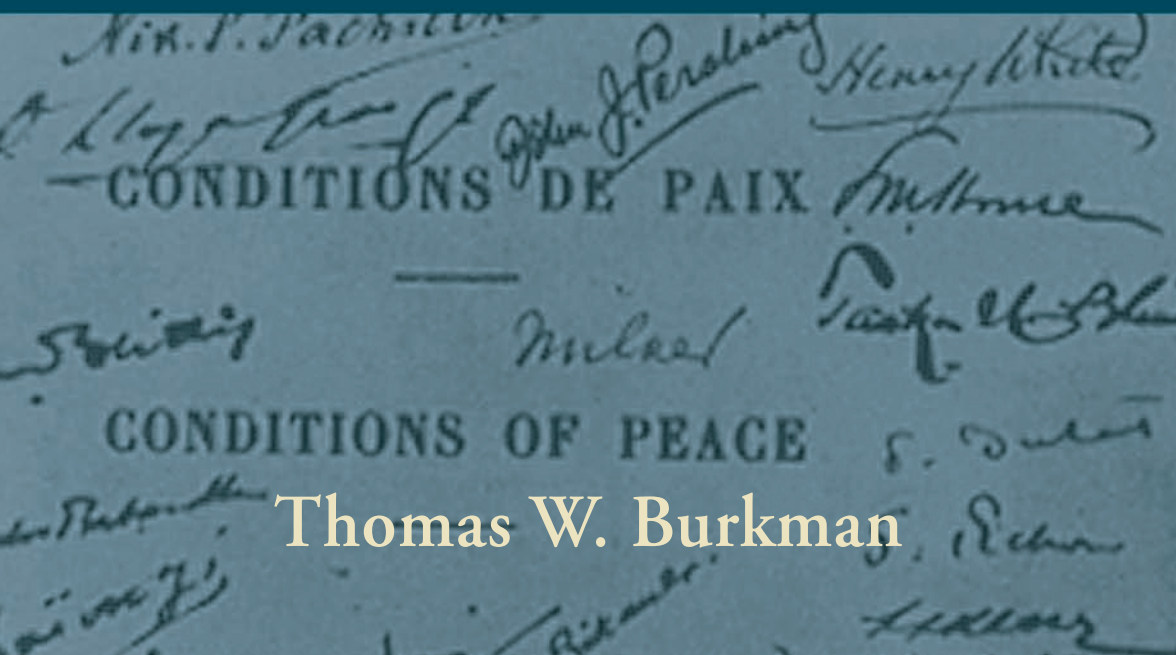




JAPAN and the LEAGUE of NATIONS

EMPIRE AND WORLD ORDER, 1914–1938



Thomas W. Burkman

Japan and the League of Nations

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Empire and World Order,
1914–1938

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To Norman Pollock and Roger Des Forges

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Introduction

THE PEACE settlement following World War I gave birth to the League of Nations. Japanese diplomats labored with those of other victorious powers to fashion the constitution of the League, and the Empire of Japan joined the organization in 1920 as one of forty-two charter members and one of four permanent members of the League of Nations Council. Japan was active in League political, humanitarian, and judicial affairs until it announced its withdrawal in 1933. When its resignation took effect two years later, Japan retained affiliation with the organization's subsidiary bodies until it severed all ties in 1938. Before conflict arose between Japan and the world body over the Manchurian Incident, the League was a centerpiece of Japan's sincere policy to maintain accommodation with the powers and to function cooperatively in institutions for international order. League involvement inspired many Japanese — officials, diplomats, and citizenry alike — to believe that Japan could achieve its national aspiration to be a regional power without confrontation with other leading states, and that a global mechanism for the peaceful settlement of international disputes could succeed.

The picture of Japan as a positive contributor to international order and comity is not the conventional view of Japan in the early and mid-twentieth century. Rather, this period is usually depicted in Japan and abroad alike as a history of incremental imperialism and intensifying militarism, culminating in war in China and the Pacific.¹ The account continues after 1945 as a reaction to and recovery from that war. In other words, World War II in Asia is center stage, deeply coloring all that precedes and follows it. Even Japan's interface with the League of Nations is typically addressed only at the nodes of confrontation: the 1919 debates over racial equality and Shandong as the League Covenant was drafted, and the 1931–1933 League challenge to the Japanese seizure of Manchuria. What this book assays to accomplish is to fill in the space before, between, and after those nodes, and to accord a full picture of the League relationship its legitimate place in Japanese international history in the 1920s and 1930s. It also argues that the League connection has long-term implications that were not obviated by the interlude of war.

Japanese cooperative international behavior in the decades after the Pacific War bears marked continuity with the mainstream international accommodationism of the League years.

It is true that most Japanese had serious misgivings about the League of Nations during the months of its gestation and the fifteen years of membership. Japan's awkward adjustments to such now-conventional systems as multilateral diplomacy, mandated territories, arbitration, sanctions, disarmament, a world court, and the International Labor Organization involved a great deal of internal debate, which this study elucidates. League standards regarding labor confronted social policies at home. The status quo underpinnings of the League represented a fundamental challenge to Japanese aspirations to achieve major powerhood through expanding its economic and political influence on the mainland. Nonetheless, Japanese leaders believed that the League was a viable place where the Empire could negotiate expanded power and international standing with the leading nations of Europe. These Japanese were schooled in *realpolitik*. They had few delusions that the European colonial powers would subordinate *their* imperialistic prerogatives to the decisions of a global body. During the 1920s, Japan observed ample cases where the powers reached major accommodations among themselves *away from* Geneva. Japan rightly saw itself as a normal power — albeit a latecomer — an adherent of the “respectable imperialism” that avoided challenging the special interests of other powers. Even those Japanese — whose lives the reader will enter in the following chapters — most dedicated to the ideals of the “Geneva spirit” sincerely believed that Japan could have the League *and* regional predominance. For them, Japan's separation from Geneva brought deep grief. For the nation, the opportunities presented by post-Mukden autonomy were accompanied by a painful crisis of diplomatic isolation.

Japan was a relative latecomer to the League of Nations project. As the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 approached, Japanese planners for the postwar settlement had to scurry to apprehend the proposal and formulate Japanese approaches. Japanese popular support did not at all compare to the feverish enthusiasm that characterized League movements in the West. Of the three nations most crucial, then and now, to Japan's external affairs — China, Russia, and the United States — only China shared League membership with Japan. Japan's testy departure from Geneva in the wake of the Manchurian Incident lends credence to the presumption, long unchallenged, that the League of Nations was a subordinate factor in Japanese foreign policy.

This study provides counterevidence that Japan attached importance to its membership in the League of Nations. Japan regularly sent to meetings of the League Assembly and Council its ranking diplomats in Europe, for whom service in Geneva was an asset in rising careers. Moreover, some of Japan's most talented

bureaucrats and jurists were posted to the League Secretariat and the World Court. Japan took pains to demonstrate that its political and financial roles in the organization were commensurate with the status of a major power. Japan had consequential input in the drafting of the League Covenant and the Geneva Protocol, the formulation of disarmament concepts and plans, and the settlement of border disputes in Europe. Japanese representatives in the humanitarian offices of the League were commended for their responsible and effective service. As the only permanent member of the League Council among Asian members of the League, Japan could represent Oriental interests before the world, press the issue of national equality, and speak with impartiality on European questions. In Geneva affairs, Japan was no “silent partner.” League engagement was also the highlight of the careers of noteworthy diplomatic and intellectual figures. The legacies of Makino Nobuaki, Ishii Kikujirō, Nitobe Inazō, and Matsuoka Yōsuke are deeply intertwined with the League of Nations.

The advent of the League of Nations after World War I encouraged the rise of internationalist movements among the Japanese public. The organization was, in the words of Japanese international historian Akira Iriye, “the most spectacular instance of postwar internationalism.”² Academic, labor, business, and religious leaders advocated adherence to the global trends of pacifism and democracy that seemed to be embodied in the League. Their opinions recorded in the press and magazines are frequently cited throughout the study. A Japan League of Nations Association, funded by the Foreign Ministry and led by top business and diplomatic figures, publicized the ideals of international organization throughout the nation. Even after Japan withdrew from the League and policies of autonomy began to displace accommodationism, the vestiges of universal order remained strong. Proposals by Japanese in the 1930s for regional systems to replace the defunct League of Nations in East Asia commonly borrowed principles and even wording from the League Covenant. After the dark valley of the Pacific War years, this internationalism would reemerge in public attitudes on war and peace, support for the United Nations, and the cooperative diplomatic policies of postwar cabinets — some of which were led by men with League experience.

Considerable space is devoted to the backgrounds, ideas, and careers of key internationalist figures. We see how the League project ushered them to world citizenship and inspired them to build bridges across boundaries and cultures. Their minds and careers also illustrate the competing loyalties of nation and world and the indelible imprint of past experiences of discrimination and service to the state. Their internationalism should not be misconstrued as pacifism. Nor was internationalism in their minds incompatible with the pattern of incremental economic and territorial expansion that they observed in the recent histories of all the world’s major powers, particularly the United States. New diplomatic values released by

the First World War and the Russian Revolution and articulated most notably by Woodrow Wilson challenged their inherent nationalism, gave them new concepts and vocabulary, and emboldened them to embrace new visions for a world peace organization. While some internationalists were ideologically committed to multilateralism and nonviolent solutions, this study applies the term “international accommodationism” to the internationalist posture of cabinets and the Foreign Ministry during the League era. This wording is drawn from the Japanese phrase “*taisei junnō*” (conformity to world trends), ubiquitous in the period, and the need deeply felt by leaders of the time to acquiesce in the world program of the powers. The counterviews of militarists and ultranationalists are noted but not treated extensively, and are found in the existing literature.³

The research for this book began in the author’s graduate school days and has been expanded through three decades of documentary inquiry and interviews in Japan, Geneva, London, and North America. Primary sources utilized in this inquiry include the unpublished manuscripts and published diaries of Japanese diplomats, political figures, and military leaders. The private papers and memoirs of Paris Peace Conference plenipotentiary Makino Nobuaki and the minutes of the Advisory Council on Foreign Relations shed important light on Japan’s entry into and early policies toward the League. The papers of League undersecretary-general Nitobe Inazō and documents in the League of Nations Archives in Geneva were useful for understanding Japan’s activity within the organization. The published and unpublished documents of the Japanese Foreign Ministry and the Japanese National Archives contributed information concerning official policy on League questions. The Public Record Office in London provided correspondence and documents of British diplomats. Newspapers and magazines of the period were used in the assessment of elite opinion in the public sector. Some elderly diplomats and journalists with direct League experience were available for interviews when this study began. In the United States, materials were gathered from records of the Department of State, the presidential papers of Woodrow Wilson, and private papers of such diplomatic officers as Roland S. Morris, Stanley K. Hornbeck, and Joseph W. Ballantine.

Note on Japanese and Chinese Names

JAPANESE AND Chinese names are rendered according to local custom — family name before given name. Most Chinese personal and place-names are romanized according to the Pinyin system, except for a few that are readily recognizable in the West in earlier romanized forms.

1

The World War I Experience

Problems of peace become at times more serious and perplexing than those of war.

—Shidehara Kijūrō

“HEAVEN’S HELP in the new Taishō era for the fulfillment of Japan’s destiny.” With these words the Ōkuma Shigenobu cabinet welcomed the outbreak of hostilities in Europe in August 1914.¹

The First World War had profound consequences for Japan. It created the unanticipated opportunity for the Empire to assert its claims to regional leadership and international equality. At the postwar peace conference in 1919, Japan for the first time ventured into the global arena of diplomacy. There the nation was forced to deal with questions of world order. The conference gave birth to an association of nations in which Japan took a seat as one of the major powers. The problem of Japan’s place in that order would vex the island Empire for two decades to come.²

The Global Impact of the War

The First World War is widely viewed as a major — if not the foremost — watershed in the diplomatic history of the twentieth century. The epoch that culminated in the signing of the Treaty of Versailles witnessed momentous changes in the way nations related to each other — changes from which Japan could not remain aloof. Unprecedented techniques of mass warfare were implemented, the map of Europe was radically redrawn, major colonial holdings switched hands, and world trade patterns were altered. Long-accepted norms of diplomatic behavior were called into question. New, modern forms of nationalism and revolution rose to challenge the common practices of exploitation by powerful states and rule by privileged classes. Ideals of national self-determination, anticolonialism, collective security, and international socialism came forth to compete for acceptance as formulae for the creation of a new world order of peace and justice. When the fray subsided,

world leaders forged the institutional framework for a new system that they believed would relieve humanity of the threat of war. For Japan the rapid changes in international affairs produced uncertainty concerning future relationships with its Asian neighbors and the victorious powers. "Heaven's help" indeed was a mixed blessing. As a nation whose interests could be stymied and whose security could be jeopardized by diplomatic isolation, Japan faced the painful necessity of adjusting to world trends.

The Great War permanently laid to rest a Europe-centered power system. Until the turn of the century, a few imperial states had been able to manipulate the balance of power anywhere in the world. Japanese foreign-policy makers were adept at adjusting to the European power system and using it advantageously. Alliance diplomacy, epitomized in the Anglo-Japanese accord of 1901, had provided a tie-in to the system by which Japan was able to prevent the formation of a concert of hostile powers and effectively neutralize any threat by a European imperialist to the expansion of Japanese vital interests in East Asia. But the alliance itself and the concentration of the British Navy in home waters in 1905 that it afforded were symptomatic of the eclipse of British preeminent power and the rise of new competitors in Europe and abroad. Old-style colonialism had passed its apex, and former dependencies were starting to assert their self-interest. During the course of the Great War, the participation of Canadian, South African, Indian, Australian, and Japanese troops as well as Chinese laborers made it inevitable that the demands of non-Europeans would be voiced in the postwar settlement. America's financial and military bailout of the beleaguered French and British in 1917–1918, coupled with President Woodrow Wilson's determination to assert American leadership in the peace, brought the full resources of the Western Hemisphere onto the world political stage. Kurt Riezler, an insightful German political philosopher, had pondered these matters upon his return from a visit to China on the eve of Sarajevo:

That which differentiates most obviously modern politics from that of every other age is that modern politics is world politics. That means that the world has become a unified political arena, that any political event anywhere in the world affects, or at least can affect, everything else. It means that it is no longer possible to view any territorial area and special question as fully isolated.³

Visionary statesmen came to believe that a permanent structure of peace would have to be global, not regional, in nature. The principles and goals enunciated by Wilson made it clear that he regarded his mission as more than the exorcising of the demon of militarism in Europe: he was determined to regenerate the system of international relations on a world scale.

The demise of a Europe-centered power system was accompanied by a de-

centralization of the world economy. Far-reaching structural changes took place in world production and trade as a consequence of the Great War's dislocation of European economies and concomitant stimulation of non-European competitors. According to figures compiled by the League of Nations in the 1920s, the shift was not a temporary phenomenon of the immediate war years. Europe's share of world production stood at 43 percent in 1913 but measured only 34 percent a decade later in 1923. The European portion of world trade, at 59 percent in 1913, was down to 50 percent in 1924. At the same time, Europe—Britain in particular—ceased to be the world's major creditor, as New York capital ventured abroad.⁴ During the war, Japan was a major beneficiary of these trends. With commercial relations between Europe and the Orient suddenly disrupted, Japanese enterprise stepped in to supply manufactured goods and investment capital to China and new markets like India and Southeast Asia. The war accelerated the long-term shift in the composition of Japan's exports from textiles to heavy industrial goods. Shipbuilding rose rapidly, to become Japan's fourth-largest export item by 1917, and the demand for Japanese steamship services accelerated sharply. Industrial employment soared, wages climbed, and a class of *nouveaux riches* reaped enormous profits. The war-time boom after 1914 ushered in creditor status with a trade surplus of over three billion yen for the years 1914–1919. Japanese loans were extended to China and Imperial Russia as well as to France and Britain.⁵

Despite substantial material growth for Japan as a nation, not all Japanese reaped prosperity. The war boom brought into sharp focus shortcomings in Japan's financial institutions and distribution of wealth. Runaway inflation led to a fall in real wages for workers after 1917. Before the end of the war, rice riots rocked prefectural capitals and contributed to the resignation of the Terauchi cabinet. This domestic unrest distracted the nation from important issues of the approaching peace conference. Instead of building reserves, Japan expended wartime profits in inadequately secured loans to China, unredeemed bonds and outstanding munitions accounts to the czarist government amounting to \$129 million, and the fruitless Siberian Intervention. Japan was reminded of the fragility of its economic base and the vulnerability of the nation to unpredictable circumstances overseas.⁶ In this context the implications of the postwar order loomed all the more consequential for Japan. The public pronouncements of the American president gave scant indication of the concrete economic features of his program. The Fourteen Points, unveiled on 8 January 1918, vaguely referred to free navigation and the removal of economic barriers and seemed to threaten trade discrimination against nations not party to the total peace program. In response, some Japanese observers predicted the emergence of a closely integrated, worldwide economic system. Internationalists began to counsel that Japan assume a cooperative stance toward the postwar order of the powers to avoid exclusion from the global economic community. More

cynical commentators countered that the postwar world would be torn by a war of commerce rooted in white-yellow racial animosity and that any viable international system would itself serve as a tool for Anglo-Saxon exploitation.⁷

Japan saw the World War as an unprecedented opportunity to advance its standing among the powerful nations. International ranking was exceedingly important to the insecure and self-conscious Japanese, to whom powerhood seemed essential for national survival. Victory in 1905 over Russia accorded Japan titular recognition as a power, eighth among the “eight great powers.” The years since the Russo-Japanese War had witnessed further advances in Japanese armored capability. Whereas in 1905 Japan had depended on European dockyards for its first-class battleships, by 1919 Japan was building oil-fired dreadnoughts superior to those of every country except the United States.⁸ Nonetheless, Japan was made conscious in numerous insulting ways that material power did not grant commensurate status and convey admittance to the Euro-American club. In 1914 the mean protocol rank of Japanese ambassadors and ministers in the capitals of the world was fifteenth from the top. By 1920 Japan had ascended only to the twelfth position, still below such weaker states as Belgium, Argentina, Switzerland, and Denmark.⁹ Unabated racist opposition to Japanese immigration in Australia, Canada, and the United States signaled the unwillingness of Western peoples and governments to grant full substance to their recognition of Japan’s elevated position in the world.

Japan became a belligerent against Germany in August 1914 on the formal basis of its alliance with Great Britain. Japan’s attention immediately focused on German naval facilities and economic enterprises in China’s Shandong Peninsula. Since 1898, when Germany had leased Jiaozhou Bay and its port of Qingdao under threat of force, the German government had invested over 200 million marks in the development of the protectorate. The main harbor displayed berths, the latest loading equipment, rail facilities, and a sixteen-thousand-ton floating dry dock — one of the best in the world. Using Qingdao as a headquarters, private German investors had fanned out over Shandong Province, establishing banks, mining operations, industries, and a rail line that reached inland to Jinan. The German presence in Shandong was clearly the major foreign impediment to Japanese leadership in trade and investment in North China.

Governor Alfred Meyer-Waldeck, under orders from Berlin to defend Qingdao “to the bitter end,” ignored a Japanese ultimatum to surrender the protectorate to Japan. Japanese troops, aided in token by one British and half an Indian battalion, commenced a full-scale invasion on the north shore of the peninsula on 2 September. After two months of an overland trek and siege of the city, 60,000 invaders overwhelmed 4,000 stubborn German defenders. The total battle deaths for Japan numbered 415. Meanwhile Japanese, British, and Australian warships routed remnants of the Kaiser’s Asiatic fleet from the German Pacific islands. In

accordance with an agreement reached between the Japanese and British navies in October, Japan occupied the Marshalls, Marianas, Carolines, and Palau — those archipelagoes north of the equator. By December 1914 the war against Germany was effectively over in East Asia and the Pacific. The Qingdao and Pacific actions permanently destroyed German colonial aspirations in East Asia and marked a shift away from British paternalism in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. For Japan it was a clear case of minimum expenditure and maximum gain.¹⁰

In Shandong, Japanese entrepreneurs lost no time taking over existing German ventures and establishing new investments in salt production, rice processing, flour milling, canning, and spinning. By the end of 1918 some fifty Japanese joint-stock companies were established in Qingdao. Over Chinese protests, Japan placed the Qingdao-Jinan Railway under Japanese management, imported employees of the South Manchurian Railway to operate it, and more than doubled service before the war ended. By commanding this critical artery, Japan was able to control the economic pulse of Shandong Province. Japan's share of the total Chinese market rose from 20.4 to 36.3 percent between 1913 and 1919, while that of Britain fell from 16.5 to 9.5 percent, never to regain its prewar standing.¹¹

The British were realistic enough to recognize from the outset that Japan's readiness to declare belligerency signaled more than treaty compliance. With Foreign Minister Katō Takaaki (1860–1926) the most forceful member of the Ōkuma cabinet, Japan would capitalize upon the circumstances of the war to extend territorial control, secure its position in South Manchuria, and elevate its power in China and the Pacific — and in consequence better its competitive position vis-à-vis British commercial interests in China. Indeed Sir Edward Grey, foreign secretary, had limply attempted in mid-August to dissuade Japan from declaring war and acting as a full belligerent; but the need for naval assistance forced London to request Japanese help. The dilemma was poignantly felt by the foreign secretary, who reflected, "To explain to an ally that her help will be welcome, but that you hope it will not be made inconvenient, is a proceeding that is neither agreeable nor gracious."¹² Japan judiciously restricted its ground war to East Asia, spurning British requests — urged by the beleaguered Russians and French — that Japanese army divisions be dispatched to Europe. Japan became a party to the London Declaration in October 1915 only when assured that the commitment to a joint peace in no way implied the obligation to sacrifice its men in the European theater.¹³

The Yuan Shikai government in Beijing was alarmed at the extension of the war to Asia and fearful for China's territorial integrity. It implored the British to make the Qingdao operation a joint expedition and pressed unsuccessfully for an Anglo-Japanese promise to restore the leasehold to China. China proclaimed its neutrality and formally protested the entry of Japanese troops into areas of the Shandong Peninsula outside specified war zones.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the Japanese con-

gratulated themselves for ridding the Orient of the German menace to peace. Writing in the December 1914 issue of *Shin Nippon*, Premier Ōkuma declared that

we are engaged in a just war, chastening the outlaw enemy in accordance with our responsibility under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. We have taken up arms to maintain the peace of the Orient and at the same time to hasten the coming of peace for the whole world.¹⁵

Though militarily triumphant in its theater of the war, Japan did not keep abreast of the breathtaking advances in armament implemented in the World War's battlegrounds of Europe. In particular the Empire lagged behind Britain in armed air development and Germany in submarine technology, innovations that could give an enemy the deciding edge over Japan's warships and island defenses. Even before the United States announced its fleet expansion program, Japanese naval attachés returned from European posts alarmed that the relative strength of the Imperial Navy had declined since the opening of hostilities. Japanese arms and military training were known to be pre-1914 vintage.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Japan's wartime growth in heavy industry, its new overseas territories, and the shift to oil as a naval fuel exposed the Empire to greater strategic liabilities and demanded far-ranging supply systems. In 1918, Japan emerged from the Great War less secure militarily and more acutely sensitive to foreign pressures.

Intensely desiring to permanently secure former German economic rights and enterprises in Shandong and to formally annex the former German islands north of the equator, Japan launched bold diplomatic maneuvers to ensure success at the postwar peace conference. Engraved on the hearts of Foreign Ministry officials were bitter memories of the 1895 Triple Intervention, when a postwar power play by a coalition of European imperialists had forced Japan to retrocede territory seized in the Sino-Japanese War. In early 1917, Japan agreed to convoy allied shipping in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean in exchange for secret assurances from Britain, France, Russia, and Italy that they would support Tokyo's demands on the disposition of Shandong and the Pacific islands. Promises regarding Shandong were extracted from China itself twice during the war years. The first commitment to support Japan's claim was secured through threat of force in the Twenty-One Demands of 1915. The second, actually a reiteration of the 1915 pledge, was purchased by a twenty-million-yen loan to the warlord regime of Duan Qirui in Beijing in late September 1918. The latter accord, made less than four months before the peace conference and unbeknownst even to the plenipotentiary Wellington Koo before he reached Paris, would earn the Chinese government reproach in the eyes of its own people.¹⁷

One new phenomenon of global import that did not escape the attention of

Japan during the war years was the rising power and assertiveness of the United States. Like Japan, America experienced a wartime economic boom. The value of exports increased from \$2.8 billion in 1913 to \$7.3 billion in 1918. American capital displaced British predominance in investment in Canada and Latin America. The Woodrow Wilson administration in 1916 announced a naval expansion program to include 10 battleships, 6 battle cruisers, and 140 smaller vessels. In the minds of Naval Operations planners this package presupposed an enemy coalition of Germany, Austria, and Japan.¹⁸ The following year, President Wilson led his country out of its isolation and demonstrated America's capacity to deploy and supply two million troops a continent away. In the last eighteen months of the war, Japan's Pacific neighbor built up a first-rate fleet and was known to be capable of vastly greater naval development. The specter of American power caused no small stir in Japan. In 1918 such American schemes for East Asian stability as the joint Siberian Intervention and the new Four-Power Consortium introduced multilateral approaches to co-opt unilateral Japanese initiatives. In the latter scheme, Wilson revived a program initiated in the Taft administration by which banks from a group of nations would loan money to China to stabilize the republican regime. Britain, France, and Japan joined with Wall Street financiers in the consortium. Negotiations for the project took three years and were finalized in October 1920, but not before Japan obtained recognition of its "special position" in southern Manchuria.¹⁹ As Wilson looked ahead to the peace settlement, he was determined that America assume a political posture commensurate with its growing military and industrial strength. His multilateral approach to world order in Europe and Asia would achieve its fullest expression in the collective security mechanisms of the League of Nations Covenant.

Japan found its economic fate increasingly tied to American prosperity and goodwill. Trans-Pacific trade prospered, with exports to America multiplying threefold and imports fivefold during the war years. Nearly 40 percent of Japan's trade traversed sea-lanes patrolled by the United States Navy. Japanese investors seeking capital to invest in Shandong and Manchuria found London banks committed to financing England's war, and were forced to look increasingly to New York for loans. As Ambassador Roland S. Morris observed in 1918, this dependence created an appetite for improved Japanese-American relations:

There has been a growing feeling among the thinking classes of people, particularly among the business interests, that Japan's political and economic welfare depends primarily on her relations with the United States. . . . Since Baron Gotô became foreign minister, the Government's efforts to cultivate the United States have been even more marked than before.²⁰

On the other hand, Japanese strategists were rightfully uneasy about American commercial expansion in Asia and economic leverage over Japan. In 1917 the United States actually considered using the threat of an import quota on Japanese silk to secure the release of additional Japanese shipping for the Allies.²¹ Of particular concern to Japan was the free marketplace ideal, a reassertion of the Open Door doctrine by the Wilson administration. In Wilson's scheme a League of Nations would assure the elimination of trade barriers and spheres of exclusive economic interest. In an open, stable world the United States, by virtue of its economic power and moral leadership, would rise automatically to the top. The Japanese, hardly so sanguine concerning their own nation's capacity to survive in free competition with the Western powers, sought to reserve special privileges in neighboring regions of perceived vital interest.²²

In the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, Japan revised its national defense policy to posit the United States in place of Russia as its number one hypothetical enemy. The navy pressed for adoption of an eight-battleship, eight-battle-cruiser expansion program, which, as American analysts rightly observed, was aimed at countering U.S. naval strength.²³ Popular hostility toward America following the World War was described by Ambassador Morris as "surpassing any previous anti-foreign agitation in extent and bitterness." He attributed this negative turn to "the fundamental Japanese jealousy of America's growing strength and influence in the Far East — which is regarded as jeopardizing Japan's predominating position — and a lurking suspicion of America's sinister designs on Japan's national aspirations."²⁴ At the same time the Foreign Ministry, the business community, and the cabinets of Terauchi Masatake and Hara Takashi recognized the necessity that Japan maintain a cordial coexistence with the North American giant. The Lansing-Ishii notes of November 1917, negotiated by the American secretary of state and Japanese special ambassador Ishii Kikujiro, represent this impulse to accommodate. The notes recognized Japan's "special interests" in China.²⁵ Understanding with the United States was to Japanese leaders a matter of top diplomatic priority, determined in large part by economic realities.

