
- 32 Mutō, *Bakushin*, Tokyo: Modan Nihon-sha, 1938, pp. 62–7.
- 33 Kitaoka Shin'ichi, *Nihon rikugun to tairiku seisaku*, Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1978, pp. 34–42.
- 34 It was symbolic that the Yamato Hotel, across the street from the British consulate, hosted the Dalian meeting. A.M. Nair, *Shirarezaru Indo dokuritsu tousō*, Tokyo: Fūtousha, 1983, p. 139.
- 35 Hori Kazuo, 'Shokuminchi teikoku Nihon no keizai kōzō', *Nihon-shi kenkyū*, vol. 62 (2001); *ibid.*, 'Nihon teikoku bōchō to shokuminchi kōgyōka', in Akita and Kagotani (eds), *1930 nendai no Ajia kokusai chitsujo*, and *ibid.*, 'Nihon teikoku to shokuminchi kankei no rekishiteki igi', in Hori Kazuo and Nakamura Tetsu (eds), *Nihon shihonshugi to Chōsen, Taiwan*, Kyoto: Kyoto daigaku gakujutsu shuppankai, 2004.
- 36 Masataka Matsuura, 'Takahashi Zaiseika no teikoku keizai saihensei to taiseikan yūi kyōsō', in Banno Junji *et al.* (eds), *Kensei no seijigaku*, Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2005.
- 37 Furuta Kazuko, *Shanghai nettowaku to kindai higashi Ajia*, Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2000.
- 38 See, for example, Suma Yakichirō, *Suma Yakichirō gaikō hiroku*, Tokyo: Sōgensha, 1988, pp. 76–8.
- 39 Maruyama Masao, 'Gunkoku shihaisha no seishin keitai', *Maruyama Masao shū*, Vol. 4, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1995.
- 40 Masataka Matsuura, 'Nicchū sens ha naze nanka shita ka', *Hokudai hōgaku ronshū*, Vol. 59/1 (2006).
- 41 Gaimushō gaikō shiryōkan archive, Tokyo, *Eikoku naisei kankei zassan, zokuryō kankei, Indo no bu, hanei undo kankei*, A.6.6.0.1–1–2–1, Shimizu (Wakayama) to Kido, Arita, and Director-General of Prefectures in Kinki region, prosecutors in the Wakayama regional courts, 'Eikoku datō Indo dokuritsu kōenkai kaisai jōkyō ni kansuru ken', 14 April 1934.
- 42 Nakayama Masaru, *Nakayama Masaru senshū*, Tokyo: Nakayama Masaru senshū kankō iinkai, 1982; *ibid.*, *Shina ron to zuihitsu*, Tokyo: Tōkō shoin, 1940; Nakatani Takeyo, *Shōwa dōran ki no kaisō*, Tokyo: Taiyūsha, 1989, pp. 672–3.

- 43 Hosoya Chihiro, 'Taiheiyō sensō toha nichī-ei sensō de ha nakatta ka', *Gaikō shiryōkan shiryō* 10 (November 1979).
- 44 Prasenjit Duara, 'The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism', *Journal of World History*, 12/1 (2001), pp. 99–130.
- 45 Murakawa Kengo, *Seiyōshi kyōtei (chūgakkō yō)*, Tokyo: Chūtōgakkō Kyōkasho Kabushiki Gaisha, 1941.
- 46 Murakawa Kengo, 'Kōa gendōryoku toshite no Nihon', in Satō Shizen (ed.), *Kōa Taikan*, Nagoya: Shin Aichi shinbunsha, 1940.

7 Bombing, Japanese pan-Asianism and Chinese nationalism

Hans van de Ven

An aspect of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–45 that has received little attention is the Japanese bombing of Chinese cities. Recent Chinese scholarship on the war has concentrated on the fighting of Nationalist ground forces especially in the first years of the war, in part to redress the suggestion of a previous generation of historians that the Nationalists made no sustained effort to resist the Japanese invasion. The Nanjing Massacre, the Japanese use of chemical weapons, and the exploitation of comfort women have also emerged as significant – and emotionally charged – topics over the last two decades that continue to have serious contemporary political significance for Sino-Japanese relations. These topics have overshadowed bombing, which in reality was a major aspect of the fighting and which featured prominently in the early reporting of the war.

This chapter uses the case of Canton to examine the economic and social effects of bombing. The Canton case suggests that, if, as is well known, the Japanese were never able to consolidate their rule in China's rural areas, the carnage caused by bombing also rendered it impossible for them to establish control over cities, let alone turn them into centres of prosperity exemplifying the benefits that would come from Japanese rule. It also examines the Japanese bombing of Shanghai during the first months of the war. This generated a wave of negative publicity for Japan portraying it as a militarist and barbaric country violating basic principles of civilized conduct. On the other hand, if only years before China was widely described as mired in civil warfare, wracked by famine, and ruled by an oppressive and corrupt elite, China became hailed as a plucky if still young nation fighting for civilization. Bombing helped to give rise to significant changes in perceptions of China and Japan.

The chapter begins with an analysis of Japanese pan-Asianism, which needs to be taken more seriously than has been done, at least as the rhetoric that the Japanese chose to deploy to give meaning to their actions. Based on the idea that Asian cultures were bound by a set of core cultural values and shared a common destiny, it posited that Japan's task was to eliminate Western imperialism from Asia. Both the social and economic havoc that Japanese bombing caused, as well as the changes in perception of China and Japan that it helped foster, undermined Japanese pan-Asian aspirations and strengthened respect for Chinese nationalism.