The global trends surrounding the Great War are clear in historical hindsight. But not many Japanese at the time were conscious of the integration of Japan into world affairs. Government leaders were slow to realize the likelihood that any new power structure to emerge in the postwar settlement would assume global proportions and make demands upon Japan, Asia's foremost power. Like the public, which spoke of the "European War" (*Ōshū sensō*) and not a world war, Japanese elites tended to assume that the decisions to be made at the peace conference — except for the disposal of Germany's former territories in the East — would deal almost exclusively with European matters and not vitally affect Asia.

Idealism and Ideology

“In no previous war in the history of mankind has the world resounded with such humanitarian proclamations.”²⁶ These words by a *Jiji shinpō* correspondent in San Francisco describe the chorus of popular aspirations for peace and social justice heard during the First World War. This phenomenon may be partially attributed to widespread revulsion against the shocking scenario of unrestricted submarine attacks, dirigible bombings, and gas warfare that spread their pall over the European front. Voices the world over called for the establishment of national and global systems reflecting the high principles of humanism and democracy. Peace societies and liberal associations sprang up during the war and demanded popular government and a “new diplomacy” shorn of imperialism, secrecy, and power politics. In the West such movements involved a large number of politically influential persons and typically urged the creation of a society of nations to prevent the recurrence of war.

Moral expectations affected both the vocabulary and the content of World War I diplomacy. American president Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) was particularly adept at expressing the subjective interests of the United States in terms of the universal hopes of humankind. The presence of such issues as child labor standards and women’s rights on the agenda of the Paris Peace Conference reflected the extent to which human aspirations, as opposed to national demands, received attention at the highest levels of international deliberation. Chinese and Korean nationalists seized upon the mood of the hour to appeal for world sympathy in their struggles against Japanese imperialism. Ideology did not eradicate power as a factor in diplomacy, but it required new justifications for the use of force and successfully challenged a Machiavellian approach to relations between peoples.

The war-inspired longing for just and harmonious international relations provided fertile soil for such ideological diplomacies as Wilsonianism and Leninism to flourish and become the major competitors for fashioning a new world order. Both asserted their validity on the basis of abstract, universal values. Both claimed for their political and social orders universal applicability and, given the passage of time, universal practicability. The movements alike contended that they were propelled by an evolutionary momentum of history.

The Wilsonian world program was an attempt to inject the principles of American democracy into international relations. Woodrow Wilson’s goal was an open, rational, liberal-capitalist, status-quo order in which the United States would exercise moral leadership for the peace and prosperity of peoples everywhere.²⁷ As his ideas crystallized during the years of his academic and political careers, Wilson came to espouse several concepts fundamentally contrary to Japan’s national polity

and diplomatic practice. He embraced the Benthamite view that the modern state exists for the sake of the individual and the protection of the individual's rights. He pictured a universal social evolution from the prehistoric clan to the modern state in which popular sovereignty marked the maturation stage. Monarchy and aristocracy all over the world were gradually being displaced by democracy, he believed. In wartime pronouncements after 1917 the president called for open diplomacy, territorial sovereignty for all states, and national self-determination for all civilized peoples. Such practices in diplomacy as "private international understandings," military alliances, and the annexation of conquered territory were to be discontinued in the world order he envisioned.²⁸ On 4 July 1918 at Mount Vernon, he insisted on

the settlement of every question, whether of territory, or sovereignty, of economic arrangement, or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.²⁹

Moreover, multilateral approaches to stability and the settlement of disputes were to replace bilateral understandings and unilateral initiatives. The crude and anachronistic principle of balance of power would be retired, and in its place collective security, institutionalized in an organization of nations, would be established. Wilson's optimism was undergirded by his conviction, as a liberal Christian intellectual, that God was working out His will in human history. Even those of his generation who were not religiously inclined shared his hope that people everywhere could lay aside selfish interests, deal rationally with disagreements, and coexist without war. The international attention accorded Wilson's ideology can be attributed to its coincidence with both human sentiment and the emergence of the United States as a formidable world power.

Wilson's ideals were not readily applauded in monarchist Japan. There, 98 percent of the population was disfranchised and elites in society regarded political parties and labor unions as destructive to the harmony and collective good of the nation. The balance of power was a mainstay of Japanese security and the *raison d'être* of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. As measures of wartime policy, Japan relied upon alliances, secret treaties, and territorial aggrandizement to further its national destiny. Bilateral diplomacy had brought valuable concessions from China during the war. To some Japanese, Wilsonianism seemed designed to circumscribe Japan's legitimate national development and perpetuate the nation's secondary status.

Meanwhile, a political exile in Switzerland and revolutionary in his native

Russia was promoting a radical socialist program for a new international order. Bolshevik theorist Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924) emphasized the social and economic rather than the political causes of war and asserted that advanced capitalist states inevitably resort to imperialism to acquire outlets for their surplus products. He scorned the current conflict in Europe as a struggle between equally predatory capitalist powers for the division of the underdeveloped areas of the world. Any liberal attempt to rectify international relations that left prevailing socioeconomic structures intact would merely paper over the war-breeding “contradictions” within capitalist societies. Only socialist revolution could end imperialism, and Lenin believed that the world was on the verge of revolutionary upheaval.

Lenin’s challenge to the basic rationale of the Allied cause brought him into sharp conflict with Wilson’s ideology. The Bolshevik leader harbored contempt for democratic socialism and republican government, which he saw as benefiting the petty bourgeoisie and a small elite of privileged workers. His concept of revolution covered all colonized peoples as well as all workers in capitalist states — not merely those peoples subjugated by the central powers. He ridiculed Wilson’s proposals for disarmament, arbitration, and free trade as mere reformist palliatives. As for the League of Nations scheme, the Russian revolutionary saw the organization playing two possible roles, both reactionary. It could serve as an alliance against one or two other capitalist states (the central powers), or it could comprise a plot of major capitalist nations to strangle a newborn socialist state. Lenin advised socialists to back neither side in the war and to oppose Wilson’s peace program.³⁰

Japanese party politicians and Foreign Ministry officials, careful not to offend the United States or dissociate themselves from the entente, paid lip service abroad to Wilson’s principles. Uchida Yasuya, on his elevation to the office of foreign minister on 1 October 1918, cabled Secretary of State Robert Lansing to assure the United States of Japan’s commitment to “the work of securing an Allied victory which shall finally rid the world of menace and aggression.”³¹ However, a chary skepticism marked the reactions of Japanese political elites to both Wilsonian liberalism and Leninist anti-imperialism. Two factors conditioned this reaction: a cultural indifference to Western-style ideologies, and a cynical realism developed through historical experience. Most Japanese were satisfied to rationalize wartime policy in terms of tangible political, economic, and territorial goals. With a heritage of what one prominent international historian has labeled an “ideal-less” (*mushisō*) approach to foreign affairs,³² the nation evidenced little of the compulsiveness, so pervasive in America, to promote transcendent moral absolutes. The ideological content of Wilsonianism and Leninism appeared to most Japanese as irrelevant at best and hypocritical at worst. Stuck in the craw of Japan’s recent historical memory were unequal commercial treaties and the Triple Intervention, cases in which

the offending imperialist powers had professed altruistic motives. Japan's rugged experience in dealing with the West had taught the Japanese that power, not moral values or international law, dominated the contest of diplomacy. A nonideological orientation equipped Japan to detect the element of national self-interest that lurked within the pompous rhetoric of World War I statesmen and revolutionaries. At the same time, it incapacitated Japan from apprehending the intensity of the sentiments that swept the world in the wake of the Great War.

From the opening volley, Japan viewed the war from the standpoint of pragmatic self-interest. Neither the Anglo-Japanese Alliance nor the London Declaration prevented Japan from secretly discussing with Germany and Austria offers to recognize Japan's paramount position in East Asia in exchange for a separate German-Austrian peace with Russia and Japan. In parliamentary interpellations in the Diet, demands that the cabinet clearly associate itself with the goals proclaimed by entente statesmen met with evasive replies.³³ Japanese leaders shrewdly recognized that to promote the war as a contest of good and evil would rigidify domestic opinion — a truth that Woodrow Wilson never learned. National weakness required that Japan act prudently and dispassionately and keep all options open.

Privately dismissing the publicized ideas of Wilson and Lenin as the rhetoric of war and revolution, Japanese decision makers tended to probe below the level of ideology for the camouflaged power play. Caustic analysts portrayed the U.S. president's program as a purposeful guise for such base designs as economic imperialism and the imposition of the status quo on less developed nations. To Privy Councilor Itō Miyoji, Wilson's new battleships — not his orations on peace and justice — were the most reliable gauge of American intentions.³⁴ The October Revolution was seen as the work of a handful of professional agitators. Army vice-chief of staff and war minister Tanaka Giichi (1863–1929) construed the Bolsheviks' subsequent repudiation of wartime Russo-Japanese agreements as the cunning handiwork of disguised German agents. Revolutionaries, he believed, should be treated as power competitors, not ideologues.³⁵ Ideology, whether it issued from Washington or Moscow, was thus perceived as just another technique in the unrelenting contest of power.

Party Politics and Foreign Policy

The practice of government under the Meiji Constitution was characterized by unspecified channels of authority and an absence of unitary leadership. The process of policy making tended to change whenever the locus of political power shifted. The World War I period witnessed far-reaching political change as the aging *genrō* (senior statesmen) declined in vigor and a genuine party cabinet came to power for the first time in September 1918. The altered shape of political authority would

influence the style and content of Japanese diplomacy in the aftermath of the Great War. Party cabinets would oversee Japan's entry into the League of Nations and the nation's activity as a member of the League until the eve of its withdrawal in 1933. Even with the appearance of new actors on the political stage, foreign-policy decision making remained a pluralistic, cumbersome procedure involving intense rivalry between departments and factions.

The first structural move to give political parties a voice in foreign affairs came in June 1917, when the senior statesmen, backed by an Imperial decree, orchestrated the formation of the *Gaikō Chōsakai* (Advisory Council on Foreign Relations). The council was envisioned as a review board representing elite elements with a heavy stake in foreign affairs, with representation from the cabinet, the Foreign Ministry, the Privy Council, the services, and the political parties. *Seiyūkai* president Hara Takashi (1856–1921) and *Kokumintō* chief Inukai Tsuyoshi were accorded seats. While they were given the title of minister of state in order to dissociate their council appointments from their party identification, the intent of the *genrō* to bring the parties into the consensus formation process was clear. The council did succeed in enlarging elite input in foreign policy particularly during the Terauchi government's deliberation of the Siberian Intervention. After the Hara ministry replaced the Terauchi cabinet, the council declined in prestige and influence and was used by the cabinet mostly as a device to co-opt potential opposition.³⁶ During the months following the armistice, the *Gaikō Chōsakai* met every two weeks or so to evaluate Foreign Ministry proposals and monitor the progress of the peace conference. Its deliberations, chronicled in detail by Privy Councilor Itō Miyoji, portray steep hurdles in the laborious process of consensus formation on such issues as disarmament, the mandate system, and the League of Nations. Rivalry between the Foreign Ministry and the council is evident as well.³⁷ In its five years of existence the *Gaikō Chōsakai* succeeded in bending a few policies but initiated none. However, anticipated intransigence from the council may have had a subtle impact on the style and spirit of policy. The Foreign Ministry appears to have toned down its memoranda and couched its proposals in vague wording in order to gain the council's imprimatur.

Pragmatism as a mode of operation was particularly well suited to the party politicians of the Taishō period. The Hara cabinet's foreign minister, Uchida Yasuya (1865–1936), was known as *Gomuningyō* (Rubber Doll) because he could bend in any direction. When world trends appeared conciliatory, Uchida pursued cooperation with the powers. In a new study of Uchida, Rustin Gates describes him as a Meiji diplomat in the pragmatic mold of Mutsu Munemitsu and Komura Jutarō. His China policy was moderate, favoring deference to the interests of the powers and promotion of the Open Door. But he was more assertive when it came to Manchuria. When an unusual opportunity presented itself—as it had in the Russo-

Japanese War, when Uchida's mentors were at the helm of foreign policy — Japan should be bold to extend its imperial interests, by force if necessary. When Uchida again took up the foreign minister's portfolio in the midst of the Guandong Army's advances in Manchuria, he would press a hard line supporting the creation of Manchukuo. Prime Minister Hara likewise held no hard-and-fast conception of world order or Japan's role in international affairs. Rather, he was interested in ending up on the winning side of any conflict. Having risen to power through adroit application of the "politics of compromise," Hara displayed flexibility in building consensus at home and in adjusting to changing realities abroad. He was noticeably sensitive to public opinion. Desirous of the backing of the services and concerned that Japan secure the leading position in Asia, Hara favored increased army and navy strength. He cultivated a generally cordial relationship with his war minister, Tanaka Giichi. Eager to satisfy business interests, he sought to end international economic discrimination, which threatened, in his words, "to compel nations to commit national suicide." At the same time, he was conscious of the capacity of the United States and Great Britain to frustrate the elevation of Japan's international status. Pragmatic, Meiji-bred officials like Hara and Uchida were careful not to antagonize the great powers. The Seiyūkai government courted the Ei-Bei Ha (Anglo-American faction), a Foreign Ministry clique whose promotion of cordial relations with the powers coincided with the commercial interests of the Seiyūkai's corporate backers. Hara posited a policy of understanding with the first-class powers as the only sane way to achieve Japan's advancement and security.³⁸

Only a few *genrō*, the senior statesmen who had led Japan through reform and industrialization following the Meiji Restoration, lived to see the First World War. But no astute politician ignored the surviving elders. Foreign Minister Katō, of Twenty-One Demands notoriety, paid the price of removal from office for side-stepping their counsel. By the time the war ended, only two first-generation *genrō* — Yamagata Aritomo (1838–1922), age eighty, and Matsukata Masayoshi (1835–1924), age eighty-three — remained. From time to time they applied pressures to influence decisions and smooth the process of consensus formation. They were kept informed on key policy developments and diplomatic correspondence, and they generally advised political restraint and military preparedness. Their influence operated effectively through allies on the Gaikō Chōsakai and the Privy Council, of which Yamagata was president. The field marshal in particular maintained an active interest in foreign affairs. Throughout his long career Yamagata had accumulated a store of bitter experience with imperialist powers at a time when Japan was weak and at their mercy. What he feared most was isolation and the horrifying specter of a coalition of white nations poised against a yellow people. Prime Minister Hara's care to consult with Yamagata is evident in the selection of the peace conference delegation.³⁹

The possibility of pressure by the military upon foreign-policy making was a constant factor in Japanese politics. The military's interest in China diplomacy was particularly marked. Since the Russo-Japanese War the Imperial Army had competed with civilian agencies by sending its own agents to Beijing and Manchuria and interfering in the administration of the South Manchurian Railway. The army trained bright officers in Chinese language and affairs and set up information-gathering posts in China in parallel with the web of consulates under Foreign Ministry jurisdiction. Often the army's China experts were more able than those of the ministry. In 1916 the army took charge of a Japanese government-sponsored operation to thwart Yuan Shikai's scheme to become emperor. As warlords seized provincial authority after Yuan's timely death, contact with China's leaders became more and more the prerogative of the Japanese Army. By 1918 the army maintained attachés in Beijing, resident officers in major cities, and military advisers to principal warlords, each unit having its own intelligence-gathering apparatus. The Foreign Ministry was irritated by these inroads into its authority and resented intrigues by army and navy officers in support of dubious adventures in China and Siberia.⁴⁰ Foreign policy in the main issued from the ministry. But on certain key issues — the retention of Qingdao and the Pacific islands, the anticonscription and disarmament clauses of the League of Nations Covenant — the services made their desires felt. The knowledge that to provoke the army and navy could ignite a political crisis was continually present in the minds of policy makers.⁴¹

An elitist concept of government and the delicacy of the consensus formation process led to a near obsession with secrecy. Insofar as possible, both the Diet and the general public were deprived of information while diplomatic policies were formulated. Since 1909 the foreign minister had delivered an annual address on foreign affairs to both houses of the Diet, and a significant part of the premier's address was devoted to foreign policy. On the potentially controversial diplomatic issues of the war years, however, the leaders' speeches were vague and noncommittal, giving rise in the press to charges of "clandestine and silent politics."⁴² The customary Diet interpellation that followed such addresses could, if skillfully orchestrated, stir public sentiment and cause cleavages within the government. The Diet had no formal function in approving treaties, which were deliberated by the Privy Council and ratified by the Emperor. Even though the defined role of the public in foreign-policy making was marginal, the memory of the 1905 riots that greeted the Portsmouth Peace Treaty prompted policy makers to be prudent and formulate programs in which the public could at least acquiesce.⁴³

The bureaucrats who rose to leadership in the Foreign Ministry near the close of the war were men of able pedigree. Viscount Uchida had previous experience as foreign minister in the second Saionji cabinet (1911–1912) and had served as minister to China and ambassador to the United States. His wife had studied at Bryn

Mawr College. Recently posted as special ambassador to Petrograd, Uchida was said to possess a firsthand understanding of the revolutionary situation in Russia.⁴⁴ Vice-minister since 1915 was Shidehara Kijūrō (1872–1951), who had been serving as minister to the Netherlands when the war broke out. Shidehara would become ambassador to the United States in 1919, foreign minister after 1924, and premier for seven months during the post-Pacific War occupation. So comfortable was he in the English language that he prepared the initial drafts of his speeches and cables in the foreign tongue. The Shidehara name came to symbolize the conciliatory foreign policy of the 1920s. The chief of the influential Political Affairs Bureau (Seimukyoku), Hanihara Shokan, had served as ambassador to Washington in 1910–1911 and would again take up the post in 1923–1924, the time when Congress legislated Oriental exclusion. The leadership of these officials is evidence of the ascendancy of the Ei-Bei Ha. In 1918–1919, the Anglo-American faction also claimed within its ranks Chinda Sutemi, ambassador to London, and leading Paris Peace Conference spokesman Makino Nobuaki. This clique dominated Japanese foreign policy between World War I and the Manchurian Incident, a period in which the domestic and international environment was supportive of accommodation with the West. As a group, ministry officials were persons of extensive experience abroad. Mainstream Kasumigaseki diplomacy was capable of grasping world trends and conceiving a role for Japan outside the regional confines of East Asia.⁴⁵

Once a policy proposal emerged from the Foreign Ministry, it was subjected to a lengthy consensus-formation process to accommodate political elements outside the ranks of professional diplomacy. The *genrō*, the ministers of war and the navy, and high officials in potentially affected ministries had to be consulted. The service ministries' approval or acquiescence was important because of the "right of supreme command," the special access to the Emperor that the army and the navy enjoyed by virtue of the Meiji Constitution's designation of the sovereign as supreme commander. Political opposition was preempted by soliciting potential critics' advice and allowing predictable opponents to let off steam. At this point the sanction of some deliberative body—the Gaikō Chōsakai in the World War I era—was sought. Nondiplomats usually restricted their comments to the area of their expertise, and rarely did freewheeling debate or substantial policy alterations take place at this stage. Important documents, such as initial instructions to conference plenipotentiaries, acquired final authority by cabinet approval and Imperial sanction. In the case of a treaty, a final round of consensus formation and sanction took place when the signed accord was brought home. Following deliberation and approval by the Privy Council, the cabinet petitioned the Emperor for ratification.⁴⁶

The priority on consensus and the reliance on informal procedures had several important consequences for the style and effectiveness of Japanese diplomacy. The

necessity of forming a broad domestic coalition tended to produce policy documents and diplomatic instructions that were lowest-common-denominator statements. Chief conference delegates were chosen primarily for their political ability to carry the outcome at home and secondarily for their diplomatic expertise. The cumbersomeness of the process prevented rapid decisions and sudden shifts in policy, while the system's delicacy required thoroughgoing secrecy. The predominance of informal processes over prescribed channels led to a heavy reliance on behind-the-scenes maneuvering.

All these circumstances were at work as the nation approached the end of the Great War. Fortunately for Japan, the inertia of the policy-making system was somewhat offset by the savvy of leading political and diplomatic actors. Effective adjustment to the postwar order required a masterful politician, Hara Takashi, at home and a resourceful diplomat, Makino Nobuaki, in Paris.

Diplomatic Isolation from the Powers

Japan's right to economic penetration and political influence on the continent of Asia had been a major tenet of Japanese diplomatic orthodoxy ever since the middle of the Meiji period. In an 1890 document Japan's first prime minister under the Meiji Constitution, Yamagata Aritomo, had counseled that a strategic "line of advantage" must extend beyond the perimeter of the nation's boundaries of sovereignty. The vastness of Manchuria and eastern Siberia lured the island empire in search of raw materials and a safety valve for its growing population. All the rationalizations of social Darwinism and Manifest Destiny that had operated in American expansionism had their counterparts among the Japanese, who sought to impose the blessings of the Meiji experience upon unenlightened, politically chaotic societies on the continent. The uplifting of Asia was also linked in Japanese minds to the challenge of Japan's survival in the face of non-Asiatic predators. Picturing Japan as "the bell to awaken Asia," *Kokumin shinbun* editor Tokutomi Sohō (1863–1957) admonished his countrymen in the spring of 1918: "Japan is destined to help and to guide the vast population of this large territory. Should Japan shirk this task, ruin may come to Asia — Asia will no longer be Asia for Asiatics. In such an event Japan might remain Japan for Japanese, but its position will become precarious."⁴⁷ Apologists for a positive continental policy pictured Manchuria as a "lifeline" to be secured and China as a partner in a "unique intimacy" based on racial identity, cultural affinity, and territorial propinquity.⁴⁸

Expansionist assumptions were not the exclusive predilection of right-wing journalists and militarists in Japan. Foreign Minister Uchida argued that territorial expansion was not to be mistaken for aggression, and cited America's seizure of the Philippines in vindication of the former. Makino Nobuaki, widely reputed

as an internationalist and a moderate, affirmed territorial expansion as a foreign policy goal when he was pressed for an opinion before the Gaikō Chōsakai. Even social democrat Yoshino Sakuzō, who had taught in Tianjin from 1906 to 1909, defended the Twenty-One Demands, including the notorious Group V, as “measures extremely appropriate” for the future advancement of Japan in China.⁴⁹ Justifications of Japanese designs on the mainland were also heard in prominent circles overseas. Viscount Edward Grey, British foreign secretary until 1916 and League of Nations promoter, held the view that if Japanese immigrants were to be excluded from North America, Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific islands, Japan could not be forbidden to expand in China.⁵⁰ The British ambassador to Beijing, Sir John Jordan, in a secret memorandum to the Foreign Office on the eve of the postwar conference, was likewise willing to acquiesce in the growth of Japanese influence on the continent so long as it conformed to the mores of “respectable” imperialism:

The events of the past four years have added materially to the economic strength and the imperial ambitions of Japan. Owing to a poverty of internal resources those ambitions can only be fulfilled by an expansion of interest in the productive area of China. The desire for such expansion is natural and legitimate and, so long as it is pursued in accordance with an accepted code it could meet with no opposition. Geographical propinquity, a common written language, and the suitability of her industrial achievements to the needs of China, provide for Japan a favored place in the field of open competition.⁵¹

Expansionist inclinations placed aspiring middle powers like Japan and Italy in a unique position among the powers in the period of the Great War and the years that followed. Their national hegemonic aspirations could not be realized within the bounds of the territorial status quo and led them to press the limits of diplomatic propriety.

The “respectable” imperialism, urged by Ambassador Jordan above, was understood in Japan to mean the pursuit of hegemonic goals by means that avoided open confrontation among the powers. It was a posture fraught with contradictions and hypocrisy. It presumed that the interests of the powers superseded those of weaker and subjected peoples. Mainstream political elites envisioned a slow, incremental extension of concrete Japanese interests. Overt political or military offensives should be pursued only when an extremely compelling opportunity presented itself. Japan should support the forces of order in China, refrain from outright interference in that country’s domestic politics, and give evidence of respect for Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity. The model of the Wilson administration’s recent dealing with its underdeveloped neighbor, Mexico, appealed to

Japanese leaders. Gotō Shinpei, an admirer of Theodore Roosevelt's who served briefly as foreign minister in 1918, cited America's Mexico policy as

the only way to handle China. . . . The Wilson policy of helping the Mexicans to help themselves by picking out the strongest men in that country and supporting them liberally is now amply vindicated. The latest agreement between the United States and Carranza is evidence of this. Japan must pursue the same tactics with China.⁵²

Since Japanese prosperity depended increasingly on trade with the United States, Japan should avoid arousing the suspicions of its Pacific neighbor regarding its aims in China. In short, there should be no Japanese-Western confrontation over China.

The unforeseen and unusually advantageous circumstances presented by the European war and the Russian Revolution lured the Ōkuma and Terauchi cabinets into opportunistic adventurism on the continent in defiance of diplomatic propriety and conventional restraints. The heaviest penalty Japan incurred was the attitude of distrust among the Chinese populace and the powers. When the war ended, the Chinese took to the streets in defense of China's national self-determination. Among foreign diplomats the Americans were particularly bitter in their condemnation of Japan. Forgetful of recent history in the Philippines and contemporary affairs in Mexico, Roland S. Morris, ambassador to Tokyo, fumed that "the Japanese are so egotistic that they do not regard their policies aggressive or their national aspirations incompatible with the interests of other nations." Paul S. Reinsch, ambassador to China, depicted Japanese behavior in China as "sinister," "unconscionably ruthless and underhanded," and bereft of "every idea of fair play."⁵³

The episode most deleterious to Japan's relationship to the powers was the often-described Twenty-One Demands of 1915. After receiving a Japanese ultimatum, China acquiesced in the majority of Japanese demands for expanded economic and strategic privileges on the mainland. The notorious Group V, which provided for the appointment of Japanese political, financial, and military advisers and the establishment of a joint police force, was dropped by Japan in deference to adverse opinion at home and abroad. Chinese acquiescence in Group V would have seriously compromised China's sovereignty and reduced the republic to virtual semicolonial status. Japanese publicists exonerated the demands as bitter medicine proffered by a virtuous mother to a sick, protesting child, and pointed out that the 245 Japanese advisers then serving the Yuan Shikai government were dwarfed by the 1,105 English and 1,003 French employees in similar positions.⁵⁴ Indeed, Frederick R. Dickinson in his work on Japan and the Great War views the demands as commensurate with conventional foreign pressures on China by Japan

and Britain in the past. But the Asia of the World War I years was in transition. Nationalistic self-esteem and antiforeignism were spreading rapidly and erupted during the peace conference on 1 March 1919 in anticolonial demonstrations in Seoul. In China the Twenty-One Demands were one cause célèbre that evoked the mass movements of May Fourth. European powers, seeing their interests placed in jeopardy by Japanese aggressiveness, were uneasy and resentful. Ambassador Jordan summed up the international consequences of Japan's wartime continental adventurism: "Her ends have been accomplished by such vigorous and unusual methods that the torpid polity of China has been stirred from its traditional inertia, and the political and commercial interests of other nations have reflected a growing sense of insecurity."⁵⁵

Painfully aware that the Twenty-One Demands had alienated the Chinese public and evoked suspicions among the powers, the *genrō* tried to repair the damage done by the Ōkuma government. A new cabinet headed by General Terauchi Masatake, a Yamagata protégé, forsook the frontal assault when it took office in October 1916. Tokyo shifted its offensive to yen diplomacy and extended secret loans amounting to 145 million yen on generous terms to the Beijing regime of Duan Qirui in 1917 and 1918.⁵⁶ Foreign Minister Motono Ichirō surprised the powers in February 1917 by dropping his government's previous opposition to Chinese belligerency and urging China to declare war on the central powers.⁵⁷ Policy discussions in the Terauchi and Hara governments show a self-conscious abandonment of the positive China policy of the early war years. Hara sought to diminish Japan's diplomatic isolation over China by cooperating in the Four-Power Consortium. By restoring China's trust, Japan planned to ease the postwar settlement. The desired course was a bilateral resolution of the Shandong question through quiet negotiations, economic inducements, and secret agreements. With Sino-Japanese neighborliness in good repair, Japan would march hand in hand with China to the peace conference to press the common causes of racial equality and relief from Western penetration in Asia. Sino-Japanese tranquillity would help convince the Western powers that Japan's claim to regional leadership was appropriate.⁵⁸

With strong American backing, China declared war on Germany on 14 August 1917. The European Allies had staved off Chinese entry since 1915, not wanting to alienate Japan. Chinese laborers, hired and transported under private contract, had been a significant presence on the French and Russian fronts since 1916, but soldiers from China saw no action in the war even after the declaration. The Chinese aim was to secure representation at the postwar peace conference and there to seek full restoration of Shandong to China and abrogation of Japanese gains in the Twenty-One Demands. Rather than acting in common cause with Japan as Japanese policy makers had hoped, China presented independent demands at the negotiating table in Paris. Xu Guoqi, historian of China and the Great War, sees

the war and its aftermath as a defining moment in the twentieth-century history of the young republic. China stood up, claimed equal membership among the nations of the world, and asserted a new national and international identity. The leading Chinese intellectual of the time, Liang Qichao, saw joining in the war as a once-in-a-thousand-years opportunity to recover international sovereignty and gain entrée into a restructured world community.⁵⁹ China's diplomacy failed in the short run, as it was granted only minor-nation status at the conference. Japan's net of secret treaties kept Qingdao under Japanese lease for the time being, and the Twenty-One Demands were not overturned. But Japanese opportunistic actions toward China during the Great War contributed significantly in the congealing of Chinese national consciousness, and in implanting an anti-Japanese element in Chinese national identity — an element that persists into the twenty-first century. China at Paris would embrace the League of Nations scheme and a decade later would seek League protection from Japanese incursion.

The revolutions in Russia in 1917 undid some of the most important achievements of Japan's World War I diplomacy. Among the casualties were 255 million yen in unredeemed czarist bonds and the Russo-Japanese secret agreements of 1916 and 1917.⁶⁰ Treaties exposed and abrogated by the Bolsheviks included a Russo-Japanese Alliance and a pledge, extracted from a czar in desperate need of munitions, to support Japan's territorial demands at the peace conference. Also lost was a 1912 secret convention delineating Japanese and Russian spheres in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. The sudden collapse of understanding with Russia was a severe blow to Yamagata Aritomo, who had been the major advocate of entente with Russia. Japanese elites also shuddered at the specter of another venerated monarchy brought low. The success of the Bolshevik cause gave rise to widespread fear of German hegemony in Siberia, for Japanese shared with Britons and Americans the widespread misperception of the Russian revolutionaries as disguised German agents. Popular journals in Japan painted a lurid picture of the menace of German submarines moored at Vladivostok and zeppelins based at Harbin.⁶¹ The army engineered the May 1918 signing of secret Sino-Japanese military and naval agreements for joint defense against "the gradual extension of enemy influence toward the east." These accords gave the Japanese Army freedom to operate in any Chinese territory adjacent to Russia and paved the way for the Siberian expedition.⁶²

The power vacuum created in Siberia by the fall of the czarist and provisional governments presented Japan with a golden opportunity to detach the eastern provinces from Muscovite control, create a new sphere of Japanese influence, and displace the Russian presence in northern Manchuria. Japanese moderates succeeded in requiring that the expedition be an allied venture, but Japan's overzealous troop commitment and reluctance to withdraw at the end of the World War are well documented.⁶³ Japan's autonomous adventurism under the guise of a joint

incursion increased the store of suspicion toward Tokyo in the minds of Western leaders. Secretary of State Lansing charged that Japan's excesses constituted "a definite departure from expressed understanding for cooperation between Japan and the United States, quite unwarranted by any necessity."⁶⁴ Just as deleterious to Japan's postwar diplomacy was the disruption the Siberian crisis created in Japanese domestic politics. An acrid policy debate absorbed an inordinate amount of the time and energy of the cabinet and Foreign Ministry. It brought down Foreign Minister Motono in April 1918 and fouled consensus formation within the Terauchi government on urgent domestic and foreign matters. By the time order returned to the decision-making process under Prime Minister Hara, the armistice was at hand. Japan was caught with homework undone on critical issues of the postwar settlement.

Japan's diplomatic isolation, attributed to aggressiveness in the Twenty-One Demands and the Siberian Intervention, was exacerbated by pervasive suspicion among the entente that Japanese sympathies lay with the central powers. Japanese media criticism of entente war aims and exonerations of the German cause irritated many foreign residents in Japan. Admiration for German martial spirit and the Prussian fighting machine had been strong among Japanese army officers since the time of the Franco-Prussian War. This esteem would survive Germany's rout in 1918, a defeat Japanese Germanophiles attributed to political and economic disorder. Esteem for Germany as a model nation-state was not a unique Japanese propensity. Regional and national armies in China had looked up to German organization and tactics. When the war opened in Europe, some Chinese writers predicted a German victory based on Germany's superior social structure, military skill, and citizen unity.⁶⁵

Entente leaders were aware of secret Japanese-German exploratory talks in Beijing, Stockholm, and Tianjin concerning a bilateral settlement. Germany took the initiative in these probes, Japan made no concessions, and Tokyo carefully kept London informed; but Japan's willingness to explore independent options appeared to be a violation of the spirit of the London Declaration, in which the Allies disallowed any separate peace.⁶⁶ In early 1917, Japan sold gunboats and cannon to the Carranza government in Mexico over the protests of the U.S. State Department. This alleged meddling in Mexican unrest raised apprehensions among American officials that Japanese opportunism extended to the Western Hemisphere. The disclosure of the Zimmermann note in the American press a few weeks later brought Japan under grave suspicion of collusion with Germany in Mexico. Even though Japan issued emphatic denials, the public throughout the world was predisposed to believe the worst about Japan.⁶⁷ Indiscreet public statements by Japanese officials stirred entente concerns. In the spring of 1918 Prime Minister Terauchi was quoted in an American magazine as saying, "if the exigencies of the international relation-

ship demand it, Japan . . . may be induced to seek an ally in Germany.” There were indeed some Japanese who lamented that such a course of action had not been followed in 1914.⁶⁸ By the end of the war, enough evidence of infidelity in deed and spirit had accumulated to evoke widespread allegations among the entente that Japan, while a cobelligerent, was an ally in name only.

Suspicion operated in the opposite direction as well. In the minds of many Japanese there was growing uncertainty concerning the dependability of Japan’s Euro-American allies. During the war the United States and Britain, without first consulting Japan, made important diplomatic moves affecting vital Japanese interests in East Asia. Before Japan had settled the disposition of Shandong with China, the powers had urged China to enter the war against Germany. Chinese belligerency would give China a voice in the matter at the peace table. The Japanese popular press played on fears of entente betrayal by suggesting that Japan’s allies might conclude a negotiated settlement with the Kaiser in which Japan would be stripped of Shandong and the Pacific islands and Germany would be accorded a free hand in Russia and Siberia. Other commentators criticized Britain for unilaterally landing troops at Vladivostok in April 1918.⁶⁹ The most unsettling factor in Japan’s relationship to the powers was instability in the system of formal bilateral alliances. The victorious Bolsheviks fully abrogated the 1916 Russo-Japanese Alliance. As early as August 1915, Japanese diplomats in London reported British opinion that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had served its purpose. After the Twenty-One Demands the pact had come to be viewed in the United Kingdom less as an instrument of common cause and more as a leash to restrain Japan’s continental policy. Ambassador Sir Conyngham Greene in Tokyo accurately predicted that postwar changes in the system of international relations would make the alliance obsolete and provide a convenient out for his country:

The proposed League of Nations will . . . create a new situation in regard to the whole question of Alliances, and enable [Britain] to merge the Anglo-Japanese Alliance — which I venture to think has lived its day and done its great work — in such a League. This new solution would make it easy for us to give our old friend — the Alliance — a decent burial without hurting Japanese susceptibilities.⁷⁰

Knowledgeable Japanese questioned whether vital Japanese interests should be made subject to decisions by any international body dominated by the self-seeking Western powers.

The instability of Japan’s alliance diplomacy was but another symptom of the nation’s diplomatic isolation. In the past, Japan had rejected multilateral ententes. Now the powers, led by the United States, were about to impose the concept of

multilateralism as the framework for international security and economic development. This movement would bring about the Four-Power Consortium, the League of Nations, and the Four-Power Treaty of 1922 and lay the Anglo-Japanese Alliance permanently to rest. Conscious of its position as a secondary power and a racial minority, Japan would face this new world order with trepidation.

Internationalist Thought

The dire state of diplomatic isolation made the repair of Japan's image abroad a matter of vital concern to all thoughtful Japanese. Consciousness of Japan's predicament gave rise, by the war's end, to a surge in internationalist thinking. The ascendancy of internationalism was evident in the press and in pronouncements by new liberal societies and was reflected in government policy in the postwar period. Internationalists argued that Japan's interests could be best secured if the nation expanded its international role beyond the confines of the East Asian subsystem and played an active part in global affairs. As determinants of policy Japan should balance regional concerns with worldwide trends, and national self-interest with the collective benefit of humanity. In short, internationalists promoted a consciousness of "Japan in the world" — a phrase used repeatedly by Saionji Kinmochi. To most Japanese, "internationalism" in the World War I period was undoubtedly mixed with a pragmatic quest for more acceptable and effective means to achieve goals that were nationally self-serving. But there were some whose global and humanitarian impulses were genuine. Among them were such men of exceptionally broad international experience as Saionji, Nitobe Inazō, Shibusawa Eiichi, and Ishibashi Tanzan.

It is important to note the realism component in Japanese internationalism. In her seminal study of the Institute of Pacific Relations, Tomoko Akami deeply probes the content of internationalist thinking in Japan. She notes that internationalists were well aware of the compromises that were made at the Paris Peace Conference in the transition from the League of Nations as an idealistic concept to a workable entity. To distinguish them from Wilsonian idealists, she employs the label "post-League internationalists." They believed that a healthy internationalism was based on the nation-state, and any analysis that places Japanese nationalists and internationalists in separate camps is artificial. They were not globalists and rarely indulged in cosmopolitanism or the world federation movement.⁷¹ Acutely sensitive to the insecurity of Japan as a late-arriving, non-Western power in a world dominated by Western imperial states, internationalists affirmed measures to establish Japan's power position in East Asia, including the colonization of Taiwan and Korea and the extension, preferably by nonviolent means, of Japanese economic and political influence in China. Many of them discounted Chinese nationalism and believed that some form of Japanese tutelage of China was required to

enable stability and development on the continent and, in turn, protect the future of the Japanese state.

The liberal intellectuals of the “Taishō democracy” movement were the first to stir public interest in a new world order. This school of thought, which reached its peak in 1919, was stirring popular support for such causes as universal male suffrage, recognition of labor unions, and reduction of arms expenditures. When John Dewey visited the country in 1919, he wrote home that “the cause of liberalism in Japan has taken a mighty forward leap—so mighty as to be almost unbelievable.” When Taishō democrats heard the liberal declarations of Allied leaders, they seized upon world trends as a way to prod change in Japan. Kenseikai Dietman Ozaki Yukio (1859–1954), a promoter of universal male suffrage, warned when the peace conference opened that the coming League would admit only democratic governments. Japan, with a minuscule electorate, would certainly be excluded and relegated to “isolation from all the civilized sections of the world.”⁷² The central figure of Taishō democracy was Yoshino Sakuzō (1878–1933). A Tokyo University professor of political history and theory, Yoshino was a formidable exponent of social democratic thought, a tireless organizer of liberal societies, and a prolific contributor to leading journals of the day. Apparently repentant of his earlier vindication of the Twenty-One Demands, he called for a redirection of Japan’s foreign policy and democratizing reforms at home, which would enable “a special mission for Japan on the world stage” to lead nations to greater freedom and cultural progress. He warned that Japan could not afford to risk isolation from emerging global political and economic systems.⁷³

Despite their enthusiasm, Taishō democracy intellectuals had a limited following, were adverse to political organizing, and had no direct influence on government policy. Political elites’ endorsement of internationalism was usually more guarded and qualified. “Internationalism is as inevitable as gravitation,” opined Prime Minister Hara, but “the road to a sound internationalism lies through a healthy nationalism.”⁷⁴ But more consequential than Hara’s verbal equivocation were his deeds: under his leadership Japan cooperated in the Four-Power Consortium, joined the League of Nations, and prepared for disarmament at the Washington Conference.

A term ubiquitous in the rhetoric of Japanese internationalism is *taisei junnō* (conformity to world trends).⁷⁵ The concept of international accommodationism had occupied a prominent place in the history of Japanese diplomacy since the Meiji Restoration, but it was particularly conspicuous in diplomatic documents of the World War I settlement. The Japanese envoys to Paris were formally instructed by the Foreign Ministry to act “in unison with the Allies in accordance with general world trends” on such questions as secret diplomacy, freedom of the seas, and disarmament. The delegation defended its acquiescence to the British-proposed mandate system by explaining that America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa were

disposed to accept the plan. The Privy Council advised ratification of the Versailles Treaty in a formal report to the Emperor that repeatedly stressed the advisability of conformity to world trends. Outside official circles, Professor Yoshino and labor organizer Suzuki Bunji campaigned for Japan to fall in step with global developments. Even one so distrustful of the motives of the Western powers as Itō Miyoji warned of the risk of standing alone. After Versailles, War and Navy Ministry research reports on arms limitation were replete with the thinking and language of *taisei junnō*. They advised that Japanese League of Nations representatives, within prudent limits, conform to the trends of League disarmament talks.⁷⁶ That Japan at this stage of its development should eschew autonomy and acquiesce in the world program of the powers was a shared assumption that set the direction of Japan's positive adjustment to the post-World War I international order. That nation's perception of the diplomatic distance between itself and the powers would evoke grave fears concerning the fate of Japanese interests within the League of Nations. But the deeper fear of being left on the periphery would compel Japan to join.

The Specter of the Postwar World

During the latter part of the war, political figures speculated about the shape of the postwar world and the problems it would pose for Japan. The nation's diplomatic behavior in the postwar settlement was in large part a product of these perceptions. The visions of Katō Takaaki, Yamagata Aritomo, and Gotō Shinpei reflect apprehensions widely held among political elites.

Katō, ambassador to London for many years and four-time foreign minister, was known as a solid Anglophile. Now Kenseikai leader in the Diet, he voiced his thoughts in a June 1917 essay in *Chūō kōron* (Central review) entitled "The European Hostilities and Japan's Position in the World." He acknowledged the war's benefits to Japan. It had provided the satisfaction of retaliation against one of the culprits of the Triple Intervention and had raised the world standing of Japan to no small degree. However, Japan's power was overrated in view of the "gulf still existing between its standard of efficiency and that of other nations." The Japanese had to carry the momentum of their wartime gains over into the postwar period so as to "secure the permanent independence, peace, and prosperity of their country." Katō predicted that Japan would have several years of advantage before the exhausted European belligerents regained their military and financial strength. However, Japan could expect the powers to pursue economic recovery by renewing their commercial activity in China as soon as the fighting ceased. To maintain its wartime advances, Japan must maintain the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and exert the level of energy that in the Meiji period had brought about treaty revision and victory over China and Russia.⁷⁷

Genrō Yamagata went beyond Katō's prediction of commercial rivalry to envis-

age racial and even military confrontation with the West. Knowing that Japan was a weak nation that could never stand up militarily to a concert of hostile powers, the Chōshū oligarch throughout his long military and political career had urged prudence in foreign policy. Earlier in the war his memoranda had revealed a man nearly obsessed with fear of a racially motivated, anti-Japanese cabal. He pictured the war in Europe as a final conflict among nations of the white race, to be followed by a racial war between white and yellow coalitions. His dogged effort for a Russo-Japanese alliance was in part motivated by the desire to prevent the formation of a white, anti-yellow bloc.⁷⁸ By the spring of 1918, when he wrote another memorandum on the world situation, his Russo-Japanese Alliance had been dashed and his prognosis was even more dour. He warned that the scale of the world had shrunk and the avariciousness of the powers regarding Asia was whetted. No matter who won the war, Japan's position would be precarious. If the entente triumphed, Great Britain would renew its economic thrust toward China from South Asia. If Germany prevailed, its influence would spread down from Siberia. In either case the United States would team up with the winner in the exploitation of China, whose sole protector was Japan. The apostle of *realpolitik* chided the Japanese public for indulging in the utopian dream of eternal peace and asserted that nations make war to extend their interests and not to promote idealistic principles. He admonished Japanese leaders that "national independence must be defended primarily by power, without which treaties are meaningless." The greatest danger to the Empire was fraternization among the powers. Japan's survival rested upon military preparedness and a balance of antagonisms in the West.⁷⁹

Like Yamagata, Baron Gotō Shinpei (1857–1929) was no idealist. Gotō was a physician-turned-politician who had been active in Manchurian relations and colonial affairs in Taiwan, serving as president of the South Manchurian Railway following the Russo-Japanese War. A person of broad vision and a studied pan-Asianist, he promoted the formation of a Japan-led "Far Eastern Economic Union" on the model of the powerful Pan-German League. Gotō was an admirer of American expansionists and was known in the Diet as *wasei Rūzuberuto* — "Roosevelt made in Japan."⁸⁰ Gotō shared Yamagata's bogey of racial isolation. In a June 1916 pamphlet he warned that

the racial prejudice of the white races is so strong that even when they make an offensive and defensive alliance with a yellow race they cannot divest themselves of the prejudice. Regardless of the fact that the two races are fighting shoulder to shoulder in this great war, if you probe their feelings you will find that the white races are displeased at the participation of the yellow races.⁸¹

Gotō was home minister and a member of the Gaikō Chōsakai when he addressed a memorandum to Prime Minister Terauchi in March 1918, in which he revealed

his anxiety that sinister designs underlay the international agenda of Woodrow Wilson. America's postwar program, he asserted, "is nothing more than one massive hypocritical monster wed to moralistic aggression and veiled in justice and humanism." American ideology, though it went by the name of democracy, was essentially the same as German militarism and could bring about a genuine world war. He predicted that America's "moralistic aggression" would flood into Asia as soon as the present war terminated and threaten Japan's unique democracy based on Imperial polity. To prepare for the postwar predator, he recommended that Japan improve its image on the continent through vigorous relief efforts and institute press censorship and measures to foster martial spirit at home.⁸²

These visions of the future reveal significant common assumptions. The Great War offered Japan an unprecedented yet temporary opportunity to strengthen itself and secure the friendship of the peoples of Asia. It was not a local European war but one with vast consequences for Japan. It had created circumstances — economic hardship in Europe and an aggressive mentality in America — that would turn East Asia into a field for ruthless exploitation by the Western powers once the fighting in the West stopped. In short, heightened competition and aggression, not peace, would follow in the wake of the war. In the face of this specter, Japan stood in diplomatic and racial isolation with no spiritual ally but China to withstand a potential coalition of white powers.

The years 1914–1918 had given impetus to a growing awareness on the part of Japanese that the world was shrinking. Events and ideological movements a continent away could affect Japan's vital interests. If the powers pursued global solutions to issues of war and peace, Japan would have no choice but to cooperate with them and be a participant in world order. At the same time, there was widespread pessimism over whether the world order taking shape was hospitable to Japan's legitimate national aspirations. Japanese apprehension was compounded by the many imponderables of 1918. Without the advantage of a half century of hindsight, Japan had no assurance that Bolsheviks were not German agents and that the British presence in East Asia was in a state of permanent decline. Japanese leaders could not foresee that antifooreign nationalism in China was more than a passing phenomenon. Japan had no way of knowing whether Wilson's diplomatic principles would achieve lasting acceptance and his League of Nations become a reality. Hence Japan approached the peace conference with an eye to securing those tangible assets within its grasp.

2

The Idea of a League

I shrank from the faces and forms by which I was surrounded. They were all fixed faces, full not of possibilities but of impossibilities.

—C. S. Lewis

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS movement in the West was spawned by the dream of lasting peace and the realization that international law was unenforceable by any mechanism then in existence. The League idea entered Anglo-American diplomatic correspondence as early as September 1914. Within a year the term “League of Nations” was in general use by the newly founded League to Enforce Peace (LEP) in the United States and the League of Nations Society in Britain. Lesser League movements were organized in France and Scandinavia. The British foreign secretary, Viscount Edward Grey, pressed the issue with presidential aide Colonel Edward M. House throughout 1915 and received the private endorsement of House and President Wilson on 11 November.¹

Woodrow Wilson was a latecomer to the League movement and was never one of its leading theorists. His first public endorsement came in a May 1916 speech at an LEP banquet. By the time of his 1916 presidential campaign the concept had distinctly become his. In 1917 the issue served as one of the idealistic causes that helped generate a consensus favoring belligerency in an America traditionally wary of European wars. The president delegated peace planning to Colonel House and his staff of experts while he assumed the more compatible role of persuading his countrymen, and the world, of the League’s virtues. Wilson included the League proposal as Point Fourteen in his congressional address of 8 January 1918—later to become the formula for the armistice. By the time of his Five Particulars speech in September, it was clear that the League would form the core of Wilson’s peace program: “The constitution of that League of Nations and the clear definition of its objects must be part, in a sense the most essential part, of the peace settlement itself.”² In preliminary deliberations before the opening of the Paris Peace Conference, Wilson insisted that the League Covenant be the first item on the agenda.

America's decisive role in the war and the nation's burgeoning military power made Wilson's demands difficult to refuse.

Most Japanese were taken by surprise at the conclusion of the war when it became clear that the traditional process of dividing the spoils would be tempered by the liberal ideals of the American president. As a belligerent, Japan had pursued a military and diplomatic program directed toward the displacement of German power in East Asia. With *de facto* control of former German territory and secret pledges by allies and neighbors to confirm those acquisitions, Japan approached the peace conference confident of achieving open recognition of its enhanced international position. The process of preparation for the parlay revealed Japan's overwhelming assumption that power factors would be the major determinants of the postwar order and that the League idea was window dressing.

Peace Preparation

Japan's peace planning began early in the war. While the seizure of Qingdao was in progress, Foreign Minister Katō assigned to the Political Affairs Bureau the task of gathering materials relevant to the postwar settlement. A year later, in September 1915, a formal Peace Preparation Commission (*Kōwa Junbi linkai*) was established, with representatives from the Foreign, War, and Navy Ministries and the cabinet's Legislative Bureau. Chaired initially by Foreign Vice-Minister Matsui Keishirō and then by Shidehara Kijūrō, the commission made its first formal report on 25 December 1916. Its resolutions pertained almost exclusively to the transfer of former German territories and economic rights to Japan.³

A more concrete formulation of Japan's conditions of peace was revealed at the time of the Inter-Allied Conference, which opened in Paris on 29 November 1917. Anticipating a discussion of peace terms, Foreign Minister Motono cabled a "general policy" statement to the Japanese delegates. The instructions were sanctioned by the *Gaikō Chōsakai* and followed the lines established by the Peace Preparation Commission a year earlier:

1. On matters of direct concern to Japan and not the other powers:
 - a. Secure the transfer of the various rights and economic assets held by Germany prior to the war in Shandong Province.
 - b. Secure the cession of German South Pacific islands north of the equator and the transfer of various rights and economic assets related thereto.
2. On matters where Japanese interests are not directly concerned, avoid any unnecessary participation in the deliberations.
3. On matters where the interests of Japan and the allies coincide, act in unison with the Allies in accordance with general world trends.⁴

These three points stood until the armistice as Japan's official policy toward the peace settlement and essentially represent the posture taken by the Japanese delegation at the peace conference. It is noteworthy that in this preliminary formulation of peace conference policy there was no mention of the League of Nations and racial equality — issues that would absorb Japan's energies at the Paris Peace Conference. Also significant is the clear statement of *taisei junnō*. The Peace Preparation Commission compiled forty-two volumes of research materials during the war, but the sole volume treating the League issue was not assembled until the time of the armistice.⁵

League Propaganda

The earliest foreign effort to promote Japanese interest in the League of Nations came in 1916 from the United States through the private auspices of the League to Enforce Peace. The individual almost solely responsible for this effort was Theodore Marburg (1862–1946), the chairman of the LEP's Committee on Foreign Organization. Marburg was a distinguished Republican aristocrat from Baltimore and a longtime trustee and benefactor of the Johns Hopkins University. Along with Hamilton Holt, A. Lawrence Lowell, and William Howard Taft, he helped found the LEP in June 1915. His work in the organization was motivated by a passion for peace described by his biographer as “almost a religion.” Marburg had served the Taft administration as ambassador to Brussels. His diplomatic experience fitted him well to fulfill the LEP Executive Committee's commission “to spread the League propaganda in foreign countries.” Marburg's energy and untiring dedication to the League of Nations dream impelled him to make contact with political leaders and peace societies in no less than thirty-five nations during the war years.⁶

A special object of Marburg's campaign was Japan. Like President Wilson, Marburg regarded Japan as one of the great powers whose participation was essential to the viability of any League scheme. The Twenty-One Demands and Japan's continental policy were under fire in the United States at the time. Marburg, however, was no party to the prevailing sympathy for China. He regarded that “backward country which is unable to maintain law and order at home” as unqualified for League membership. He saw nothing wrong with a Japanese position of overseer in East Asia patterned after the Monroe Doctrine, and he was willing to accord Japan even more far-reaching prerogatives. On the mainland, Japan had “simply followed the path mapped out for her by the European powers,” and “a Japanese hegemony in China” was preferable to the instability then rampant in the republic. Nonetheless, if China had any hope for sovereignty, it lay in the proposed League. “China,” wrote Marburg, “should be able, under the aegis of the League, to rear the structure of a superior government; whereas, without the League she is certain to

be browbeaten and despoiled.” Moreover, a League of Nations could effect a true open door everywhere in China.⁷

A letter of May 1916 from Walter Boardman Bullen, a furloughed Northern Baptist missionary, provided the initial prodding for Marburg’s approach to Japan. Bullen suggested that an organization to promote the League of Nations be planted there. He predicted that Japan would respond positively because “new ways of recognizing her value and her standing are naturally very gratifying to the newest great power. Japan is keenly alive to the importance to her of the confidence and the good will of western nations.” He suggested Prime Minister Ōkuma as the logical contact. Marburg was also encouraged in this enterprise by Sidney L. Gulick, a returned American Board missionary and Dōshisha University professor then working in the Federal Council of Churches for the cause of Japanese-American understanding. Gulick had interviewed the premier in 1915.⁸

In 1916, Japanese political power and peace society leadership conveniently converged in Count Ōkuma. The loquacious senior statesman and founder of Waseda University had served as president of the Japan Peace Society since its founding in 1906. He retained the office when he became prime minister in 1914, though his thirty-month stint as premier is more aptly remembered for Japanese bellicosity. The society’s official organ, *Heiwa jihō* (Peace review), carried scattered reports of the League movement in the West after mid-1915. Marburg’s letter to Ōkuma, dated 10 June 1916, was accompanied by copies of LEP publications and bolstered by a note of introduction from former U.S. president Taft. Marburg briefly explained the goals of a League of Nations and cited prominent American figures — including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge — who had endorsed the plan. Senator Lodge of Massachusetts is better known for his fight against U.S. membership in the League of Nations in the postwar months. In common LEP parlance, Marburg described a League that would “compel an inquiry before nations are allowed to go to war.” The former diplomat was optimistic that Ōkuma would endorse the LEP program and boldly proposed that “you, My Lord, might be willing to father a movement in Japan looking to the organization of a similar group there.” The letter ended with the request that the prime minister secure a pronouncement in favor of the League “either from your cabinet or from the legislature of Japan.”⁹

Ōkuma never replied to this letter nor to a follow-up appeal. But four months later the cabinet fell, and the new Terauchi government launched its concerted effort to refurbish the warlike image left by its predecessor and mend relations with the United States. Continued prodding by the League to Enforce Peace evoked the first favorable statement by a Japanese official. This time Marburg had his request for an endorsement forwarded to Tokyo by Ambassador Satō Aimaro in Washington. Foreign Minister Motono Ichirō responded, relaying to Marburg a greeting that expressed guarded sympathy with the work of the League to Enforce Peace:

I have noted with interest your unremitting efforts to secure the world against a repetition of the present convulsion. All proposals directed to effect so desirable an end must be welcomed and carefully studied by everyone to whom Peace and goodwill are not empty names and who has any regard for humanity.¹⁰

Audacious enough to label this as “official approval” of the League by Japan but not content with platitudes, the importunate Marburg drove further. Thanking Satō for transmitting the foreign minister’s message, he pointedly inquired whether Japan was party to the joint declaration of 11 January by the Allies to “associate themselves with all their hopes with the project for the creation of a league of nations to insure peace and justice throughout the world.” Satō replied in the affirmative.¹¹ Marburg proceeded on the assumption that Japan had declared itself for the League. He launched an ambitious program to disseminate propaganda of the LEP among a broad range of Japanese leaders. He engaged a Japanese student at Hopkins to translate selected literature of the society into Japanese. Failing to induce Ambassador Satō and the embassy to sponsor this project, he sought out the help of American pacifists in Japan. He found in E. W. Frazar, treasurer and former president of the American Peace Society in Japan, a willing accessory. Frazar was a Tokyo Ford dealer and close associate of Quaker missionary Gilbert Bowles in numerous peace enterprises. Marburg requested that Frazar have the literature printed in booklet form at LEP expense “for distribution primarily among the statesmen and next among the most influential private citizens in Japan.” He specified that Motono’s statement be inserted as a frontispiece, and he boldly proposed that the Foreign Ministry be induced to assume the task of distributing two thousand copies to “statesmen, including all the members of Parliament.”¹²

Marburg’s expectation of Foreign Ministry cooperation was presumptuous, and his estimation of Diet influence in foreign policy was uninformed. But his persistence paid off. The printing and distribution, with the Motono statement properly displayed, were carried out under the sponsorship of the Japan Peace Society.¹³ Marburg continued his campaign to win Japan for the League by mailing LEP materials directly to Japanese leaders. He sent resumes of meetings, the society’s Draft Convention, and copies of his own booklets to Motono, Ambassadors Satō and Ishii, Dietman Tagawa Daikichirō, and Privy Councilor Kaneko Kentarō. Tagawa, a Christian and a proponent of disarmament, later helped found the Japan League of Nations Association. Kaneko was president of the America-Japan Society and a noted friend of Harvard classmate Theodore Roosevelt.

Prior to the armistice there was no one within the Foreign Ministry willing to take up Marburg’s cause and play an advocate role for the League. The reticence of diplomats to become involved in the crusade is seen in the polite refusals of Ambassadors Satō and Ishii to speak at Win the War for Permanent Peace conventions

sponsored by the LEP in major American cities in 1918.¹⁴ But Marburg had sown important seeds. When in the fall of 1918 Kasumigaseki awakened to the importance of the League issue, materials of the League to Enforce Peace were among the few resources readily available to policy planners.

The Public Awakening

In Japan, as in much of the world, the fortunes of the League enterprise rose and fell in relation to the popularity of Woodrow Wilson. Ever since the American president had undertaken the mission of peacemaking in Europe, he had attracted the attention of Japanese idealists. The earnestness of his peace initiatives, the energy of his trust-busting efforts at home, and the urbanity of his gentleman-scholar image were often deliberately contrasted to the alleged unimaginative, “bureaucratic” leadership of Japanese political elites. Wilson’s popularity in Japan reached its pinnacle just prior to America’s entry into the war. A March 1917 symposium in *Chūō kōron* was devoted to the president and included a piece by Tsurumi Yūsuke (1885–1973). Tsurumi was a railroad official, a former student of Nitobe Inazō’s, and, curiously enough, the son-in-law of Wilson detractor Gotō Shinpei. He typified many progressives in his assertion that “the name Wilson stands for the new ideals and atmosphere of the day”:

Dr. Wilson is a statesman of lofty character, a natural favorite among the Japanese. The specter of this impoverished philosopher rising to the presidency after the crude Mr. Roosevelt and indecisive Mr. Taft is in itself sufficient to make the Japanese people swell with admiration. What constitutes the core of his political life is the fact that he is a man of ideals and a man of faith.¹⁵

Tsurumi organized a “Wilson Club” to promote the president’s ideals in Japan. His devotion to the American statesman was rewarded in the fall of 1918 by an hour-long audience at the White House, after which the president wrote that he had “added a very delightful personal friend to our interesting circle.” Wilson was gratified that “the club should bear my name and should devote itself to the spreading of ideas which personally I feel to be essential to the peace of the world.”¹⁶ Another private citizen to personally encounter Wilson during the war years was financier Shibusawa Eiichi. Present with him at a 1915 White House meeting was Charles W. Eliot, former Harvard University president and staunch Wilsonian. Though Eliot had not lent his prestige to the League to Enforce Peace, he supported a league in principle and urged American participation. Shibusawa, whose name headed the leadership of almost every citizen effort for Japanese-American friendship, would go on public record before the armistice in favor of Wilson’s peace program. In 1920 he became the first president of the Japan League of Nations Association.¹⁷

Wilson's glowing image was somewhat tarnished when in April 1917 he abandoned his neutral role and led the United States into the war. Cynicism replaced praise in some circles when America's burgeoning economic and strategic power became manifest and when American troops were deployed to Asia in the Siberian Intervention. Nevertheless, such leading liberal political thinkers of the day as Yoshino Sakuzō, Nitobe Inazō, and Minobe Tatsukichi sustained their high regard for Wilson's programs as heralds of a new world order and models for progressive change in Japanese government and society.¹⁸ Meanwhile, Japanese embassies abroad dutifully transmitted to Tokyo the public pronouncements of entente statesmen, replete with appeals for an international peacekeeping organization. All evidence indicates that this information was not seriously appraised in policy-making circles but rather was dismissed as a European matter or wartime rhetoric.

In early January 1918 the dual event of British prime minister Lloyd George's Three Conditions speech and President Wilson's Fourteen Points address gave the League of Nations proposal increased prominence in wartime diplomacy in the West. In the Japanese press these declarations received front-page headlines but only superficial content analysis. Newspaper articles and editorials tended to focus on the speeches' references to the prosecution of the war and ignore their treatment of the peace. A *Tokyo asahi* editorial noted that the messages "impressed the whole world" and were "more powerful than weapons," but it declined to pass judgment on the specific issues raised by the speakers. Rather, the writer seized the opportunity to take aim at the Terauchi government. The Western statesmen's forthrightness, the editorial said, should guide the prime minister to offer the upcoming session of the Diet something better than the usual "timeworn, ready made speech." The rightist *Yamato shinbun* complained that while the Western statesmen had given detailed attention to the future of Serbia, Montenegro, and other European entities, neither Wilson nor Lloyd George had made any statement on the disposal of Shandong and the Pacific islands.¹⁹ Nowhere in the Japanese press was the League of Nations concept, a key feature of both speeches, even mentioned. Its absence might have been more a function of shoddy transmission than lack of interest. The Kokusai-Reuter agency, on which the Japanese press depended for overseas news, transmitted a grossly confused set of Fourteen Points that lacked any statement on open diplomacy. Point Fourteen dealt not with the League but with freedom of passage in the Dardanelles. The English-language *Japan Times and Mail* printed the same curious list on 10 January but carried a revised, accurate account the following day. As late as the following September the *Asahi*, Japan's leading daily, reprinted the erroneous, League-less version of the Fourteen Points.²⁰

Writing in *Chūō kōron*, Yoshino Sakuzō alone treated the Lloyd George and Wilson speeches in depth. The Tokyo University professor noted that, except for Wilson's silence on reparations, the Allied leaders were in agreement on the major

issues. Regarding the premier's reference to the need for "some international organization . . . as a means to settling international disputes" and the president's call for "a general association of nations," Yoshino expressed his hope that this item would be "one of the controlling ideas of the peace conference." He went on to say that

so long as this task remains unaccomplished, eternal peace cannot be guaranteed. Though there are defeatists who look at past frustrations and think the cause is hopeless, others believe that those very failures underscore the pressing need for an international union. One cannot ignore the fact that the world's most powerful statesmen are devoting sincere attention to this idea. . . . The earnest words of earnest men are sometimes stronger than armed power.

Yoshino was confident that the principles espoused by the Western statesmen would revolutionize international affairs in the postwar era. However, at this early date he believed it would be a long time after the war before the League itself could come to fruition.²¹

The government in early 1918 observed total silence. The Three Conditions and the Fourteen Points were not discussed in the Gaikō Chōsakai in January, though the council met five times that month after the president's address. Speaking to the Diet on 22 January, Foreign Minister Motono predicted that peace was a long way off. Apparently disregarding the recent messages, he announced that "not only has Japan not yet received any proposal whatever from an allied power concerning conditions of peace, but we do not think that the moment has yet come to enter concretely upon such negotiations."²² Politicians were totally absorbed in more pressing issues—labor unrest, rice riots, and demands by the public and the military for a Siberian expedition. Rather than inject another bewildering and potentially divisive foreign policy issue into an already volatile political scene, leaders shelved the League proposal as a European matter. Japan's primary interests in the peace, they presumed, were secured in secret treaties. After a while the Diet and the public tired of having their questions ignored. When official taciturnity extended into the fall of 1918, the commercial newspaper *Chūgai shōgyō* editorially questioned the politicians' leadership ability:

Lamentably enough, we have never heard any one of the Japanese statesmen talk boldly on peace questions, and, in consequence are indeed anxious to know as to whether the so-called leaders of our country are really prepared for peace, which must come sooner or later. . . . Has the Hara Cabinet not a single statesman who is as competent as Mr. Wilson or Mr. Lloyd George?²³

A lengthy pamphlet by Viscount Edward Grey published in Japan on 21 June stimulated the press' first serious evaluation of the League concept. In this essay Grey affirmed the proposals of President Wilson for an association of states that would uphold the rights of weaker nations and require disputing parties to exhaust pacific means of settlement before resorting to war. The dominant editorial reaction was skepticism, a skepticism that revealed many of Japan's misgivings about the postwar world order. A coalition of large nations — an Anglo-American alliance, for instance — could totally dominate such a League, said the *Kokumin*. The *Hōchi* joined the *Kokumin* in asserting that the security of small nations might be better achieved under the old system of alliances and balance of power. The *Yamato* questioned whether powerful members would act impartially on such economic issues as access to markets and raw materials. The *Asahi* was noncommittal but observed that Grey's scheme was practicable only in the event of an entente victory. Yoshino Sakuzō, writing in the July issue of *Chūō kōron*, criticized the press for failing to see beyond the proposal's problems. He predicted that ideas like those expressed by Viscount Grey would set the trends of the future.²⁴

The Grey pamphlet also drew a response from noted legal scholar Tachi Sakutarō (1874–1943). Tachi was a professor of international law at Tokyo University and a legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry. He would later accompany the Japanese mission to the Paris Peace Conference and publish a commentary on the Covenant of the League of Nations. In a lengthy editorial in *Gaikō jihō*, Tachi welcomed the idea of a League as a means to end the ravages of war. He was especially pleased that Viscount Grey had included Germany in his scheme — a principle that Tachi and many other Japanese spokesmen believed to be requisite to the League's success. Without the central powers, argued the international jurist, the organization would be “a league of nations in name only,” and the contest between Germany and the entente would resume.²⁵ Tachi, like many other journalists and diplomats as well, was concerned that the League be an inclusive organization and that the question of the relationship of member states to nonmember states be clarified.²⁶ They feared a scenario of a monolithic alliance of Western powers, with Japan isolated whether within it or outside it. Tachi was specifically critical of the plan of the League to Enforce Peace for a union of select powers. His significant concluding remarks reflect the suspicion of a have-not nation that peace alone was no guarantee of security and national advancement:

It will be impossible to maintain world peace merely through a pact like the League of Nations unless it rest upon a foundation of faith on the part of all peoples in the benefits of peace. . . . Even in peacetime there are nations which monopolize vast natural resources and deny other peoples a place in the sun.

They act to dominate and oppress peoples of different race, language, ideas, and culture. Under such circumstances it will be no easy task to make all nations think of the benefits of peace and accept the burdens of the League of Nations.²⁷

Tachi's words were also prophetic of the antipathy toward the League and world order structures that rose again in Japan in the early 1930s.

Skepticism concerning the viability of the League scheme remained a dominant sentiment in the final months of the war, even among Grey's Japanese friends. After Katō Takaaki, former ambassador to London, had studied the pamphlet in detail, he is reported to have said that had he not personally known the author to be an earnest and practical man, he would have imagined that the former foreign secretary was building castles in the air.²⁸

The Eve of the Armistice

During the summer and fall of 1918, Japan was increasingly the target of outside pressure to fall in line with the League movement. The growing likelihood of an Allied victory stirred interest among the public in the peace program of the entente powers. Theodore Marburg continued his campaign of mailing out copies of the LEP Draft Convention. The Japan Peace Society pressed forward with the task of publicizing the League idea through a newly created Correspondence and Publicity Bureau. Marburg drew a reply from Viscount Kaneko, in which the veteran public servant said that he concurred with the Draft Convention in every point, adding that "I showed it to many of my friends and they were as delighted as I. Moreover it was translated and published in 'The Hochi Shinbun,' one of our influential newspapers. Ever since, the subject of the League has been discussed everywhere." For the Japanese public, this publication constituted the first introduction to the form a League of Nations might take. Kaneko requested a fuller explanation of the Convention's reference to disciplinary "economic and military measures." Marburg took pains to write a lengthy and reassuring reply, in which he stressed that the contemplated force was to be used to compel inquiry, not repel aggressors.²⁹

From London came a message of support for a league by the utopian science fiction writer H. G. Wells, a member of the League of Free Nations Association. He addressed an open letter to the people of Japan, which was published on 26 October in the *Tokyo nichichi* and *Osaka asahi* newspapers. The famous spokesman for liberal optimism expressed his hope that the Japanese people would join the nations of Europe and America in establishing a world organization. The peoples of the West, he wrote,

are exerting themselves with all their intellect and wisdom to form a World League or a Federation of States, with the view to preventing a repetition of the

catastrophe and to protect the universal welfare of mankind. . . . We are firmly convinced that the idea is rational and pertinent and that by this we can convert the warlike minds of the peoples of the whole world to the love of peace.

It is indeed our sincere hope that highly civilized nations like Japan and China assist in the execution of our great scheme, and we are earnestly desirous of knowing how great an effort has been done or is being done by the people of Japan for the realization of this noble purpose.³⁰

Wells shared with Theodore Marburg the conviction that Japanese participation was essential if peace machinery were to function on a universal basis. This was also on the mind of Woodrow Wilson at the peace conference.

By late October the press was treating the League proposal seriously and editors were taking up the cause. The *Tokyo asahi* ran a three-installment feature on the project, which described in depth League movements in Europe and America. The *Kokumin's* alert foreign editor Baba Tsunego topped all journalists in airing the League issue in the final days of the war. Earlier Baba had warned against anti-yellow discrimination in a League and stressed the dangers of trading military strength for pacifism. Now in editorials on 29 October and 7 November he chided the Japanese people for failing to perceive the global implications of the European war. Their "careless minds" had too long overlooked President Wilson's insistence on the creation of a world organization, a proposition that had become "a crucial issue for the peace conference." Baba criticized Foreign Minister Uchida for ambiguity on the question and called on the government to work for the realization of the League and the president's trend-setting ideas. Japanese enthusiasm for the League was necessary to allay the powers' suspicions of the Empire's territorial ambitions. Turning the race issue into an argument for the organization, he asserted that within the League "Japan will be able to take the lead in making a clean sweep of oppression against colored races in the world."³¹

Officials found it increasingly difficult to remain aloof. From Japanese embassies in Europe came cables describing the growing influence of League movements in France and England and a specific request from the French foreign minister for comment. When the Hara cabinet took office on 29 September, the U.S. Embassy inquired of the new leadership its attitude toward President Wilson's peace program as expressed in his speech of 27 September.³² On 6 October, Germany requested an armistice based on Wilson's principles. A forthright policy statement could hardly be expected from the fledgling cabinet, which, barely a week old, was just beginning to plot its precarious course in a sea of political unrest. But on 8 October, Foreign Minister Uchida responded to domestic and foreign pressures for a public statement on the government's peace policy. Addressing newsmen, Uchida launched a trial balloon:

We cannot but be impressed by the recent utterances of the President of the United States in addressing the people of that country, which has risen to the occasion in this struggle with a national and an individual singleness of high purpose and an international generosity which appeals with peculiar force to the people of this country. The declaration by President Wilson that “with perfect unity of purpose and counsel will come assurance of complete victory” seems to me to be a first principle in the solution of the difficult problem before us. There can be no League of Nations unless there is among its members as complete unity of confidence and of trust, one in the other, as there is of purpose and of counsel. The “noblesse oblige” of the West or the “bushido” of the East must permeate and guide the action of any such league. Distrust and suspicion must be left outside its door.³³

What did Uchida say? First, he stated that Japan had been listening to the pronouncements of President Wilson. The Japanese public and the United States government wanted to know this. But how well was Japan listening, and what were its responses to Wilson’s specific proposals? Vague affirmations of the president’s spirit hardly satisfied these queries. Second, the foreign minister addressed the League issue by stressing the need for unity and trust. Considering the context of Japan’s relationship to the powers, it is clear that he was questioning whether these conditions were present to a degree adequate to assure the attainment of the League’s goals as defined by Wilson. Thus, while trying not to appear aloof or uncooperative, the Hara cabinet was giving notice that Japan was reserving judgment. Japan would not jump on the League bandwagon until the nation could fully trust the intentions of its sponsors.

Diplomatic correspondence in the final weeks of the war did little to allay Uchida’s misgivings or provide him clear guidance. From Ambassador Chinda, whose cables were dominated by the League issue, came inklings that the British Foreign Office perceived the League as a postwar extension of the entente relationship epitomized in the Supreme War Council and the Inter-Allied Conferences — institutions in which Japan had played a secondary role. In late October, British parliamentarian Lord Robert Cecil called for a meeting of representatives of the European Allies and the United States to discuss the creation of the League. Japan was affronted by its omission from the roster of participants, and Uchida instructed Chinda to inquire whether the oversight was intentional. Chinda’s reply of 9 November relayed Cecil’s apology and promise to supply Japan with reports of all British deliberations on the League. Such maneuvers substantiated the long-standing suspicions that the Euro-American powers, now set to robe themselves in the League, were prone to act in collusion against Japan.³⁴ Japan’s quandary was made no easier by evidence that Western statesmen envisioned widely divergent

schemes for a League. Chinda informed Kasumigaseki that within England alone several contradictory concepts held forth. It was soon clear that Wilson advocated an association of peaceful and democratic states, Lloyd George a concert of powers, and Georges Clemenceau a defensive alliance. Even Germany proposed its counter version in the final weeks of the war, advancing the idea that member states should share surplus raw materials and evoking some sympathetic press response in Japan.³⁵

Other communications from abroad at the time of the armistice fed the fear that a League would be biased against Japan and would prevent the achievement of its national destiny. Ambassador Ishii in Washington cabled news of a 15 November speech by Oklahoma senator Robert L. Owen that voiced the claim that the League would prevent "fatalists" in the Orient from fielding "a military machine that would make the whole world tremble."³⁶ Ambassador Chinda sent a summary of a speech of 12 November by Lloyd George in which the prime minister expressed his hope that the League would enable total disarmament and the abandonment of military conscription.³⁷ Most disconcerting to the public was the absence of any assurance of protection from racial inequality within the League. "It is somewhat surprising," declared former Kenseikai president Ōishi Masami, "that Mr. Wilson, who stands for the vindication of justice and humanity, has so far not said a word about the removal of race discrimination." Newspaper editorials made it clear that the League question and the race question were closely associated in Japanese minds.³⁸ A week before the armistice, U.S. ambassador Morris accurately appraised the strength of the sentiments that would eventually compel the Japanese government to make racial equality a formal peace conference demand:

The movement towards a League of Nations in Europe and America has revived the agitation in Japan for an equality of treatment of Japanese emigrants in Anglo-Saxon countries. It is argued that the aims of such a League are irreconcilable with Asiatic exclusion and that Japan should, therefore, insist upon the abandonment of racial discrimination before consenting to join the League.³⁹

Frustrated by his government's indecision toward the Wilsonian peace program, Ambassador Chinda gave his cables a note of urgency. The future peace conference plenipotentiary predicted that the League proposition, now officially endorsed by Japan's alliance partner, would be "an item of major importance on the peace conference agenda." He warned that the Foreign Ministry's almost total lack of preparation on the issue would significantly weaken Japan's position at the parlay. On 10 November he specifically requested a clear policy directive on the Fourteen Points.⁴⁰

The next day the Japanese government and people greeted with some surprise

the news that the Great War was over.⁴¹ Until this time Japanese decision makers had not taken the League of Nations issue seriously. It took the armistice to bring home to Kasumigaseki the message that the concepts of world order upon which Japan had based its wartime diplomacy and peace preparation were about to be challenged. A painful awareness dawned among decision makers that Japan had prepared for a tournament whose rules had unexpectedly been revised. Conscious of lost time, the Foreign Ministry scurried to grasp the meaning of President Wilson's peace program.

3

The Great Debate

We must take risks, no matter whether we accept the League or reject it. The risks that we take in accepting it are less than the risk we take if we reject it.

—William Jennings Bryan

THE PROSPECT OF the Armistice brought the Foreign Ministry to the disconcerting realization that Japan's preparation for the peace had ignored the Fourteen Points and formulated no position on President Wilson's diplomatic program. The bureaucracy had narrowly focused its planning on concrete considerations of territorial expansion and economic rights. Ministry officials later recounted the rude awakening:

The state of affairs took a sudden turn and Japan was faced with the approach of the peace conference. The peace was to be based on the terms of the Fourteen Points and Four Principles of President Wilson's program for world peace. Consequently the ministry was confronted with a situation in which the research done up to this point proved to be not only inadequate but in many respects useless. Especially was this the case with regard to the final of Wilson's Fourteen Points on the League of Nations, the content of which was yet unclear and subject to variant interpretations. This left our officials very bewildered.¹

The Foreign Ministry Awakening

In an effort to make up for lost time, an ad hoc committee composed of the vice-minister and the bureau and section chiefs of the Political Affairs Bureau was convened to analyze the Fourteen Points. The group's tasks reflected the immature state of Japanese preparedness. An official translation for "League of Nations" had to be chosen. After considering various renderings then in use, the committee fol-

lowed the advice of Asian Section chief Mushakōji Kimitomo to adopt “Kokusai Renmei.” In its endeavor to deal with the League, the committee was hampered by a paucity of reference materials. It had little more than translated speeches; publications of the League to Enforce Peace; and a report by the Bryce Group, a private British study association. None of the Covenant drafts prepared by Allied governments had yet been shared with Japan. The Draft Convention of Britain’s Phillimore Committee, which had been delivered to Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour eight months earlier, was not conveyed to the Japanese Foreign Ministry until 12 December, two days after the peace delegation set sail.² Vice-Minister Shidehara’s major concern about the League was the prospect of multilateral diplomacy. He expressed the fear, commonly voiced by Japanese diplomats, that language deficiency and tactical ineptitude would prevent Japan from advancing its interests in a multinational forum. Shidehara stressed to the committee his preference for the bilateral mode:

It will be very much to our disadvantage to have our fate decided at this sort of great round table rather than in direct negotiations with a party whose interests are involved. I would prefer to see the proposal go unrealized. But since it is likely to come about, there is no alternative but to align with world trends and give it serious consideration.³

The first Foreign Ministry report dealing with the proposal to establish a League of Nations was a six-page document dated the day of the armistice. It was the last in a series of reference materials designed to provide a basis for discussing the issues of the postwar settlement. The paper began with a historical overview of the concept of multinational compacts, starting with the Holy Alliance of 1815 and extending to Wilson’s Five Particulars speech of 27 September. It noted the support American and British leaders had given the movement, and reasoned that the League of Nations could no longer be considered a matter of mere academic interest. The League stood, said the report, as “the most important question in international politics.” The document listed five League-related issues of vital concern to Japan. The first was arms limitation. The second was economic access: would the League open the closed economic systems created by colonial powers? The third problem was the League’s challenge to the Anglo-Japanese alliance and Japan’s practice of secret diplomacy. Next the report posed the problem of League intrusion into areas of national sovereignty. Lastly, the issue of inclusiveness and German membership was raised. The report gave, in effect, a compendium of major misgivings that had been aired in the media. In its conclusion it offered a strikingly prophetic assessment of the League movement: Irreversible world trends were moving the proposition toward reality. Despite myriad hurdles, some if not

all of the world's states would establish a League. However, in all likelihood the organization would not fulfill the lofty ideals of its sponsors, nor would it become a powerful influence in world politics.⁴

At the Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 13 November, Foreign Minister Uchida presented a tentative written assessment of those items in Wilson's Fourteen Points of direct concern to Japan. This "top secret" memorandum was reported in the press to be the product of joint deliberations among the Foreign, War, and Navy Ministries. It was hastily prepared, the foreign minister explained, in response to insistent requests by Ambassador Chinda for an official stand on Wilson's program. Proceeding point by point through the issues of open diplomacy, freedom of the seas, disarmament, and territorial settlements, Uchida concluded with a cautious evaluation of Point Fourteen:

Concerning the League of Nations, which is one of the most important issues, the Imperial Government affirms its ultimate purpose. However, the persistence of narrow racial attitudes among nations casts doubt upon the feasibility of the League's goals and creates the possibility that its establishment will be disadvantageous to the Empire. Furthermore, there remains the exceedingly difficult problem of how member states are to treat nonmembers. Therefore, it is considered advisable to delay as much as possible agreement on a concrete proposal and to await an appropriate future opportunity to discuss its implementation with other states. In the event that the League of Nations comes into being, it would be unwise for Japan to be isolated outside it. If a concrete proposal for its establishment is presented, Japan should devise a suitable strategy to secure the elimination of disadvantages arising from racial prejudice.⁵

Though policy planning was still at an early stage, the foreign minister in the above statement voiced four points that would be applied consistently by Japan throughout the postwar settlement. First, Japan approved the Wilsonian program in theory. Second, details of the program would create circumstances disadvantageous to Japan. Third, Japan should attempt to delay the program's actual implementation. Fourth, if its realization appeared inevitable, Japan should not press reservations to the point of nonparticipation or diplomatic isolation. This pattern of response underlay Uchida's statements on open diplomacy and disarmament as well and would characterize Japan's deportment at the peace conference. Permeating the entire memorandum was the impulse of *taisei junnō*. The foreign minister stressed that Japan should conform to world trends and follow the lead of alliance partner Great Britain. In order not to appear aloof to the idealism of the postwar world, Japan at the upcoming conference should "refrain as much as possible from assuming an attitude of opposition to peace and humanitarian considerations." In

advocating accommodationism, Uchida had the backing of Prime Minister Hara and the *genrō*.⁶

Uchida's report triggered the Gaikō Chōsakai's first discussion of the Wilsonian peace program. It would also set the stage for a running debate in the council — one of the best recorded policy debates in Japanese diplomatic history — which would continually hark back to the question of Japan and the League. The major participants were Count Makino Nobuaki and Viscount Itō Miyoji. The debate rose in vehemence until the peace delegation set sail on 10 December. Its echoes were heard in Japan throughout the months of the Paris Peace Conference.

Makino Nobuaki and Itō Miyoji

Despite sharp contrasts in their diplomatic presuppositions, Makino Nobuaki (1861–1949) and Itō Miyoji (1857–1934) offered strikingly similar credentials.⁷ Both were reared in rebellious Kyushu domains in the twilight of the Tokugawa shogunate and served the Meiji government effectively in their early careers. Each had carried out official assignments in Europe and was adept in the English language. Both men regarded Meiji oligarch Itō Hirobumi as their mentor and were indebted to him for elevation within the bureaucracy to the ministerial level. They had served together on the Privy Council. Both were men of large physique, and by the time of World War I each had risen above his peers to command prestige and political influence independent of bureaucratic position.⁸ Neither, however, ever attained the senior political stature of *genrō*, nor did they command political cliques or public followings. Behind their similarities lay deep contrasts that can be understood only by probing their respective backgrounds.

Makino Nobuaki was born in 1861, the second son of Ōkubo Toshimichi. He was adopted immediately after birth into the heirless Makino family. The Meiji Restoration propelled his natural father from middle samurai status to national prominence as a major architect of the Meiji state. At the age of twelve Nobuaki accompanied Ōkubo to America on the Iwakura Mission. He remained in Philadelphia for two years to attend a private middle school. After further education at the Kaisei Gakkō, a predecessor of Tokyo University, he entered the Foreign Ministry in 1879 at the age of nineteen. The following year he received his first overseas assignment as secretary in the Japanese legation in London.

Like his father before him and his son-in-law Yoshida Shigeru after him, the freshman diplomat eagerly adopted the fashions of the English. During his two-year stint in London he developed a lifelong attachment to Sherlock Holmes mysteries and breakfasts of toast and marmalade. His acculturation had a political component as well — identification with the Foreign Ministry's Ei-Bei Ha. While in London, Makino caught the attention of Itō Hirobumi, who, accompanied by

his secretary Itō Miyoji, was visiting European capitals to investigate models for Japan's Imperial constitution.⁹ The Meiji statesman later elevated the young Foreign Ministry bureaucrat to the posts of governor of Fukui Prefecture (1891) and vice-minister of education (1893). In this latter assignment Makino worked hand in glove with another Hirobumi protégé, Education Minister Saionji Kinmochi, and a lifelong relationship ensued. When in 1906 Saionji accepted the Imperial summons to premiership, the marquis recalled Makino from an appointment to St. Petersburg and designated him education minister. Makino later held the foreign minister's portfolio in the first Yamamoto Gonnohyōe cabinet (1913–1914). By the time of the World War, three decades of service in important posts at home and abroad merited his description by the press as one “closely identified with every international movement in this country.”¹⁰

Makino spent his happiest years as minister to Rome and Vienna. This period, from 1897 to 1905, was one of rising international prestige for Japan. Makino's eight-year absence from the homeland at this critical time could be an important factor in the development of the internationalist attitudes for which he is remembered. He was removed from the domestic environment of intense nationalism in the decade intervening the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars. Makino continually tuned his ear to the world at large. Many of his diplomatic and social contacts with Westerners developed into lifelong friendships. His personal papers contain cordial correspondence, interrupted only by the Pacific War, with



Makino Nobuaki, photographed in New York en route to the Paris Peace Conference. Photo courtesy of Makino Junko.

such varied figures as American financier John D. Rockefeller Jr., ambassadors Sir Charles Eliot of Britain and Joseph C. Grew of the United States, Paris Conference notables Edward M. House and Paul Mantoux, Edith Bolling Wilson, and diplomat-historian Sir George Sansom. The paucity of overseas correspondence in Itō's voluminous papers is striking by contrast. Among the world figures at Paris, Makino most admired Clemenceau and Wilson — the Tiger for his straightforward and resolute bearing, and the Prophet for his intellect and faith. Two decades later, when a second global cataclysm had dashed all Wilson's dreams, the retired Imperial household minister recalled the president as "an enthusiastic idealist who believed that war must by all means be eliminated from human existence."¹¹

At home and abroad, Makino established the reputation of a pensive strategist rather than a charismatic leader. His demeanor was revealed in his unhurried pace in the game of go. Makino frequently indulged in the checkerboard ordeal of wits and served for many years as honorary president of the Japan Go Association. His opponents recalled that he made no move until he had thoroughly sized up the situation, driving his challengers to distraction with his delays. In his career as in his pastimes, Makino was prudence personified. He shied away from party politics and positions of political leadership where immediate decisions were required. His most effective role was that of counselor — to Prime Minister Saionji and later the Emperor. His associates regarded him as a *bunkajin*, or "man of culture," and not a politician. Even at the Paris Peace Conference, where he served as Japan's top spokesman, Makino did not shine at the negotiating table. He sometimes lost opportunities because of lengthy deliberation. His unique talent was his canny ability to discern the trend of the moment and guide Japanese policy into that stream.¹²

Makino was consistent in his opposition to the interference by the military in foreign policy. But "prudence" and "adaptability" are better terms than "liberal" for describing his politics. As education minister he restrained student activism and curbed academic freedom. As foreign minister he appointed a China hard-liner as chief of the Political Affairs Bureau. During the Great War, amid calls for party cabinets, Makino cautioned of "the evils of political strife."¹³ While not deeply committed to any ideology, Makino did possess an uncommon perceptiveness concerning the long-term impact of the Great War on East Asia and Japan. The veteran diplomat was one of the first Japanese elites at that time to speak and act on the assumption that it was no longer possible for Japan to stand aloof from important movements in the West. Unlike more provincial thinkers in the Gaikō Chōsakai, he discerned that "Japan, in issuing its final ultimatum to Germany, opened fire in a worldwide arena." As early as 1917 he warned his countrymen that

the war's influence in the Orient deserves more consideration than is now assumed. . . . Moreover, this influence will be political, economic, military, moral,

and intellectual. In other words, it will extend to all aspects of human affairs and, I believe, completely alter the face of the Far East.¹⁴

He anticipated Japan's first experience in a multilateral peace conference as an occasion when the Empire might acquire a respectable image among the powers and be drawn into the mainstream of world affairs. He viewed his own appointment as plenipotentiary to that parley as an opportunity to nudge Japan in the direction of a genuine internationalist role.

Itō Miyoji began life as a commoner in Hizen domain. Lacking Makino's samurai roots and status education, he rose to prominence by demonstrating proficiency in skills desperately needed by the early Meiji government. His competence in English, learned in his youth from Dutch Reformed missionaries, drew the notice of *genrō* Itō Hirobumi, who subsequently elevated him to numerous official posts. His greatest contributions to the Meiji state were his role in preliminary research and drafting for the constitution and his tenure as chief cabinet secretary from 1892 to 1896. As Hirobumi's aide, he had a hand in the Shimonoseki negotiations that terminated the Sino-Japanese War. With his mentor he watched in bitter helplessness as Germany, France, and Russia divested Japan of territorial gains in the humiliating Triple Intervention. This episode was to permanently jaundice Itō's attitude toward major Western states. Itō's image of the powers as avaricious and deceitful was nurtured by historical realities and compounded by his suspicious attitude toward all opponents.

After departing from the tutelage of Itō Hirobumi, Miyoji shunned party politics and bureaucratic positions, seeking rather to operate as a "black curtain" (*kuromaku*), or power behind the scenes, in classic *genrō* fashion. In this aspiration he succeeded only partially. He sought the position of Imperial household minister—a post to which Makino was elevated after the Paris Peace Conference—but he lacked status roots and, after Hirobumi's assassination in 1909, a powerful sponsor. Narcissistic and vindictive, he inspired no one's confidence. His political contemporaries Yamagata and Hara were irked by his long-winded diatribes and incessant nitpicking on the Privy Council and the *Gaikō Chōsakai*.¹⁵

The focus of Itō's political and personal life was upon the past. He regarded himself as the "guardian of the constitution," a role for which his legal expertise and conservative predilections well suited him. After Yamagata, he was the most prestigious member of the Privy Council, a body responsible for protecting the constitution, defending Imperial sanctity, and maintaining precedent. His love was his three hundred aged *bonsai*, stunted trees in which journalist Baba Tsunego saw a parallel to his warped personality.¹⁶ The tender of *bonsai* cherished gnarled relics of the past and protected them from the elements. By contrast Makino, the master of *go*, relished situations that required him to adjust adroitly to changed circum-

stances. Seiyūkai leader Hara Takashi sized up Itō in 1917 as a man “moved only by ideas twenty years out of date.”¹⁷

Serving concurrently in the Privy Council, Itō in the Gaikō Chōsakai was a force to be reckoned with. Appointment to the Gaikō Chōsakai was evidently of greater personal importance to Itō than to the other members, and he took his responsibilities with utmost seriousness. Unencumbered by the time demands of a ministerial or party post, he painstakingly scrutinized each document that came to the council’s attention. He raised shrill complaints when the Foreign Ministry withheld pertinent information and when, in his judgment, the premier convened the council too infrequently. When the Gaikō Chōsakai sent messages to the peace delegation, Itō was usually selected to do the drafting. He not only chronicled the proceedings of each meeting but also duplicated them on a hectograph for distribution to all the members. Itō comes across in the minutes as both a cantankerous cynic and a realist analyst of policy issues. He and his allies may have served to restrain the Foreign Ministry from taking a forthright positive stand on Wilson’s peace program. Itō’s contentiousness was exacerbated by the frustrating realization that Makino, with effective ties to the Foreign Ministry, the prime minister, and the *genrō*, moved in the procession of power while he himself fussed on the sidelines.

The Itō-Makino confrontation was a case of two very different personalities holding very different conceptions of the outside world and Japan’s role in it. Their first open split occurred during the final year of the war, when the Gaikō Chōsakai addressed the question of committing Japanese troops in Siberia. Itō enthusiastically supported Foreign Minister Motono’s proposal to send a unilateral expedition to Vladivostok, but Makino marshaled the Seiyūkai Party, Marquis Saionji, and other senior statesmen into a noninterventionist coalition that thwarted the adventure until plans for a joint expedition with the United States were arranged.¹⁸ Makino feared that action based on narrow nationalism would incur the suspicion of the powers. He realized that realities outside Asia had important bearing on what Itō regarded as local issues. Makino also believed the army to be prone to adventurism and likely to get Japan into trouble.

The Debate

On 13 November 1918, Foreign Minister Uchida laid before the Gaikō Chōsakai his policy draft on the Fourteen Points. Itō took the floor to express his frustration over the nature of the armistice. Armistices were supposed to be agreements terminating combat and not pontifications of ideals. Itō correctly pointed out that the British and French had not yet given the Fourteen Points their full endorsement. He complained that the articles did not deal with the disposal of Shandong. He raised

his first of many objections to the “vague meaning” of Wilson’s pronouncements.¹⁹ But his subsequent remarks on specific points showed that it was the content rather than the obscurity of the president’s proposals that disturbed him.

On the issue of open diplomacy, Itō expressed his opposition to the outlawing of secret treaties. Publicizing Japan’s several clandestine agreements would be embarrassing. Baron Makino entered the discussion to voice a rare instance of agreement. Itō attacked freedom of the seas as “a vague notion that nations will interpret according to their own interests.” He labeled as hypocritical Wilson’s advocacy of this principle at a time when the United States was expanding its navy. This duplicity, Itō alleged, “raises doubts about the president’s true motives.” On arms limitation Itō went along with Uchida’s contention that Japan should follow the powers, but he predicted that no disarmament scheme would get off the ground.

Itō’s critique of Wilson’s Fourteenth Point was brutal. With references to Rousseau, Kant, and Bentham, he belittled the League of Nations idea as a timeworn theme that history had rejected. Employing a method of argument he particularly liked, he erected an unattainable standard and then attacked the proposed League for failing to measure up. He posited five principles that would have to prevail in international relations in order for a global peace organization to bring about world transformation: (1) equal rights for all members, (2) the priority of universal over particularistic interests, (3) the abolition of all political and military pacts, (4) the absence of selfish economic alliances, and (5) the prohibition of secret treaties. Any league that failed to enforce all these standards would be doomed to ineffectiveness. Then, one at a time, Itō contrasted these requisites to the unchangeable realities of alliances and national disparities in population, culture, and natural resources. True equality would require the erasure of national boundaries. An international system based on amity and moral principles looked good on paper, he declared, but “the fact is, it cannot be realized.” Since rational statesmen would not promote a pipedream on its own merits, the League’s sponsors must be harboring sinister motives: “The League of Nations is a political strategy of first-rank Euro-American powers to maintain the status quo and suppress the ascendancy of second-rank and lesser states.”²⁰

During the two council sessions when Uchida’s report was deliberated, Makino remained for the most part characteristically silent. But before the next meeting on 2 December, two new developments would compel the baron to speak out in rebuttal to Itō’s skepticism. The first was a 30 November memorandum by Komura Kin’ichi (1883–1930), European Section chief of the Political Affairs Bureau. Komura, the son of a famous foreign minister, argued forthrightly for a redirection of Japan’s China policy and peace conference planning. He contended that such revolutionary movements as pacifism, humanism, labor unrest, and political radicalism were global in nature and “could not be stopped.” Each of these ideological

developments could act as a threat to Japanese sovereignty and national interests. But Japan had underrated ideology and prepared for the postwar settlement with eyes blinded to everything except Shandong, the Pacific islands, and Siberia. Japan was out of step and was particularly vulnerable because of its racial and religious minority status among the powers. Japan was also handicapped in the new game because it had pursued “expansion by military means,” behavior now repugnant to the world. Unless Japanese foreign policy was immediately reformed, the peace conference would impose restraints upon the Empire. The Komura memorandum counseled that Japan should actively promote the principles of equality and world peace and take concrete steps to reform its China diplomacy. Komura’s statements confirmed Makino’s belief that Japanese political leaders, from the *genrō* on down, were woefully out of touch with world thinking on the critical issues of the peace.²¹ Makino would take up Komura’s themes and apply them to the League question. The second development was Makino’s appointment as a peace conference plenipotentiary — a post Itō coveted for himself. The baron was asked to share with the council his view on the upcoming conference. His presentations to the council on 2 and 8 December would refute Itō and spark heated retort.

Taking his cue from Komura, Makino advanced three ideas. First, Japan’s “old diplomacy” (*kyūrai no gaikō*), which had earned the suspicions of the powers, should be reformed through adherence to Wilson’s diplomatic principles expressed in the Fourteen Points. These new values, he argued, were altering international affairs:

Today it is a worldwide trend to honor pacifism and reject aggression. The world with one accord is promoting the so-called Americanism, and the situation is completely different from the days of the old diplomacy.

Second, Japan should get in step with world trends:

As I now depart for Europe charged with immense responsibilities, I strongly advocate that Japan’s diplomacy conform to the trends of the world. . . . Japan should reject tactics of threat and conspiracy and follow a policy motivated by justice and concern for the weak.

Third, Japan should devote more serious consideration to the League of Nations proposal. The League, he suggested, was receiving priority attention in Britain and America and would inevitably be established. Moreover, the powers were likely to pressure Japan to participate.²² Like his contemporaries Wilson and Lenin, Makino obviously believed that history had great momentum and that a global tide was setting new and worldwide agendas to which Japan must respond.

At the meeting of 8 December, just two days before his departure for Paris, Makino called on Japan to affirm the reformation taking place in international relations and rid its China diplomacy of “two-facedness” and “selfish action and intrigue.” He argued before a largely unconvinced audience of Itō, Tanaka Giichi, Inukai Tsuyoshi, and other skeptics that the League movement reflected the world trends of pacifism and internationalism and that Japan should give the organization unqualified support. Japan’s nonparticipation, he warned, might result in its ostracism from the world economic and diplomatic communities and provoke global sympathy for China. Moreover, to be an indifferent participant was not enough:

I do not need to labor the point that disadvantages will result if Japan merely assumes the posture of a sideline observer who passively adapts to the inevitable. Rather, we should anticipate world trends and adopt a government policy of active endorsement of the establishment of the League of Nations.

By taking the initiative, Japan could have a say in the shape of the body, raise its international standing, and earn the world’s respect.²³

In the volley of objections that ensued, Inukai accused Makino of denying the validity of Japan’s territorial expansion. Itō supported the charge by asserting that “a policy of conformity to world trends does not sufficiently take into consideration Japan’s expansion needs.” Makino squirmed and attempted to mollify his adversaries by replying that while territorial expansion was natural and necessary, Japan must strive to erase a kaiserlike image. Itō bitterly resented Makino’s characterization of Japan’s China policy as predatory. “Give me one concrete example of Japan’s poor image,” he demanded. “Show me proof that Japan’s diplomacy has been two-faced.” Makino rejoined that cases in which the Foreign Ministry and the military had clashed over foreign policy were common knowledge. Undaunted, Itō proceeded to describe why, in his opinion, the League was an unfeasible scheme unworthy of Japan’s support. In lengthy detail he demonstrated that the League’s supporters in the West were advocating contradictory concepts. He justifiably complained that the League’s sponsors were agreed only on the need for arbitration of international conflicts, hardly a novel idea. He accused Makino of irresponsibly promoting the League without analyzing its concrete features and demanded to know “the nature, organization, and limits of the League of Nations in Baron Makino’s mind.” Indeed, Makino had offered no justifications for collective security, disarmament, or sanctions. Rather, the baron was preoccupied with pursuing world trends and refurbishing Japan’s image. Reiterating his previous arguments, Itō pictured Wilson’s goals for the organization as “impossible ideals.” “Are you advocating,” he asked, “that Japan give up the Anglo-Japanese Alliance for the

sake of this League?" The institution, he concluded, would be "an international political union to preserve the status quo for the Anglo-Saxon race and check the ascendancy of other powers."

War Minister Tanaka Giichi and former prime minister Terauchi in turn added heated rejoinders to Makino's accusation of two-faced policy. General Terauchi reminded Makino that the baron himself had held the office of foreign minister and therefore had no right to blame others for past irregularities. Makino offered the olive branch by admitting to "an immoderate choice of words" but stood firm in his conviction that the League would become a reality. The prime minister and foreign minister tried to strike a middle course and smooth over the differences to prevent an irreparable split and to lighten the mood of the council for Makino's farewell party, which followed. Hara and Uchida both left the council meeting convinced that the League would be established and that Japan had no viable alternative to supporting it. But Uchida was uncertain as to the best timing for Japanese endorsement.²⁴

The resemblance of Itō's reservations concerning the League to those voiced a year later by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge is striking. Both men opposed the League on constitutional grounds. Both argued that the organization would rob their countries of the unique economic, political, and strategic advantages accorded them by geographical isolation. Both objected to outside interference in their nations' perceived vital interests in less developed, neighboring territories rich in human and material resources. It is also significant that Itō and Lodge were on unfriendly terms with the regime in power. Their relationship to the leaders of their respective governments was marked by mutual disrespect and lack of access.

The conflict between Itō and Makino did not subside when the delegation boarded the *Tenyō Maru* on 10 December. His mind evidently not at rest, Makino cabled the foreign minister from aboard ship and asked him to impress upon the Gaikō Chōsakai the importance of the League issue for the peace conference.²⁵ He requested that summaries of embassy reports on the League movement abroad be distributed among the *genrō* and members of the council. Itō continued to criticize the League in the Gaikō Chōsakai while the Covenant was being hammered out at Paris. With the availability of draft covenants and more information on the nature and structure of the League, Itō focused his censure on specific provisions on disarmament, conscription, and the mandate system. On these issues Itō invoked his constitutional expertise and displayed his defensiveness with regard to Imperial prerogatives.²⁶ As the drafting of the Covenant reached its final stages and Japan's racial equality demand appeared doomed, Itō accused the plenipotentiaries alternately of exceeding their instructions and failing to exercise initiative. They overlooked vital constitutional issues, he grumbled, let themselves be cowed by the powers, and neglected to utilize personal diplomacy to win allies to their cause. In such complaints Itō invariably singled out Makino as an irresponsible and inept

diplomat.²⁷ Some of his criticisms were warranted; others were slanderous. On two separate occasions he charged that Makino had ignored the government's directives and moved too rapidly and enthusiastically in committing Japanese support to the League.²⁸ From start to finish, the Makino-Itō debate illustrated the inability of Japan's leaders to resolve their indecision over the postwar order that the League of Nations symbolized.

The Media on the Eve of the Peace Conference

Journalists did not have access to the policy discussions in the Gaikō Chōsakai, but many of the issues debated there were aired in newspapers and magazines in the weeks between the armistice and the opening of the peace conference on 18 January 1919. With a few noteworthy exceptions, the opinions expressed were favorable to the establishment of a League and solicitous of Japan's participation. The impulse to follow world trends was very evident, and the concern that the League solve the problem of racial discrimination was ubiquitous.

Yoshino Sakuzō took the stand for liberal intellectuals in the New Year's issue of *Chūō kōron*. Calling 1919 the "year of victory in which the world history of peace and justice will commence," he summoned Japan to join with people everywhere in constructing the postwar new world. He urged intellectuals in particular to take up the task of enlightening the public on the advent of the new age. Yoshino blasted those obstinate thinkers for whom "the moral imperatives of world trends are menacing" and who allowed themselves to be intimidated by fears that the League of Nations would become a tool of the big powers. Brushing all such misgivings aside, Yoshino declared that "there is no reason for hesitating to join the League of Nations."²⁹ The *Tokyo asahi* editorialized that Japan would have no choice but to join the League, and expressed the hope that President Wilson would surmount all obstacles and bring to fruition an effective organization.³⁰ At this time opinion spokesmen commonly identified Wilson's diplomatic program with the advance of civilization. "The issue of the League of Nations," said an *Osaka asahi* editorial, "is the touchstone of human progress." The *Jiji* heralded the West's leadership in "the progress of civilization and the development of human knowledge" and urged that "Japan herself must get into this current." Katō Takaaki, the Kenseikai Party president, expressed his approval of the League project in the *Tokyo asahi* on 3 January. He warned that to move contrary to "the new tendencies of the world" would bring the nation to certain ruin.³¹ When the peace conference opened and there was still no public word of an official policy on the League, the *Jiji* voiced impatience with the government:

The ministers . . . have not even touched on the question of a League of Nations. Japan is one of the five great powers and occupies an important position in the

peace conference. She must have an opinion about this and many other weighty problems. She should support with all her might the idea of a League of Nations. Why no word about it?³²

In the mind of the Japanese public the League and the issue of racial justice had become inseparably linked. The question of equality for the yellow race, reported Ambassador Morris, “underlies all discussions on the subject.” The *Hōchi* asserted that the campaign for equal treatment of alien races by Europeans and Americans was more pressing in the eyes of the public than the territorial questions before the peace conference. The *Tokyo asahi* forthrightly declared that the acceptance of the principle of equality should be “a precondition for our nation’s participation in the League of Nations.” When Marquis Saionji departed for Paris on 14 January, the same paper issued him a farewell challenge to “represent the interests of the world’s nonwhite races, for the sake of world peace and the realization of the ideals of the League of Nations.”³³

At crosscurrents with the general public affirmation of the League were nationalistic spokesmen who pictured the League as a menace. Some shared with Itō Miyoji an intense desire to strengthen Japan’s position in East Asia against Western military, economic, and cultural incursion. “Let the Orient be the Orient’s Orient!” declared Tokutomi Sohō in a *Kokumin* editorial on the eve of the peace conference.³⁴ One noteworthy writer who raised his voice against the League’s threat to Japanese ascendancy was Konoe Fumimaro (1891–1945).

Konoe was a twenty-eight-year-old scion of the noble Fujiwara family and member of the House of Peers. Intellectually he was heir to socialist economist Kawakami Hajime, under whom he had studied at Kyoto University. Politically he was heir to his father, Konoe Atsumaro, who founded the pan-Asianist Tōa Dōbunkai (East Asian Common Culture Association) and whose career was marked by the conviction that China and Japan must form common cause against Western racism.³⁵ The young Konoe published an acrid critique of the League of Nations in mid-December, a month before his departure for Paris as an aide to Marquis Saionji. His thoughts take on added significance in that, as prime minister twenty years later, Konoe would sever all Japan’s remaining ties to the League’s subsidiary organizations.

Konoe’s polemic appeared in the popular nationalistic magazine *Nihon oyobi Nihonjin* (Japan and the Japanese). Entitled “Ei-Bei hon’i no heiwashugi o hai su” (I reject Anglo-American pacifism), his essay is a prime example of the argument, often voiced by Japanese cynics, that the League was a product of Anglo-American criminal conspiracy. He contended that the world order advocated by leaders in the United States and Britain had nothing at all to do with justice and humanism. Such mouthings, he believed, were only a facade to hide their true motive — the

domination of the world through “economic imperialism.” He accused England and America of monopolizing the natural resources of the world and “nose-bleeding” other nations for their own enrichment. He condemned Japanese League proponents who, seduced by flowery language, viewed the proposed organization as a “blessing from heaven.” The fact was, argued Konoe, that the Anglo-Saxons were moving under the guise of the League and arms limitation to impose upon late-developing nations a status quo designed to perpetuate their dominance. Konoe warned that unless the peace conference recognized racial equality and opened all colonies to free trade, Japan “might someday be compelled like Imperial Germany to break loose from its confinement.”³⁶

Such remarks by a person of courtier blood drew the instant attention of American diplomats and China sympathizers. Excerpts from his article were immediately translated and cabled to Washington. Portions were published in Shanghai in *Herald of Asia* and *Millard's Review*. The latter expressed regret to find “a member of Japan's peace delegation so sympathetic with the policy which brought about Germany's downfall and so suspicious of the peace plans which are being worked out by America and the Allies.” What worried the American Embassy was that the prince's cynical views were “shared by a number of publicists.”³⁷ En route to Paris, Konoe was strongly rebuked by Saionji for his brashness. Konoe's hostility toward the League mellowed somewhat after his stay in war-ravaged Europe. At the peace conference he recognized the futility of Japan's spurning the new international order and even found occasion to praise Wilson's role in the League's establishment.³⁸ Nevertheless his essential view of world politics as a struggle between classes of nations remained a constant throughout his political career.

The Peace Conference Delegation

The selection of plenipotentiaries was conducted with utmost care. Initially it was assumed that the Paris Peace Conference, like the Portsmouth Conference in 1905, would be a gathering of professional diplomats. Chinda Sutemi (1857–1929) and Matsui Keishirō (1868–1946), ambassadors to London and Paris, respectively, were the logical choices. But Chinda advised his government on 21 November that the major powers were sending heads of state and Japan should send leaders with at least the status of minister of state. He also warned Tokyo not to appoint military officers or anyone with past German associations to a top post in the delegation. Prime Minister Hara insisted that neither he nor the foreign minister could afford to leave the country at a time of unstable domestic conditions. It was rumored that Katō Takaaki would be selected to head the delegation, but Yamagata objected to his appointment. Baron Makino too was considered but was thought to wield insufficient moral influence at home. The bitter memory of the post-Portsmouth

Hibiya riots made it imperative to send a statesman of stature commanding public respect. The cabinet chose Marquis Saionji Kinmochi (1849–1940). His qualifications included Imperial lineage, past service as premier and foreign minister, and stints as Japanese minister in Austria, Belgium, and Germany. During a decade-long stay in Paris as a student, he had acquired fluency in the French language and the friendship of Georges Clemenceau. Moreover, the sixty-nine-year-old Saionji was a recognized senior statesman of quasi-*genrō* status. Saionji declined three times. Finally, when assured that Makino would be designated second in command, the marquis accepted the assignment. Saionji's appointment drew praise from the major embassies in Tokyo because of his reputation as a liberal and an internationalist.³⁹ Filling out Japan's five plenipotentiary positions were Chinda, Matsui, and Ijūin Hikokichi (1864–1924), ambassador to Rome and Makino's brother-in-law. Because of Saionji's uncertain health and the delay of his arrival in Paris until 2 March, Makino acted as the real strategist and major spokesman for the delegation. It was generally recognized that Saionji's task at Paris was, as a London daily put it, "to sign the peace, not to discuss its terms." The role of figurehead was not alien to him, and indeed he played it often and well during his long career. A staff of nearly sixty Foreign Ministry aides and military and technical advisers joined the envoys in Paris. Most were selected from the staffs of the Japanese embassies in London, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, and other European capitals.⁴⁰ This able entourage included nine future foreign ministers and three future premiers. By assembling the best talent available, Japan signaled the high importance it attached to the peace conference.

Makino led twenty-three members of the delegation eastward from Yokohama on 10 December in a retracing of his journey with the Iwakura Mission forty-seven years earlier. On board the *Tenyō Maru*, a workroom functioned as a branch office of the Foreign Ministry, complete with wireless contact with Kasumigaseki. A press agent reported that the members of the mission "are frequently heard to talk among themselves about the League of Nations, freedom of the seas, and other problems. When you ask for their opinion, they will laugh blandly or purse up their lips like oysters."⁴¹ At San Francisco the entourage was welcomed by Norman Armour, a career diplomat specially sent from Washington by the State Department. As the mission passed through the United States and England on its way to Paris, Makino followed his instructions to exchange views with leading foreign personages on the issues of the approaching conference. Arriving in New York by special train on 31 December, the baron began a round of meetings with prominent Americans, some of whom held firm opinions on the League question. His first appointment was with former secretary of state Elihu Root. The well-known Republican expressed a generally favorable evaluation of the League proposal. But as a jurist he cautioned that international law must be codified before a league could function

effectively. This struck Makino as a rather difficult order. Another former secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan, called at Makino's New York hotel. Makino was impressed by this League sympathizer's commitment to pacifism and international arbitration. Leaving most of the entourage in New York to study published critiques of the League by scholars and political figures, Makino and two secretaries (one being Matsuoka Yōsuke) headed for Washington. President Wilson, Secretary of State Lansing, and Colonel House had already departed for Europe. In the capital Makino was graciously received by Vice President Thomas R. Marshall. The baron conferred with Acting Secretary of State Frank Polk; Rumsford S. Miller, chief of State's Division of Far Eastern Affairs; and Ambassador Ishii. On 4 January the Japanese mission sailed from New York.⁴² It is difficult to assess the impact of these consultations on Makino and the delegation. The record is sketchy and the plenipotentiary's public statements offered only the expected blandishments of cooperation with the Allies. In any case it is clear that the League question was prominent in the mind of the mission and a continuing source of consternation.

Formal instructions to the peace conference plenipotentiaries were approved in the *Gaikō Chōsakai* on 22 December and wired to Ambassador Chinda four days later. As in the directive for the Inter-Allied Conference a year earlier, the cable divided Japan's concerns into three categories and advised the representatives not to interfere in matters of no direct interest to Japan. The acquisition of former German possessions and rights in the East received the most attention and clearest directives, indicating a continuing preoccupation with territorial and economic issues. Appended to the instructions was Uchida's mid-November statement on the Fourteen Points.⁴³ Lacking all but vague guidelines on the League of Nations, Makino and the peace delegation were left on their own to make the concrete decisions for the first agenda item of the parley.

Japan thus approached the Paris Peace Conference newly awakened to the place of the League of Nations in the post-World War I settlement. The nation had devoted four years of military and diplomatic maneuvers to securing particularistic goals of a territorial and economic nature. The preliminary work on broader issues of postwar world order was piecemeal, belated, and plagued by bitter dissension. The weeks following the armistice provided insufficient time to mold disunited reactions to the League concept into a viable political consensus. As a result only a semblance of policy emerged. The state of affairs demonstrated the strength of the bonds preventing a smooth transition from what Makino called the old diplomacy to the new.

4

Making the Covenant Palatable at Paris

Avoid most carefully, on every occasion, decisions arrived at through a conference.

—Prince Metternich

FOUR OF THE FIVE Big Power delegations arrived in Paris in January 1919 with their own draft versions of a League of Nations constitution in hand. The lone exception was Japan.

While the establishment of the League of Nations led the peace conference agenda, it was a matter of low policy priority for the Empire. The projections of such internationalist diplomats as Komura and Makino notwithstanding, Japan's planning for the postwar settlement had designated the displacement of German power in East Asia as the major objective. This aim was to be accomplished through the annexation of former German Pacific islands and the acquisition of Germany's Qingdao leasehold and economic rights in Shandong Province. Japanese decision makers preferred to put off the League issue until these goals were accomplished to Japan's satisfaction and until the League proposition took more concrete shape. In response to Japanese public sentiment, an international statement disavowing racial discrimination was later added to Japan's conference goals. Hence the Empire's peace program embodied three objectives—the Pacific islands, Shandong, and race equality. Success would raise Japan's standing in the world community and strengthen its regional leadership in East Asia. Contrary to the preconference expectations of most Japanese policy makers, each of Japan's primary goals was to become inextricably intertwined with the issue of the League of Nations during the course of the negotiations.

Japan's Place in the Peace Conference

The Japanese entourage took up residence in the Hotel Le Bristol overlooking the Place Vendôme, in the shadow of a 144-foot column commemorating Napoleon's

victory at Austerlitz. Three decades later Sawada Renzō, veteran diplomat and Japan's first official observer to the United Nations, recalled the scene:

We rented the whole Hotel Le Bristol, situated on one corner of the Place Vendôme. One part of the building was devoted to offices for the delegation; the other served as its living quarters. In the center of the square rose a tall and slender monument to Napoleon, fully ten times higher than the statue of Ninth Rank Ōmura Masajirō. Lined up in its shadow, facing the Japanese headquarters, were nearly thirty cars proudly bearing the insignia of the Rising Sun. Indeed it was a sight to catch the eye of the Parisians.¹

Though the Japanese mission appeared on the surface very much like the other Big Power delegations, Japan's postwar position among the powers was singular. Unlike Britain, France, and Italy, Japan was not indebted to the United States for military assistance in the war. Nevertheless, Japan regarded the goodwill of the United States as essential to its future national welfare and security. Compared with the states of Europe, Japan was a neophyte in the art of multilateral diplomacy. The Paris Peace Conference was the Empire's first experience of a multilateral international meeting where issues perceived as vital interests were at stake. For the first time, war issues involving Japan and its immediate neighbors were to be brought before a world tribunal for review based on the demands of a global power structure. This situation posed new opportunities to achieve world respectability and, at the same time, threatened to circumscribe Japan's independent, regional prerogatives and even rob the nation of the fruits of war. Among the Japanese, the peace conference phenomenon evoked the same hopes and fears as the specter of a League of Nations. The Foreign Ministry was rightfully apprehensive over the delegation's tactical inexperience and limitations in Western languages. The potential liabilities of the peace process weighed heavily on the cabinet, the ministry, and especially the peace mission.²

While the Japanese delegation at Paris can be faulted for inadequate preparation on global issues and for tactical ineptitude, the American representatives for their part took relatively little interest in the postwar issues of East Asia. One State Department specialist in Asian affairs who was at Paris later recalled the futility of his efforts to direct the attention of President Wilson, Colonel House, and others to the problems of the East. This staff member complained:

In terms of "man hours" of thought and consideration, the amount of time given by the American delegation — and the staff thereof as a whole — during the whole period of the Conference to problems of the Far East and the Pacific was, as compared with that which was given to problems of Europe and of Africa, so

little as to be almost negligible. The American “experts” on the Far East wrote many memoranda; but there is little if any evidence that most of the memoranda which they sent forward were read by the principal American delegates. One of these experts was twice called in consultation for a few brief moments; others of them were not called in at all.³

In view of the poor preparation on both sides, the likelihood of major misunderstandings between Japan and the United States at the Paris Peace Conference was great.

Decision making before the conference reflected the hierarchy of the Supreme War Council; that is, key policies were worked out by the major powers in a closed process that often excluded Japan. Though Japan requested (with British backing) representation in the armistice discussions in late October and early November 1918, it was granted only the right to be consulted. Four-power meetings produced the armistice, and Asian issues were not raised. Japan would capitalize on this circumstance during the peace conference by arguing, when advantageous, that it had not been a party to the armistice and therefore was not subject to its terms. The United States, Great Britain, and France kept a tight rein on decisions regarding conference organization, including the agenda and procedural rules — matters of momentous import. Japan had no input in the bargaining that defined the nature and makeup of conference commissions, determined that the constitution of the League of Nations would be an integral part of the peace treaty, and established Paris and Versailles as the sites for the preliminary and formal peace conferences.⁴

After the conference began on 18 January, Japan was repeatedly reminded by the course of events that key policies were being worked out by greater powers in closed-door consultation. Lesser nations were habitually invited to suggest changes in near-finished products that emerged from important commissions and the Council of Four. Though acknowledged as one of the Big Five, Japan found itself progressively isolated from the inner circle as the months of the conference passed. After the latter part of March the Council of Four, composed of Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Orlando, met frequently and made the principal decisions of the conference. The Japanese were told that their exclusion from this body was due to the absence of Japan’s head of state at the conference — but the delegation interpreted this as an affront to its prestige. Robert Lansing, in his memoirs of the peace conference, reveals that the mission had reason to be upset. The bypassing of Japan in the creation of the Council of Four, recalled the former U.S. secretary of state, was due to Japan’s inferior position among the powers. In a departure from the mission’s original instructions to remain silent on matters of primarily European interest, Marquis Saionji on 24 May issued a statement of protest to the Council of Four, asking to be privy to matters of general concern.⁵ Ja-

pan's emissaries quickly learned that private conversations would avail more than formal presentations, and they pressed their demands through backstage contacts. Their experiences throughout the conference led Baron Makino to conclude that the crucial conflicts of the postwar settlement did not concern Germany but rather pertained to relations among the Allies.⁶

The Japanese delegation's deportment at Paris is consistent with patterns of negotiating behavior displayed by Japan in international bargaining from 1905 to 1941. Japanese negotiators typically evidenced a staunch confidence in the inherent justness of their original demands. They tended to cling tenaciously to their initial positions, arguing that the Japanese people at home would settle for nothing less. Inflexibility was tightened by Imperial sanction of conference demands and the hardening of domestic public opinion. The Japanese position typically reflected overdependence upon preconference assurances achieved through personal diplomacy. Compromises were postponed as long as possible, often precipitating hostile confrontations, embarrassment, and loss of public confidence at the closing stage. Whatever flexibility there was usually resulted from initiatives taken by Japanese envoys exceeding their instructions. Lack of clear negotiating guidelines, a clumsy decision-making process at home, and the technical difficulties of maintaining close contact with Tokyo made it inevitable that Japanese negotiators offered unauthorized concessions when confronted with an impasse. Throughout, the necessity of risk avoidance dominated the diplomats' activities. Their most frustrating task was to project an image of flexibility abroad and toughness at home.⁷

Japan approached the Paris Peace Conference in the spirit of the old diplomacy. It formulated its policies as an imperialist power and expected the United States and the European Allies to do the same. Japan presented demands aimed at the furtherance of its own self-interest and depended on wartime power plays for their achievement. The Empire stood aloof from the movement to create a world system where war would be unknown. In view of the new values Woodrow Wilson had popularized, Japan's posture was, in the words of historian Imai Seiichi, "diplomacy behind the times."⁸ The longest-surviving Japanese diplomat at the conference, Horinouchi Kensuke, later recalled,

Japan was totally absorbed in issues directly related to its own interests such as Shandong and the Pacific islands. It devoted no attention at all to matters of universal concern such as a peace structure and the international labor problem. Indeed, its perspective was limited. . . . It is regrettable that Japan did no more than maintain the virtue of silence.⁹

The caricature of the Japanese as silent partners at the peace conference is painted repeatedly by Japanese and foreign historians alike. But taciturnity must not be confused with passivity. A thorough analysis of the proceedings and primary

documents of the parley shows that the delegation was diligent, officious, and at times vocal in the pursuit of Japanese interests at Paris. Realistically speaking, Japan's ultimate goal was essentially no different from that of the major powers, whose schemes for universal peace served to reinforce their predominant position in the world. But in an environment of idealism, Japan lost the contest for popular sympathy by formulating a conventional policy toward territorial settlements and treating the League as expendable. Japan's diplomacy inspired few people at home, much less the admiration of world masses. Just as the Twenty-One Demands had alienated the Empire from its allies and neighbors during the war, so Japan's postwar diplomacy incurred the suspicion of the United States and the enmity of China.

The Abandonment of Obstructionism

Foreign Minister Uchida's statement of 13 November 1918 before the *Gaikō Chōsakai* remained the sole official guideline for the Paris plenipotentiaries for dealing with the League question. The cable that carried this and other instructions to Ambassador Chinda on 26 December elaborated only by classifying the League item among those questions regarding which Japan should "consider world trends and act in unison with the Allies."¹⁰ While the foreign minister never took a clear stand for or against the League, the plenipotentiaries could deduce from the vague instructions these directives: the delegation should (1) attempt to delay the League's formation, (2) avoid remaining outside, should its establishment appear inevitable, and (3) work within the context of the League issue to press for racial equality. The official instructions remained unchanged throughout the conference. In pursuance of these instructions, the delegation first dragged its feet on the League question and then set out to alter the substance of the Covenant so as to make it amenable to Japan's national interests.

By the time the Japanese appeared on the Paris scene, the League movement had attained a momentum among world statesmen that no secondary power could stem. The time for influencing the agenda of the conference and effecting fundamental changes in the constitution of the League had already passed. On 13 January, the first day Japanese representatives attended preliminary meetings of the Council of Ten, Ambassadors Chinda and Matsui were treated to the news that the League would head the schedule of conference business.¹¹ The Hurst-Miller draft of the Covenant, which would serve as the basis for deliberation, was a distillation of several previous drafts and a product of painstaking Anglo-American compromise. When it was distributed by Wilson at the first meeting of the League of Nations Commission on 3 February, it had already acquired an element of permanence that precluded any Japanese attempt to subvert or substantially modify the League scheme. Providentially, not all Anglo-American decisions before the conference

had been contrary to Japanese interests. In negotiating with Wilson, Lord Robert Cecil had succeeded in watering down some of the president's proposals in ways that happened to satisfy major Japanese concerns. He had limited provisions on disarmament to the realm of principle and inquiry and had eradicated a clause that would have restricted League membership to states that enjoyed "popular self-government."¹² In subsequent debates as well, Japan could often depend upon British, French, and Italian negotiators to shoulder the burden of neutralizing offensive Covenant provisions.

The delegates of thirty-two states and dominions officially got down to business on 18 January in the French Foreign Ministry in the Quai d'Orsay on the banks of the Seine. From the outset Japan's lack of enthusiasm for the League was starkly apparent. The Council of Ten — with two delegates from each of the Big Five powers — was the first venue where the issue surfaced. On 22 January, when Prime Minister Lloyd George presented a resolution to the Council to establish the League of Nations Commission, Baron Makino stated that Japan would not bind itself to the League sight unseen. He pleaded insufficient preparation on the subject and requested time for his government to study its obligations under the proposed organization. The delegation would have to await further instructions before lending its support. Makino also expressed his dissatisfaction with Wilson's plan to make the League constitution an integral part of the peace treaty.

President Wilson was perturbed. Had not Japan as a member of the Supreme War Council accepted the League as a basis for the armistice? Did Japan wish to dissociate itself from this previous understanding? Makino and Matsui in reply acknowledged Japan's general agreement to the armistice but asserted that that commitment did not bind Japan to the details of future developments. Lloyd George inquired whether Japan's reticence implied a wish not to be represented on the League of Nations Commission. Makino replied that, on the contrary, he wished to represent Japan in that body. When Lloyd George's resolution was adopted, Japan's reservations were duly noted and, at Makino's request, were kept confidential.¹³

During the succeeding seven days the Japanese delegation stoutly maintained a posture of aloofness from the League. When the motion to set up the League of Nations Commission was presented to a plenary session on 25 January, delegates of nine nations, led by President Wilson, rose to intone messages of warm support for the project. Lu Zhengxiang, the foreign minister of the Beijing government and a Chinese plenipotentiary, assured the conference of China's backing for the League, "which will give all nations, both small and great, an effective guarantee of their territorial integrity, of their political sovereignty, and of their economic independence founded upon an impartial justice." Wellington Koo declared that "no people have been more eager to see the formation of a League of Nations than the people of China." Four Japanese plenipotentiaries sat silent through the session.¹⁴

Japan's demeanor changed on 30 January. On that day Baron Makino assured

the Council of Ten that his government was “quite ready to associate itself with the work of this very important organization.” He claimed that he had telegraphed Tokyo the day before, requesting official sanction for Japanese participation. He attributed his delegation’s shift in attitude to its positive appraisal of printed expositions on the League by Wilson and Lloyd George.¹⁵ A post-Versailles report by the delegation sheds important light on the considerations that evoked the mission’s shift. This document describes how the envoys, when faced with the potential disadvantages inherent in the organization, had to choose between two basic policy alternatives: (1) join the League while attempting to modify the substance of its charter so as to remove obstacles to the future development of the Empire, or (2) stand completely outside the League and act independently. The delegation, according to this report, reasoned that, by taking the first option, Japan would have to acquiesce in the unattractive Covenant provisions on disarmament and sanctions, which were beyond its power to change. But by opting for autonomy Japan would incur an even more distressing scenario. The Empire would be subjected to political and economic decisions made by an alien body that catered to the interests of its members. Japan’s predicament of racial and diplomatic isolation would be worsened, and it would forfeit its hard-earned standing among the five Great Powers. As world commercial competition increased, member states would form blocs and enact boycotts to the detriment of Japanese exports. Furthermore, Japan would have to risk the liabilities involved in negotiating a separate peace with Germany. After weighing these considerations, the mission decided that Japan had no choice but to cooperate with the conference in establishing the League.¹⁶ It is also likely that Makino and his associates were swayed by the growing consensus in the Council of Ten favoring the adoption of a mandate system for the disposal of German and Ottoman territorial possessions. According to the British draft resolution of 24 January, trusteeship rights were to be assigned by the League to qualified member nations.¹⁷ The timing of the Japanese affirmative shift might well have been influenced by the need to avoid forfeiting jurisdiction over the Pacific islands.

The delegation’s initial coolness toward the League did not satisfy League detractors at home. In the *Gaikō Chōsakai*, Itō Miyoji accused the envoys of violating their instructions to delay the League’s formation. Makino, he claimed, had been too timid to take “forthright action” opposing the League and had done no more than express “ambiguous reservations.” As Itō had feared all along, the baron had let his personal inclinations take precedence over official orders. Prime Minister Hara came to the plenipotentiaries’ defense. A frontal attack on the League was not a realistic option for Japan, he said, for it would have led to isolation from the powers. The only viable course for Japan was to try to change the wording of the Covenant and, failing that, to interpret it loosely so as to minimize conflicts with the Imperial constitution.¹⁸ Meanwhile, the major Japanese newspapers heralded Japan’s designation as one of the Big Five and welcomed the Covenant. Ishibashi

Tanzan, editor of the *Tōyō keizai shinpō*, urged his readers to focus on the “mutual international life” of the League and not waste their time judging it on the basis of race equality, freedom of the seas, and disarmament. He expressed his hope that his countrymen would “lay aside issues of their own interest for the present” and promote the creation of the League. When the peace conference first released a draft for public scrutiny on 14 February, the *Tokyo asahi* lauded the League’s constitution as one of the most important documents in the annals of the world and predicted that it would make President Wilson’s name immortal.¹⁹

The formal arena for effecting changes in the Covenant was the League of Nations Commission. President Wilson himself chaired the meetings of this commission, which met in the Hotel de Crillon. It was composed of fifteen members — two each from the Big Five, and one each from five smaller powers. Representatives of the lesser powers met on 27 January to choose from nine aspirants; China was one of the five elected. China was represented on the League of Nations Commission by V. K. Wellington Koo (Ku Weichun, 1888–1985), a recent Columbia Ph.D. who had studied under James T. Shotwell. Shotwell, Bryce Professor of the History of International Relations at Columbia University, was part of the American delegation and later a founding member of the Institute of Pacific Relations. At age thirty-one, Koo was the youngest plenipotentiary at the conference. Few nations had so articulate a spokesman for their interests.



League of Nations Commission at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919. Chinda Sutemi and Makino Nobuaki are seated on the left. Reproduced by permission from NHK, ed., *Dokyumento shōwa*, I (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1986).

Makino initially selected Chinda Sutemi (ambassador to London) and Ochiai Kentarō (minister to the Hague) to represent Japan on the League of Nations Commission. However, before the commission's first meeting on 3 February, Makino appointed himself in place of Ochiai — a clear indication of the mission's growing awareness of the centrality of the League issue to the conference. Makino and Chinda faithfully attended the fifteen meetings of the commission. They sponsored several amendments with mixed success, and they threw their support behind amendments proposed by other countries. Two decades later Makino recalled his sense of uneasiness as he debated the structure and rules of the organization:

It was very unpleasant for me to attend the meetings of the League of Nations Commission because of my apprehension that the collective responsibilities required by the Covenant would somehow restrict Japan's rights. Nevertheless, since the Covenant had become the foundation of the peace conference, I had no choice but to join in the game.²⁰

Hence, within the first two weeks of the peace conference the Japanese delegation recognized the futility of an obstructionist approach to the League of Nations. It became clear that Japanese hesitancy would not postpone the creation of the organization. Foot-dragging simply drew attention to the weak state of Japan's conference preparation and annoyed the leaders of the great powers. In the face of the mandate principle, aloofness threatened to jeopardize the achievement of one of Japan's primary conference goals. But even after moving to formally associate itself with the project, Japan guarded its diplomatic maneuverability. It remained sufficiently noncommittal to preserve the option of withdrawing support in case the League assumed an inhospitable shape or the nation's top-priority peace demands were not met. Japan's core position on the League throughout the conference remained "wait and see." It also became apparent to the Japanese early in the parley that there were limits to President Wilson's influence. Disagreements among the Allies showed that the Western powers were not a monolithic bloc and that beneath an overlay of democratic idealism they still clung to the values and methods of the old diplomacy. The League dream, which a year before had risen to an exalted position among the Allies as a vindication for the war and a substitute for Bolshevism, now appeared vulnerable to the undermining forces of national interest. Though the League would become a reality, Japan by joining it would not have to trade concrete vital interests for abstract virtues. Having thus reevaluated the conference situation and adjusted to the inevitability of the League's establishment, the mission turned its attention to two tasks: the alteration of the Covenant, and the securing of Japan's primary conference goals.

The Mandate Question

The concept of mandates was a stroke of genius that formally honored Wilson's nonannexation principle but at the same time satisfied the European and Japanese Allies' demand to acquire control over former German colonies and Ottoman territories. The idea was spelled out by South African general Jan Christiaan Smuts in his published plan for a League of Nations. Before Wilson reached Europe in December 1918, he informed a shipboard audience that the "German colonies should be declared the common property of the League of Nations and administered by small nations." The mandate principle was affirmed by Wilson and Lloyd George in their preconference deliberations at Buckingham Palace later the same month.²¹

Outright annexation of the captured German islands north of the equator had been the most prominent assumption in Japanese planning for the peace. Some Japanese media spokesmen valued the Marianas, Marshalls, and Carolines as outlets for population pressure and a source of potash for agriculture, while the Imperial Navy saw potential strategic uses for the islands. As early as 1 December 1914, Foreign Minister Katō Takaaki had stated that Japan should be rewarded for its contribution in the war by the permanent acquisition of the captured territories. In that same month a naval administration was established with headquarters on Truk and a goal to make the Japanese presence permanent. While officers set up branch administrative units on the larger islands, the navy encouraged private commercial entrepreneurs in Japan to participate in the economic development of the new Nan'yō (South Seas) territory.²² During 1917, Japan had negotiated secret treaties that assured the Empire of British, French, Russian, and Italian postwar support for Japanese retention. A Foreign Ministry report as late as 10 November 1918 had reiterated Japan's confidence in British backing. Japan's official demand for the "definite possession" and "unconditional cession" of the islands was presented to the Council of Ten at Paris on 27 January. In a propaganda piece distributed to the press at Paris, Baron Makino emphasized the resolute backing of Japanese domestic opinion for the demand. "To place these islands under the control of any other nation," he said, "would naturally constitute a reflection upon Japan that would be resented by the people of that country."²³

The proposal of the mandate system by Lloyd George in the Council of Ten on 27 January took Japanese diplomats by surprise. Unsure how to respond, Makino asked that the discussion be held to a "provisional character" while he wired home for instructions.²⁴ Makino's telegram was read to the Gaikō Chōsakai by Foreign Vice-Minister Shidehara on 3 February. It told of a 30 January private discussion between Makino and Lloyd George in which the British prime minister had implied that the occupying power would be chosen as mandatory in each case. Makino

gave the Foreign Ministry his own view that “the mandate system in essence will be no different from annexation” and urged the government to grant its assent in view of probable American, Australian, and New Zealand acceptance of the British plan. Speaking in support of Makino’s advice, Shidehara admitted that the mandate system was a compromise for Japan, but he emphasized that under the “Class C” designation Japan would be permitted to apply its domestic laws to the native population. The foreign minister and prime minister were leaning toward endorsing the plan, he said. They would, however, instruct the plenipotentiaries to secure unofficial assurance from the United States that Japan, and not America or Australia, would become the mandatory in the case of the Japanese-held islands. Shidehara also voiced the significant observation that the mandate system was being discussed in Paris as if the formation of the League of Nations were a foregone conclusion.

Itō Miyoji characteristically spoke first in response to Shidehara’s presentation. He was incensed that Japan’s alliance partner, despite prior agreement on the islands’ disposal, had proposed the mandate system without consulting Japan. He raised the worst-possible-case scenario that Britain might have compounded its duplicity by secretly offering *all* the Pacific islands to Australia. Even with British support, Japan could be outvoted in a League decision assigning mandatory rights. Itō warned against affirming the League of Nations and its mandate system before the League had taken concrete shape. Navy Minister Katō Tomosaburō expressed his opinion that the mandate system would not be a strategic disadvantage, for in time of national emergency Japan could break the nonfortification restriction and arm the islands. Three weeks later, however, Navy Vice-Minister Tochinai Sōjirō took a sterner line in asserting that the islands were essential to Japan’s defense and should not be allowed to be classified as anything less than an integral part of Japanese territory. Throughout the discussion, most Gaikō Chōsakai members expressed less concern over the mandate concept per se than over the possibility that the islands might be assigned to some other trustee state. Misgivings about the mandate system were soon voiced in the Japanese press. On 6 February the *Tokyo asahi* termed it a “foolish plan” and questioned the appropriateness of placing the South Sea Islanders, who had no foreseeable capacity for governing themselves, under mandate status.²⁵

The Japanese fear that another nation would be assigned the Pacific island mandate was well founded. Australia indeed desired that its trusteeship include those former German islands north of the equator. The United States Navy was concerned about the potential consequences of a Japanese strategic position in the southern Pacific intervening between the Hawaiian and Philippine Islands. A report issued before the armistice by the Planning Section of the Division of Naval Operations candidly addressed the issue. Rather than permit Japan to expand in a direction in conflict with the interests of the United States, the report asserted, the

peace conference should accord Japan a free hand in Siberia. Such a move would be justified in view of the expanses of unoccupied land in the Soviet Union. The Pacific islands in question should be internationalized. When the General Board of the Navy Department responded to this memorandum, it concluded that the United States should acquire the Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall Islands. While President Wilson was apprehensive of growing Japanese power in East Asia, he recognized that the conference could not challenge a Japanese mandatory position over the islands north of the equator without concomitantly questioning the legitimacy of a dominion mandate over islands south of the equator — a sure invitation to British wrath.²⁶

Undeterred by such considerations was Breckinridge Long, third assistant secretary of state. Long cabled the American delegation his conviction that “in these islands the United States has a very material interest.” Long called for U.S. acquisition of the Carolines, Marianas, Yap, and the Samoan Group, citing the danger of leaving the Japanese in control of the important cable station on Yap and the threat of “a screen separating the Philippines from the Hawaiian Group and from the United States.” He noted that since its naval expedition in 1914, Japan had closed the islands in its possession to foreign trade, and he warned that Japan might be fortifying them. Recognizing that the United States would have difficulty justifying acquisition at the peace conference, Long suggested a duplicitous solution. The islands should be restored to Germany, which, stripped of its naval power and unable to defend its Pacific territories, could later be cajoled into transferring them to the United States, perhaps as payment of a war indemnity. The delegation did not pursue Long’s plan but throughout the conference tried in vain to detach Yap from the Japanese mandate or to internationalize the cable facilities there. Before the conference was over, the United States registered a reservation on the inclusion of Yap in the mandate to Japan, declaring that the island’s “free and unhampered use should not be limited or controlled by any one Power.”²⁷

The Gaikō Chōsakai on 3 February decided to reconfirm Japan’s demand for annexation. However, in line with the government’s overall posture of acting in concert with the powers, it advised the delegation not to take an isolated stand against the mandate system. If it became necessary to acquiesce, Japan’s concession should be accompanied by a reservation asserting its right to receive the mandate over the islands. The council also approved instructions revealing for the first time a recognition of the important implications of broader peace conference issues and a realization of the need for Japan to present an image of interest in global affairs. In response to press criticism that Japan’s delegates had been too silent at Paris, it advised the mission to speak out “even on matters not directly related to Japan.”²⁸

Privately assured of the amenability of the mandate system to Japan’s interests, Makino took matters into his own hands before the instructions were received. He

announced to the Council of Ten on 30 January his satisfaction that a provisional agreement on mandates had been reached.²⁹ That accord became the basis for Article 22 of the League Covenant. Before the provision was approved in its final form, however, the Japanese delegates sought to alter it so as to tighten the mandatory power's jurisdiction. In the League of Nations Commission on 8 February, Makino succeeded, over Wilson's objection, in restoring the article to its original form as proposed in the Council of Ten, by the removal of the word "if" from the following phrase:

There are territories, such as South-West Africa and certain Islands in the South Pacific, which . . . can be best administered under the laws of the mandatory state as if integral portions thereof. . . .

Wilson argued that the insertion of "if" had not changed the meaning of the article, but Makino accurately detected its important implication.³⁰

C-class mandates were not to be fortified, and as "integral portions" of the mandatory power's territory they did not have to be subject to the Open Door principle. The C-class formula was an anti-Japanese device of the British in the interest of the dominions. Since the domestic laws of Australia and New Zealand applied in their mandated islands south of the equator, Japanese immigration was precluded there. Moreover, the absence of the Open Door was an effective bar to Japanese exports and enterprise in the dominions' mandates. Japan argued in vain at Paris that the Open Door should be applied to C-class mandates.³¹

Disarmament

The Fourteen Points had signaled Wilson's intention to press the cause of disarmament in the postwar settlement. The First World War was widely regarded as having been precipitated by the arms race that preceded it, and millions of League supporters the world over believed that peace required disarmament. Moreover, the drastic measures of disarmament imposed on Germany at the peace conference were justified by the victors as a prelude to arms reduction on a worldwide scale.³²

Conversations in Washington between Colonel House and Ambassador Ishii Kikujirō in June 1918 provided clear warning of the American government's determination in this matter. When Foreign Minister Uchida stated his response to the Fourteen Points in November, he predicted that agreement on disarmament was unlikely. Japan, he said, wished to avoid arms restrictions, but the nation must not convey an image of opposition to peace and humanitarianism.³³ By the time the plenipotentiaries were handed the foreign minister's statement as part of their instructions on the eve of the peace conference, the principle of disarmament had been firmly set in the draft covenants. It worried them that the disarmament item

in the Covenant had ballooned to encompass provisos to abolish conscription and private arms manufacture and to require the “full and frank interchange” of information on national armaments and military programs.

Disarmament was viewed by nearly all Japanese elites as disproportionately debilitating to their nation, a relatively new and insecure arrival in the ranks of powerhood. They quite logically believed that arms limitation should be imposed only on those major combatant nations that had amassed huge arsenals during the war. Some Japanese spokespersons frankly asserted that world disarmament was highly desirable — for everyone except Japan.³⁴ The implications of disarmament for the military establishment gave rise to strong misgivings about the League among officers of the Imperial Army and Navy. In the Anglo-American draft Covenant the clause abolishing conscription drew the heaviest fire. Even outside the services, conscription meant more to the Japanese than a system of recruitment. Since its establishment in 1873, the conscript army had played a major role in the dissemination of new ideas and the spiritual unification of heterogeneous regions and social classes of the Empire. Militarism positively connoted the virtues of order, diligence, loyalty, and obedience. To threaten Japan’s military institutions was to attack the very fiber of Japanese national consciousness. War Minister Tanaka devoted his lengthiest speech in the *Gaikō Chōsakai* to the provision in Article 8 regarding conscription. He refuted the sentiment prevailing in the West that the draft encouraged aggression. The general pointed out the positive contributions of conscription in inculcating the spirit of the nation in Japan’s youth. He recounted how conscription had made possible Japan’s victories in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, exploits upon which Japanese national glory rested. Conscription was now indispensable for the maintenance of Japan’s elevated status among the powers.³⁵

Most Japanese military figures, including the army and navy attachés in Paris, opposed Japan’s submission to disarmament in any form. However, they were overruled by the service chiefs, who subordinated their misgivings to the domestic political necessity of compromising with the Hara government and the international political necessity of cooperating with the powers. The top brass accepted the plenipotentiaries’ assurances that the more offensive disarmament provisions of the Covenant could be moderated through negotiation. Moreover, they were encouraged by attaché reports from foreign capitals that revealed that military leaders in the West, like themselves, were opposed to allowing Wilson to decimate their materiel and soldiery.³⁶

Fortunately for the Japanese delegation, other middle powers were vitally concerned about Article 8 of the Hurst-Miller draft. Italian objections before the conference opened had already made the inclusion of a ban on conscription doubtful, and the French took up the gauntlet in the fourth meeting of the League of Nations

Commission. There Léon Bourgeois argued that, to the French, compulsory military service was a fundamental component of democracy. President Wilson agreed to strike this provision from the Covenant. Similarly, the prohibition of private arms manufacture was reduced to a recommendation, without the Japanese having to speak a word. However, the Foreign Ministry did not let down its guard against the possibility that a provision requiring nonconscript armies might be reinstated later in the conference. When in March the Council of Ten deliberated the restriction of future German forces to volunteers, Foreign Minister Uchida ordered the Japanese plenipotentiaries to “exert utmost efforts to insure that a volunteer army system is never imposed upon Japan.”³⁷ It was the French delegation again that carried the ball in an amendment, much in Japan’s interest, to tailor disarmament requirements to the special geographical circumstances of member states. Having in mind France’s proximity to a potentially resurgent Germany, the venerable Monsieur Bourgeois on 11 February introduced the following amendment to Article 8:

having due regard, in determining the number of troops, not only to the relative strength of the different States, but also to the risks to which they are exposed by their geographical situation and the nature of their frontiers.

A drafting committee simplified the wording to read “taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State,” and the commission adopted it on 13 February.³⁸ The French amendment recognizing the relevance of geographical circumstances to disarmament may have provided a model for subsequent Japanese efforts to inject the issue of geography into Covenant provisions on sanctions.

In two instances the Japanese played a visible role in moderating disarmament provisions in the Covenant. In the League of Nations Commission on 6 February, Ambassador Chinda successfully proposed replacing the word “domestic” in the following clause with “national”:

The High Contracting Parties recognize the principle that the maintenance of peace will require the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations; . . .

This modification substantially expanded the scope of permissible armaments. Japan again succeeded in injecting an element of flexibility into Article 8 when it proposed on March 22 that disarmament plans adopted by the League “be subject to reconsideration and revision every ten years.” After a compliant President

Wilson altered this phrase to read “at least every ten years,” the amendment was accepted by the commission. The Japanese delegation discovered, however, that there was a limit to how far it could press for flexibility. When Baron Makino proposed that the entire Covenant be revised every ten years to reflect changes in international conditions, the commission voted no.³⁹

One vexing issue for Japan was the question of how decisions on permissible armament levels would be made within the League. The draft Covenant stated that the League Council, advised by a permanent commission, should formulate such plans. Despite the anticipation of a permanent seat on the council, the danger of Japan’s being overruled by the non-Asian majority was frequently cited by League critics and disarmament foes at home. The delegation did not raise this issue in the League of Nations Commission but elected to pursue it through private approaches to British diplomats. Sir Robert Cecil assured Makino that the permanent commission would include representatives of all the Big Five and that decisions there would require a unanimous vote.⁴⁰

Back in Tokyo, news of the disarmament provisions of the Covenant naturally caused a stir among military figures. One keen observer was General Ugaki Kazushige (1868–1956), a subordinate to War Minister Tanaka Giichi. Ugaki was a native of Okayama who had studied in Germany before and after the Russo-Japanese War and would hold the post of war minister from 1924 in the Katō Takaaki cabinet. His comments in his diary reflect the army’s concern that disarmament was a device to freeze the status quo. When the draft of the Covenant was published in mid-February, he recorded his pessimism:

The League of Nations, now a fashionable topic, has been announced in Paris. According to the official text, the League’s essential aim is the prevention of rivalry in the future and the preservation of the so-called status quo. In other words, it is useful for promoting the interests of satisfied, stable, secure states, while preventing backward countries — which lack the power and spirit to advance — from altering the status quo. To energetic nations striving for progress and satisfaction, the League is an impediment to be discarded. . . . Britain and America seek, through the League of Nations, to shut off the military power of other states while nibbling away at them through use of their long suit, capitalism. There doesn’t seem to be much difference between military conquest and capitalistic nibbling.⁴¹

Article 8 was the subject of intense discussion in the Gaikō Chōsakai. Foreign Vice-Minister Shidehara tried to calm potential fears by emphasizing the voluntary nature of the disarmament provisions. But War Minister Tanaka disputed the right of the League to prescribe arms limitation for its members. He argued

that the clause requiring League Council permission for exceeding recommended armament levels should be dropped and that the League should require members to exchange only a "general outline" of military information. Itō Miyoji denounced the article as an infringement on the Emperor's prerogative, specified in Article 12 of the Meiji Constitution, to decide the organization and size of the army and navy. He disputed Shidehara's contention that the language of the Covenant made disarmament optional. He questioned the wisdom of Makino's reliance on the private assurances of Cecil, for "Cecil is a figure of secondary importance in Britain." Itō's total negativism on the disarmament question was finally too much for even the war minister to abide. General Tanaka believed that the army had more to gain from cooperation with the Hara cabinet than from digging in its heels on the League question. He stated his confidence that Japan would indeed be able to veto any disadvantageous disarmament plan.⁴² Before the conclusion of the peace conference Japan's military attachés in Paris were encouraging the army General Staff to make studies of Japan's armament needs in anticipation of upcoming disarmament negotiations within the League. By relegating the issue of disarmament to the realm of political policy, the military was able to compromise and acquiesce.

Arbitration

Article 12 of the Covenant draft released to the public on 14 February laid out procedures for the arbitration of disputes. It stipulated a three-month waiting period between the date of an arbitration decision and the time parties could resort to war. On 24 March, Makino proposed in the League of Nations Commission that this article be amended to disallow military preparations by either party during the three months. His action, suggested by the mission's legal adviser Tachi Sakutarō, was taken apparently without instructions from Tokyo. The amendment read as follows:

From the time a dispute is submitted to arbitration or to inquiry by the Executive Council, and until the lapse of the aforesaid term of three months, the parties to the dispute shall refrain from making any military preparations.

The amendment was approved without discussion and referred to the Drafting Committee. When it surfaced there, it met the determined opposition of David Hunter Miller of the American delegation, who regarded it impossible to apply, and the amendment was sent back to the commission with the recommendation that it be rejected in any form.⁴³

The commission took up the amendment at its last meeting, on 11 April. Baron Makino spoke for it, arguing that military preparations in a time of crisis would

heighten tension and anxiety and were therefore contrary to the spirit of the Covenant. The prevailing sentiment expressed by Wilson, Cecil, and Ferdinand Larnaude (of France), however, was that the Japanese provision would compel weaker states to maintain a high level of military preparation during peacetime and would create advantages for unscrupulous states. China's concern in the issue was voiced by Wellington Koo, who warned that the effect of the Japanese amendment would be to turn the world into "a veritable armed camp just as it had been before the war." Only Orlando of Italy spoke for Japan. Clearly outnumbered, Makino withdrew the amendment.⁴⁴

It is interesting to note that in 1924 the Fifth Assembly of the League adopted the Geneva Protocol, which forbade any increase in armaments or even economic mobilization by states party to a dispute during arbitration proceedings. The representatives of France, Britain, and other powers that had opposed Japan's amendment to Article 12 voted for this provision without reservation. But the Geneva Protocol was rejected by the British and other governments at home and was abandoned.⁴⁵

Discussion of the Covenant provision on arbitration followed altogether different lines in Tokyo. Members of the Gaikō Chōsakai called into question the feasibility of impartial arbitration and the constitutionality of a scheme that would restrict the Emperor's right to declare war. Given this sentiment, it is not surprising that the Japanese delegation sided with Britain and the United States in defeating a proposal by the smaller nations on the Commission, led by Portugal, to make arbitration decisions and rulings by the Permanent Court of International Justice binding upon League members. Perhaps Lord Robert Cecil was speaking for the Japanese when he uttered these ironic words to the Commission on 6 February: "I cannot assume . . . responsibility for discarding war as an instrument for the maintenance of the peace of the world."⁴⁶ Similarly, Japan joined the United States and Great Britain on 7 February in defeating an amendment to Article 13 (later to become 15) by Belgium, backed by France, to give mandatory effect to a majority (as opposed to unanimous) decision of the League of Nations Council.⁴⁷

Sanctions

The sanctions provisions of the Covenant were ranked by the Japanese delegation with disarmament as the items most disadvantageous to Japan. Article 16 of the 14 February draft Covenant empowered the League Council to recommend economic and military sanctions against outlaw states. As a resource-poor island nation, dependent since industrialization upon foreign commercial intercourse, Japan viewed itself as uniquely vulnerable to sanctions. This article could provide China with an institutionalized means to summon foreign pressures against Japan. Moreover, the prospect of an external authority mustering Japanese troops

or ships for policy action raised constitutional questions, and few Japanese wanted to become involved in faraway disputes in which the Empire had no direct interest. The voluntary language of Article 16 did little to allay these fears. Itō Miyoji spoke for the alarmists when he warned that a system of sanctions would be subject to abuse by the larger powers: "I can emphatically state that the measures such as the sanctions set forth in this article were originally proposed with the intention of applying them against weak and small nations. It is unthinkable that they could be employed against either Britain or America."⁴⁸

In their maneuvering to neutralize Article 16, the Japanese applied the principle of special geographical circumstances, which the French had successfully inserted in Article 8 on disarmament. The delegation drew up the following two amendments for insertion at the end of the article:

1. Responsibility as to the measure to be taken under this article shall, upon geographical and political considerations, rest largely and primarily with a state member of the League which is situated near the covenant-breaking state against whom the measures are directed.
2. Further, the failure on the part of any state member of the League to participate in military operations against the covenant-breaking state, on the ground of distance and less interests, shall/may not be deemed as non-compliance with the provisions of this article.⁴⁹

The apparent intention of these draft amendments was to limit the obligation of a member to contribute in League police action to those disputes in the member's own region. This would relieve Japan of the burden of sending troops to Europe and, more importantly, might discourage the introduction of Western forces into East Asia. However, insofar as extant records of the peace conference show, the amendments were never formally presented. The delegation simply found the atmosphere of the conference unsuitable for tampering with the provision on sanctions. The American and British delegations regarded the principle as indispensable to the League's ability to enforce peace. The smaller states, backed by France, wanted even stronger machinery to discipline aggressors. In the League of Nations Commission, Makino merely ventured to inquire whether Article 16 applied to private as well as governmental transactions with offending states. He was assured by Wilson that it covered "all kinds of relations."⁵⁰

Article 10 of the Covenant guaranteed members' territorial integrity and empowered the League Council to advise measures to combat acts of aggression. The Japanese delegation drafted amendments that, if enacted, would have significantly qualified the concept of aggression set forth in the Covenant. Like the Japanese draft amendments for Article 16, the statements composed by the mission would have recognized special regional relationships and obligations:

and the Executive Council shall, in this connection, give due consideration to circumstances arising from geographical relations of States members of the League.

An alternative statement would have included “traditional” ties:

and the Executive Council shall, in this connection, take into consideration the geographical as well as traditional relations that pertain between certain of States members of the League and the State or States against whom such external aggression is directed.⁵¹

Here again there is no evidence that these amendment drafts reached the floor of the Commission.

Given Japan’s demonstrated concern for special geographical circumstances and singular relationships, it is no surprise that the delegation took a deep interest in the American proposal of 10 April that the Covenant affirm the validity of “regional understandings like the Monroe Doctrine.” It is also no surprise that the Chinese Delegation suspected Japan’s motives. The American proposal, as is well known, was one of several alterations pressed by Wilson to satisfy League critics in the U.S. Senate after he returned from his mid-conference furlough. Makino and Chinda met privately with Colonel House to assure him of their warm support. Colonel Stephen Bonsal, an assistant to House, commented to the Japanese visitors that the provision “confers upon the Japanese much the same guardianship over East Asia as that we asserted over Latin America in the days of the Holy Alliance.” An hour after Makino and Chinda departed, Wellington Koo showed up to register his strong dismay at the breadth of the allowance. He said he was cabling his government and feared that he would not be authorized to sign the Covenant if it contained this provision. The amendment as worded, he told the League of Nations Commission on 10 April, covered “all kinds of understandings, good, bad, and indifferent.” Koo failed to persuade the Commission to restrict the reservation to the Monroe Doctrine. His next effort, to attach a statement requiring that such understandings be “not incompatible with the terms of this Covenant,” also failed. Whereupon Koo changed tactics at the Commission’s final meeting of 11 April and proposed that the words “or understandings” be added to Article 20, which invalidated all “obligations” inconsistent with the Covenant. Koo won this last-minute maneuver. The Japanese did not take part in the open debates, and in no instance did they talk about an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine in so many words. However, the Monroe Doctrine reservation was regarded by the delegation as tacit acceptance of Japan’s special regional interests.⁵²

Racial Equality

The delegation's most intense effort to modify the Covenant was its attempt to insert a clause stating the principle of racial nondiscrimination.⁵³ This endeavor, which heavily involved the hopes of the Japanese public, eventuated in Japan's most painful conference setback. The optimism witnessed in some quarters at home with regard to the postwar order was crushed by evidence that the powers were still motivated by the prejudices and self-interest that had prevailed under the old diplomacy. Japan was chagrined by the realization that its supposedly enhanced international standing carried little weight in a contest with the Western giants.

Japanese sensitivity on the race issue was longstanding. The desire for equality with the Occident had been one of the motivating goals behind the political, social, and industrial changes of the Meiji period. The discriminatory treatment of Japanese aliens in North America and Australia was a major sore spot in Japan's relations with the West in the early twentieth century. Katō Takaaki regarded the fight against racial discrimination as a second stage in the Japanese people's great struggle for equality, following the successful campaign for treaty revision.⁵⁴ Exclusion laws and land tenure restrictions ultimately raised the question of national prestige, for to the Japanese people the constructs of race, culture, and nation were nearly interchangeable. Their standing among Westerners was felt by the Japanese to have implications for status vis-à-vis less literate, less industrialized neighboring peoples of Asia. During the war, pulp magazines, reflecting the sober warnings of such elites as Gotō Shinpei and Yamagata Aritomo, carried lurid predictions of an East-West racial war to follow the current death struggle of white civilizations in Europe.

Before the peace conference opened, race equality held low priority as an official Japanese objective for the postwar settlement. The issue did not surface in planning by the Peace Preparation Commission. It was not mentioned in the secret treaties with which Japan paved its way for a favorable postwar settlement. A U.S. State Department report of 26 January 1918 on Japanese foreign policy relegated the race-related immigration question to secondary importance in Japanese-American relations, positing that recent events would divert Japanese population overflow in the direction of the continent of Asia. However, the insightful author raised the possibility that Japan would broach the issue at a postwar peace conference:

Nevertheless we should anticipate that, if there is anything approaching a general settlement at the close of the war, it will be sought to place this controversy on a more permanent footing — and it is believed that we should then stand ready to take it up and deal with it upon a frank constructive basis.⁵⁵

Though it was not understood to portend a major postwar issue at the time, a conversation between Ambassador Ishii and Colonel House in July 1918 takes on, in retrospect, significance as a precursor of and basis for the Japanese push at Paris. Ishii's dispatch to Tokyo reported his assertion to House that a just postwar order could not countenance situations in which Japanese workers were denied entry into the United States, Canada, Australia, and British possessions in southern Asia and in which Japanese goods faced in French colonies import restrictions not applied to European goods. He expressed the desire of the Japanese people "that inequality as in the past — conditions contrary to justice — should be done away with, and that peaceful equality based on true foundations should be achieved." House replied that in his discussions of the issue with President Wilson and with the British foreign secretary he had found agreement that artificial restrictions on a people like the Japanese were contrary to justice. House continued that

if Japan cooperated with America on the matter of disarmament and permanent peace, it was beyond doubt that a very great advance would be achieved with respect to facilitating Japanese activities in accordance with the principle of the Open Door and equality of opportunity to which Ishii had adverted.⁵⁶

Were House's assurances, ambiguous and premature to be sure, taken by Japan as a green light on the race issue? We will never know for certain. We do know, however, that Ishii, at Makino's request, sent a copy of this memorandum of conversation to the Japanese peace conference delegation on 14 January 1919. We also know that in February, when Makino and Chinda met with House in Paris, they reminded him of his conversation with Ishii: House's statements had "pleased the Japanese government" so that "we look upon you as a friend, and we have come for your advice." They then went on to ask how Japan might obtain from the conference a race equality statement.⁵⁷

Who decided that racial discrimination should be redressed through the means of an amendment to the League of Nations Covenant? Foreign Minister Uchida's official instructions to the delegation at the time of its departure in December called attention to the problem of "narrow racial attitudes" and directed the plenipotentiaries to "devise a suitable strategy" for eliminating the attending disadvantages, but they did not prescribe what remedy to pursue. In January and February there were no specific directives from Kasumigaseki on the issue. Instructions in March were sent in response to moves the delegation had already taken. Recollections of Japanese diplomats at Paris all credit the plenipotentiaries with initiating the demand for a Covenant provision of racial equality. Naoko Shimazu's important study of the subject credits Chinda and Makino for devising

it. Ian Nish attributes the initiative to Makino and says that he did not have the full support of the delegation in this move.⁵⁸ Baron Makino, the delegation's chief strategist, had been personally involved in questions of international discrimination before. When he was foreign minister in 1913 in the first Yamamoto cabinet, the State of California had disallowed Japanese immigrants to own land.⁵⁹ Hence evidence of both a direct and circumstantial nature indicates that the delegation made the decision to seek a Covenant amendment. The Foreign Ministry, feeling the pressure of public opinion, encouraged the mission to hold tenaciously to this course and achieve success. Even then the demand was rated less crucial than the favorable disposal of Shandong and the Pacific islands. In the estimation of foreign-policy leaders at home, the race question was significant to Japan in principle, but its concrete importance did not measure up to that of the labor and conscription issues.⁶⁰

Toward the end of the conference, Japan's race equality demand became strategically intertwined with the controversy over Japanese and Chinese rights in Shandong. It would be an oversimplification to argue that race equality from the start was simply a red herring to be sacrificed for the securing of the priority demand for the Shandong leasehold — although this was the predominant view in the American delegation at the time. A more accurate picture is a scenario of shifting intentions that changed along with the wording of the demand over the course of the peace conference. Early in the conference the delegation sought wording in the Covenant that would compel the removal of such symbols of international inequality as immigration restrictions and alien land laws. When this effort proved futile, the mission pressed for a statement of principle that for the time being would leave the concrete irritants untouched. Finally, the race equality demand devolved into a bargaining point to be exchanged for practical concessions on Shandong.⁶¹

While the Japanese steadfastly refused to drop the word "equality" from their demand, they progressively weakened the language of the statements they proposed in private negotiations and commission meetings. Their maximum demand, submitted to Colonel House on 5 February and forthwith rejected by Wilson and House, read:

The equality of nations being a basic principle of the League, the High Contracting Parties agree that concerning the treatment and rights to be accorded to aliens in their territories, they will not discriminate, either in law or in fact, against any person or persons on account of his or their race or nationality.⁶²

An alternative statement was presented to the League of Nations Commission on 13 February as an amendment to Article 21 on religious equality:

The equality of nations being a basic principle of the League of Nations, the High Contracting Parties agree to accord, as soon as possible, to all alien nationals of States members of the League, equal and just treatment in every respect, making no distinction, either in law or fact, on account of their race or nationality.⁶³

In a stately speech in support of his motion, Makino reasoned that, as it was right to proclaim that no person should suffer on account of religion, it was equally right to proclaim that no person should suffer on account of race or nationality. Wellington Koo spoke in favor of the proposal, even though it was not central to China's peace conference agenda. F. P. Walters, venerable historian of the League, summed up the debate: "The Japanese argument combined disconcertingly, from the British and American point of view, the qualities of being unanswerable and unacceptable. The only course, therefore, was to abandon both suggestions." Lord Cecil spoke in pained opposition, and the entire article was dropped from the Covenant.⁶⁴

The major source of recalcitrance on the equality issue, the mission discovered, was Australian prime minister William Hughes. The very incarnation of dominion nationalism, Hughes would not consent to anything that would satisfy Japan's desires. His nation had recently tightened anti-Japanese restrictions and was determined to prevent Japanese economic penetration of the former German territories it held in the South Pacific. Despite repeated Japanese entreaties to Hughes and attempts at intercession by Lord Cecil, General Smuts, and Canadian prime minister Robert Borden, the Australian remained adamant. On 25 March, Makino and Chinda offered assurances that Japan's aims did not involve emigration. Even so, Hughes alone among the dominion representatives refused to agree to Japan's final proposal, to insert the following phrase in the Covenant's preamble:

... by the endorsement of the principle of the equality between States and the just treatment of their nationals. . . .⁶⁵

If the statement were adopted, Hughes threatened, he would raise the explosive issue of immigration in a plenary session.

The Japanese public clearly and passionately associated the League of Nations with the principle of race equality. As early as the time of the armistice, Ambassador Morris reported to Washington that the question of equality for the yellow race "underlies all discussions on the subject." Stating an order of priorities the reverse of the government's, the *Hōchi* in a 1 December editorial asserted that the campaign for equal treatment of alien races by Europeans and Americans was more pressing in the eyes of the Japanese people than the acquisition of Qingdao and the Pacific islands. This was an accurate representation of public sentiment. The *Tokyo*

asahi boldly declared that the acceptance of the principle of equality by the peace conference should be “a precondition for our nation’s participation in the League of Nations.” On 14 January the same newspaper challenged embarking plenipotentiary Saionji to “represent the interests of the world’s colored races, for the sake of world peace and the realization of the ideals of the League of Nations.”⁶⁶ When the peace conference released a draft of the Covenant to the public on 14 February, the press reacted in alarm to the document’s silence on equality. The *Nichi nichu*, while granting that the spirit of the League was beautiful, likened its ability to function to that of a wide-mesh basket with neither bottom nor lid, incapable of holding either liquids or solids. Without race equality, warned the editor, Japan in the League would be “a praying mantis fighting against a dragon chariot.” The bitter reaction brought renewed attacks upon the powers. The greedy Anglo-American nations, alleged the *Asahi* and the *Nichi nichu*, were using the League to exploit smaller nations and were making a mockery of its ideals. In a similar vein, General Ugaki in his diary conflated the issues of race and the status quo. He berated the United States and Britain for selfishly perpetuating a status quo in which some races “suffocated” in overpopulated regions, condemned to “permanently reside in conditions of slavery.”⁶⁷ The opposition Kenseikai seized upon the energized public sentiment to embarrass the cabinet. Party president Katō Takaaki on 27 February put the Seiyūkai government on notice that “if the government fails in attaining its end because of a lack of previous understanding with the other Allies on the point, it will be a very serious diplomatic blunder.”⁶⁸

Public opinion was mobilized on the race issue more than on any other peace conference question. Private organizations were formed to hold rallies and conduct petition drives. Appeals for an aggressive approach were directed to the peace conference delegation on the eve of its departure and during its stay in Paris. The Foreign Ministry also played a role, forwarding to Paris fourteen petitions and the demands of a 23 March mass meeting of a Union for the Abolition of Racial Discrimination (Jinshuteki Sabetsu Teppai Kisei Dōmeikai). Such information enabled Japan’s emissaries to play the domestic sentiment card, as they insisted that the Japanese public would settle for nothing less than a Covenant explicitly affirming the principle of equality of nations and just treatment of their nationals. An effort was made to enlist public support abroad as well. On 14 March, Ambassador Ishii addressed a dinner of the Japan Society in New York, where his plea for an end to “race humiliation” attracted wide attention. Ishii’s address was greeted coldly by four Western senators, who publicly vowed to vote against a Covenant that contained a racial equality guarantee.⁶⁹ The initial sympathy of Wilson and House for the principle of the Japanese demand cooled after they encountered such sentiment during their mid-conference furlough. The administration knew that it would need the votes of southern and western senators if the Covenant were to be

ratified. Britain, for its part, was unable to subdue the diplomatic independence of Australia and refused to disregard the opposition of its former colony.

The saga of the fate of Japan's final appeal is well known. The preamble amendment came up for a vote in the 11 April final meeting of the League of Nations Commission. A majority of the Commission supported Makino. Koo spoke for the motion. France voted with the majority, as did Italy whose preconference Covenant draft had declared that "every state is equal before the law." In deference to American and British opposition, however, Wilson ruled that the motion failed for lack of unanimity. A protest by Ferdinand Larnaude, France's greatest international lawyer, failed to overcome this procedural maneuver.⁷⁰ Makino engaged in another round of backstage diplomacy before the 28 April plenary session. Though he was unable to salvage the principle of equality, he utilized the race issue effectively to pressure the United States on the Shandong question. He offered to refrain from instigating a public confrontation in the plenary session over racial equality in exchange for assurances on Japanese temporary retention of the former German leasehold. With this bid plus a threat to bolt the conference, he got his way on Shandong. On 28 April the baron carried out instructions by entering a substantive earlier version of Japan's equality demand in the minutes of the plenary session, but he did not press for its adoption.⁷¹

The Japanese public never appreciated the tradeoff. When news reached Japan that the modified race equality proposal had failed in committee, the national sense of disappointment seemed, in the estimation of the *Japan Times and Mail*, "to verge on disaffection." The *Kokumin* castigated the British and American delegates for "defying humanity in the most outrageous manner in all history." The editor held the plenipotentiaries responsible for the loss of face among Japan's Asian neighbors:

What attitude will China, Siberia, and other Asiatic nations take toward Japan after she has committed such a diplomatic failure and blunder? The rejection of the racial discrimination proposal is decidedly a disgrace to the country, no matter in what beautiful terms it may be explained.

The country that has occupied the foremost position in the Orient, being admitted as the leader of all Oriental nations, has been ejected from her exalted position and pushed back into the rank of secondary powers, and that by her own allies giving a pretext for contempt and mockery to the weaker and smaller nations.

The usually moderate *Asahi* labeled the Japanese envoys "incompetent" and warned that real peace was as remote as ever.⁷²

The public indignation over the rejection of the race equality provision gave

rise to demands for a national policy defying the Western powers. Rebellious Italy became an instant hero when it bolted the conference over Fiume. The *Hōchi* rejoiced that Premier Orlando had “mercilessly torn the mask off President Wilson’s face.” The *Asahi* blamed the defection of Italy on the president’s inclination to force America’s will on all parties. It recommended that Japan emulate Italy’s “brave” and “manly” rebuke of Wilson’s false rhetoric. The *Nichi nichu* argued that the only way for Japan to recoup its failure on racial discrimination was to press for the recognition of its own Asiatic Monroe Doctrine. Editor Watanabe Minojirō of the *Osaka mainichi* voiced an argument repeated time and again throughout the following two decades. Japan’s rebuff on race equality, he wrote, is evidence of a trend toward racial war. He called for the immediate creation of a “union for the awakening and self-defense of Asian races” under Japanese leadership. The American ambassador in Tokyo rightly observed that the conference’s refusal to embrace race equality “will create a lasting bitterness against Occidental nations.”⁷³

Those who spoke out in favor of the League despite the powers’ refusal to incorporate racial equality were few and bold. Progressive Dietman Shimada Saburō explained in a pamphlet that reform is a step-by-step process. America had not yet fully achieved a state of human equality after a century and a half of independence. He pleaded that the people should welcome the Covenant as a “paragraph in the history of evolution” and be patient with its imperfections. Ishibashi Tanzan pointed out in a *Tōyō keizai shinpō* editorial that Japan’s professed ideals of equality stood in stark contradiction to its laws excluding Chinese laborers from its shores, restricting foreigners’ rights in its colonies, and limiting suffrage to a small faction of its citizenry. Of more fundamental importance than race equality was the “mutual international life” that the League of Nations would foster. Yoshino Sakuzō rationalized that America’s racial policies were really a domestic matter. Like Ishibashi, he asked whether Japan would admit Chinese coolie immigrants and accord them equality. He expressed his continued confidence in the peace conference as an agent for “world reconstruction.”⁷⁴

Japanese diplomatic leaders expressed varied assessments of the causes of Japan’s miscarriage at Paris. Foreign Minister Uchida regretted that the issue of race had been permitted to assume the rank of an important plank in Japan’s peace program. Itō Miyoji attributed Japan’s frustration to tactical obtuseness on the part of the delegation. He censored the plenipotentiaries for poor timing, overdependence on the United States, and lack of tenacity. In retrospect Makino blamed the unanimous vote principle. Whatever the rationale leaders advanced, one thing remains clear: nothing in the delegation’s power could have moved William Hughes. The Australian prime minister’s obstinacy, moreover, was symptomatic of the old proclivities, prejudices, and self-interests that survived amidst the new order.⁷⁵

The International Labor Convention

The Great War opened a new era of opportunity for the labor movement in industrialized countries. Allied governments were indebted to organized labor for its crucial contribution in the war effort and were apprehensive of the appeal of Bolshevik ideology to the working classes. Eager to appease increasingly powerful and articulate union spokesmen and to co-opt more radical forces, peace conference planners responded favorably to labor's demands for a voice in the postwar settlement. Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor and George N. Barnes, former leader of the British Amalgamated Society of Engineers, were given official standing as peace conference delegates. Their mission, as they understood it, was to write into the treaty guarantees for the rights of workers in all countries. Although the elevation of labor in the West contrasted starkly with the official suppression of the movement in Japan, leaders in the fledgling Japanese labor movement were also optimistic that the new order promised better times. Kagawa Toyohiko, who helped organize a strike in the Kobe dockyards during the war, declared that "the reconstruction of the world will fall into the hands of the workingman."⁷⁶

The task of establishing international rights for labor was viewed at the peace conference as closely associated with the cause of the League of Nations. A Commission on International Labor Legislation was appointed to carry out the task of drafting an International Labor Convention. Like the League Covenant, the Convention was to be part of the peace treaty. After thirty-five meetings, a document emerged on 24 March that spelled out the structure of the International Labor Organization (ILO). This institution was to exist within the larger framework of the League of Nations, and its membership was to be identical to that of the peace organization. The ILO at its inception was more closely tied to its sponsoring body than is the today's ILO, which is structurally independent of the United Nations. A plenary session of the peace conference approved the Convention on 11 April and sanctioned plans for the first International Labor Conference to be held in Washington under the League's auspices the following October.⁷⁷

A mushrooming working force, discontent over rampant wartime inflation, and the intellectual and social ferment of the World War I period all contributed in the growth of Japanese labor union membership. By standards of Western industrialized nations, however, Japan's union movement was still in a fledgling stage. Membership in the Yūaikai, the largest federation of unions, numbered thirty thousand. Japan's factory legislation was primitive, and strikes were brutally suppressed. Labor unions were denied official recognition. Labor leaders, like the academics of Taishō democracy, hoped that Japanese participation in a world renewal movement would bring pressure for reforms at home. Japanese labor leaders were

on the mark, for as Sheldon Garon's study of the labor movement states, "more than any other international influence, the Paris Peace Conference shaped the discussion of labor problems in Japan."⁷⁸

The government's deportment on the labor issue at Paris paralleled its posture toward the League of Nations. Among the Big Five, Japan alone failed to formulate a draft labor charter before the peace conference. In the early meetings of the Labor Commission, Japan reserved its position with regard to the commission's aims. When it became apparent that labor interests had won the right to insert labor provisions in the treaty, Japan backed the relatively moderate British draft Convention. However, in view of the disparity in labor standards between itself and the nations of Europe with a longer history of industrialization, Japan found itself uncomfortable with parts of the British draft.⁷⁹ Japan sought in the Labor Commission to modify the Convention so as to neutralize its challenge to labor conditions at home. Much as the League threatened to force uncomfortable changes in Japan's relationship to the international system, so the Labor Convention appeared to compel, at an unsettling pace, alterations in Japan's internal societal relationships.

The first to grasp the opportunities presented by the postwar elevation of labor was the Yūaikai's energetic president, Suzuki Bunji (1885–1946). In the January 1919 issue of the Yūaikai journal, Suzuki addressed the subject of "The Labor Problem and International Relations." He emphasized that "the urgent task of solving the labor problem in our country is not simply a domestic matter." He argued the need for fair minimum wage laws on an international scale. Such labor protection measures, he maintained, should be written into the treaty at Paris. As for the League of Nations, Suzuki warned that the backward state of Japan's labor standards could prevent Japan from having a voice in the organization's formation.⁸⁰

Japan was embarrassed to have no labor representative among its peace conference delegation, and the Foreign Ministry decided to send Suzuki to Paris. Upon his arrival the Yūaikai president was disappointed to find his presence a mere token. He was not consulted by Ochiai Kentarō (a career diplomat) and Oka Minoru (a former Agriculture and Commerce Ministry bureaucrat), who sat with Samuel Gompers on the Labor Commission. Suzuki made effective use of his time in Paris by consorting with Western labor leaders and thoroughly acquainting himself with the labor provisions of the treaty.⁸¹

The Japanese representatives on the Labor Commission had ample reason to be uneasy in view of current state of regulation under the Factory Act of 1911. The act placed a twelve-hour limit on the workday of women and of youth under fifteen, but employers could extend the limit by two hours when necessary. The minimum age for employment was twelve, and ten for light work. Abuses were widespread. Managers were known to conceal underage children from inspectors. There were no laws providing for worker safety, for accidents were attributed to the carelessness of employees. Soldiers and national police dealt forcibly with strikers.⁸²

The Labor Commission found the Japanese representatives defensive from the start. At the 7 February meeting, Oka inquired how delegates to ILO meetings should be selected “in countries where organizations of employers and workers did not exist.” His question reflected his government’s nonrecognition of organized labor. Oka eagerly embraced the British view, which prevailed, that the ILO should represent governments and not labor associations. The Japanese delegates were especially apprehensive about Article 18 (later renumbered Article 19) of the draft Convention, which stipulated that proposals adopted by a two-thirds vote of the International Labor Conference be enacted in domestic legislation by the parliaments of member states within one year. They foresaw the possibility that pressure would be exerted upon Japan to enforce labor standards at home that were opposed by Japanese representatives abroad. The Japanese were also reluctant to see impersonal, quantitative regulations imposed on their economic system, which functioned, as they saw it, efficiently and humanely through paternalistic employer-worker relationships.⁸³ Ambassador Ochiai asked for special treatment for Japan. According to the minutes for 19 February,

Mr. Ochiai said that the Government and people of Japan were much concerned with labor questions, but their conditions were very different from those of Western Nations, and therefore there might be certain measures of reform embodied in proposed conventions which were necessary for a large number of other countries, but which, if adopted immediately and unconditionally, would be contrary not only to the interests of industry, but also to those of the workers themselves in Japan. Consequently, in accepting and carrying out such proposed reform, he thought Japan should have the opportunity of subjecting their execution to a period of delay or of introducing some exceptions or modifications.⁸⁴

Meanwhile, voices at home expressed apprehension over the Labor Convention and the labor clauses in the Covenant. A business-oriented daily, *Chūgai shōgyō*, foresaw uncomfortable adjustments for Japan. When the Gaikō Chōsakai met on 19 February to critique the full Covenant text released a few days before in Paris, Itō Miyoji said that Japan must absolutely demand exceptional status in regard to labor. The next day the Nihon Kōgyō Kurabu (Japan Industrialists’ Club) cabled Makino its “ardent desire” that he exert efforts to revise the “international labor law” in view of “the different moral customs and social structure” of Japan. Accordingly, the Foreign Ministry instructed the delegation on 6 March to withhold its assent to the Convention unless Article 18 were modified. On 19 March, Oka and Ochiai, believing that the Commission had not been responsive to the Japanese position, abstained from the otherwise unanimous vote adopting the draft Convention.⁸⁵

Draft amendments found among the papers of the delegation give a concrete indication of the modifications Japan desired. One proposal would have allowed

national discretion in the legislation of standards enacted by the International Labor Conference:

Due regard shall be had to any substantial difference in the industrial conditions resulting from the imperfect development of industrial organization in particular countries, their climatic conditions, or other special circumstances; and in such case, the High Contracting Party shall take all possible steps to adopt provisions equivalent in the circumstances to the provisions hereinafter set out.⁸⁶

Another draft would have permitted a state in difficult circumstances to exceed the one-year limit and enact domestic legislation “as soon as possible.” A third amendment draft would have provided a grace period of up to ten years for domestic enforcement.⁸⁷ Though available records do not show these particular amendments reaching the floor of the Commission, the drafts probably played a part in private negotiations with British representatives.⁸⁸

Plenipotentiary Makino added his prestige to Japan’s case by appealing to the Council of Foreign Ministers on 1 April. After describing the difficulties that the Convention’s inelasticity would impose on Japan, he warned that Japan would not sign it unless it were modified. Columbia University professor James T. Shotwell of the American delegation summed up the dilemma of the Labor Commission in his conference memoir: “to find some device by which the Parliament of Labor should have sufficient authority to justify its existence in the eyes of Labor as a real force for securing legislation, and yet not set itself up as a super-government in opposition to existing governments.”⁸⁹ Japan lay at the crux of this dilemma.

All the while, maneuvers were taking place behind the scenes that eventuated in compromises acceptable to Japan. The British dominions, fearing trade competition from cheap Japanese exports, were pestering the British delegation to bring Japan within the ILO. The case was complicated considerably by a successful move by the major delegations to append to the Convention a nine-point Labor Charter setting forth specific labor standards. In the list were such principles as the eight-hour workday, minimum wages, annual vacations, and weekly holidays—items that Japan found onerous. However, Point 8, which provided for equal treatment of alien workers, was very much to Japan’s liking. Prime Minister Hughes, leader of Australia’s Labor Party, despised Point 8 but intensely hoped to see Japan submit to the high labor standards embodied in the other points. So keen was his feeling on this matter that he favored dissociating the ILO from the League in order to permit Japanese participation if Japan repudiated the League over the race equality issue. India shared many of Japan’s qualms concerning the domestic applicability of advanced labor standards and pressured the British for a more flexible Convention.⁹⁰ Finally, on 4 April a compromise was reached based on the insertion of the following paragraph in Article 19 of the draft Convention:

In framing any Recommendation or draft Convention of general application the Conference shall have due regard to those countries in which climatic conditions, the imperfect development of industrial organization or other special circumstances make the industrial conditions substantially different, and shall suggest modification, if any, which it considers may be required to meet the case of such countries.

India sponsored this amendment at the 11 April plenary session. Its adoption cleared the way for Japan's acceptance of the International Labor Convention and its approval, on 27 April, of the Labor Charter.⁹¹

Japan's position with regard to the labor provision of the treaty brings to light one of the most significant paradoxes of the Empire's diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference. On the one hand, Japan called for national equality within the League of Nations and insisted upon a position on the League Council where the nation would stand shoulder to shoulder with the Western powers. On the other hand, when it came to the labor standards of the International Labor Convention, Japan pleaded for special consideration as a less advanced society. Japan's posture shows that the prize of high international standing was not worth the price of accelerated domestic social change. In the cases of both the League Covenant and the Labor Convention, the conviction that Japan could not stand aloof from world trends was decisive in the delegation's final decision to acquiesce in the actions of the peace conference. Social legislation in succeeding years considerably narrowed the gap in labor standards between Japan and other industrialized nations. The full emancipation of labor, which came to fruition in the Allied Occupation after the Pacific War, rested upon the strength that the labor movement built in the two decades following Versailles.

The League Question and Sino-Japanese Relations

Had the Ōkuma cabinet's policy to prevent Chinese belligerency prevailed, China would never have attended the Paris Peace Conference. After China's declaration of war on Germany in August 1917 made its participation in the postwar settlement unavoidable, Japan attempted to prepare for the peace in such a way as to minimize the chance of a Sino-Japanese breach at the conference table. Secret loans and agreements were part of this diplomacy. Some of the Chinese peace delegation stopped in Tokyo before going to Paris and gave assurances of Sino-Japanese cooperation.⁹² Believing that the matter of its rights in Shandong was securely settled by secret treaties, the Japanese mission set out to establish a united front with China to press the cause of racial equality. Japan was taken by surprise when China assumed an autonomous posture at the conference. Though Wellington Koo voted for the Japanese proposals on racial nondiscrimination and national equality in the

League of Nations Commission, he also communicated to American officials that the issue was not a Chinese priority. China presented demands for the revision of unequal treaties, the direct reversion of the Jiaozhou leasehold, and release from obligations imposed in the Twenty-One Demands. Chinese envoys failed in these pursuits, but they succeeded in capturing the sympathies of Western peoples, particularly Americans, by their stirring appeals to Wilsonian principles. The Japanese image suffered commensurately. The Sino-Japanese confrontation centered on the disposal of Shandong. During the course of the conference, Japan found this question inextricably tangled with the issue of the League of Nations.

During the war, the Chinese were much more alert than the Japanese in responding to the League movement. Well before the armistice, both official and public spokesmen had lent their support to the establishment of the organization as a means to recover China's full sovereignty. For some Chinese, the League notion resonated with the classical ideal of *datong* (great harmony). Kang Youwei, harking back to a set of *datong* reform proposals that made him famous in the 1890s, cheered the prospect of the League as a step to an international government and the erasure of national boundaries. Internationally minded citizens formed a Chinese League of Nations Society, which in the winter of 1918 sent President Wilson a note of encouragement coupled with a plea for efforts on China's behalf: "Your Excellency has conferred infinite blessing upon the world by the laying of the League of Nations foundation. The Chinese people pledge wholehearted support and rely on your help to solve their numerous diplomatic problems." Following Wilson's 27 September speech, China's president, Feng Guozhang, wired the American president a statement of total agreement with his views. After the conference began, Wellington Koo assured the League of Nations Commission at its second meeting that no people was more eager to see the League realized than the Chinese. Chinese propaganda distributed in Paris played up Chinese support for the League, and President Wilson in response assured the Chinese that in the League "China would receive a kind of protection she had never had before."⁹³ While Japan tried to weaken the collective security mechanisms of the Covenant, China attempted to strengthen its provisions against external interference in the internal affairs of member states. Koo played an important role, along with Paul Hymans of Belgium, in altering the Hurst-Miller draft of the Covenant to open the League Council to smaller nations as nonpermanent members. During the conference Beijing leaders publicly endorsed a plan privately discussed at Paris whereby foreign economic enterprises in China would be placed under the supervision of a board responsible to the League.⁹⁴ The tenor of Chinese maneuvers concerning the League made it apparent that Japan could hardly afford to remain outside the organization while China joined and gained access to its tools.

A detailed treatment of the Shandong controversy lies outside the scope of this study. The fact has been established that Japan was not bluffing when it threatened to bolt the conference if its claim to the temporary retention of former German rights in Shandong was not upheld. Having compromised already on the Pacific islands and lost on race equality, the Japanese government felt it could not give in on this demand too. Despite chief plenipotentiary Saionji's personal discomfort with the subordination of the League issue to Shandong, and despite Makino's private inclination to compromise on the question as a demonstration of friendship toward China, the delegation was instructed not to sign the League of Nations Covenant if Japan did not get its way. The Japanese timing was effective, for promoters of the League recognized that Japanese nonparticipation would make the organization a world institution in name only. As House's aide Stephen Bonsal observed, "With Russia absent and the Central Empires at least temporarily excluded, should the Rising Sun Empire withdraw, our World Congress, or whatever it is, could dwindle to the proportions of a rump parliament."⁹⁵ The powers gave in to Japan's demand. In China, the anti-imperialist May Fourth Movement erupted and successfully swayed the Beijing government not to sign the treaty. Three years later, after a lengthy series of Sino-Japanese negotiations at the Washington Conference, Shandong was restored to China in full sovereignty, while Japan retained economic rights there.

What the Shandong episode at Paris demonstrated was that there was a limit to the policy of conformity to the peace program of the powers. The Japan of 1919 would not brook a repetition of the Triple Intervention. The Empire would not join the League if to do so meant the weakening of its posture vis-à-vis China and the sacrifice of what was regarded as a vital interest. The clear subordination of League prerogatives to Japanese interests is apparent in eleventh-hour negotiations on 30 April with American, British, and French heads of state over Shandong. Agreement on Japanese temporary retention of the leasehold had already been reached. China made it clear that if the Chinese failed to carry out their side of the settlement — for instance, if they interfered with Japan's formation of a police force with Japanese instructors — the Japanese government reserved the right to revert back to the Sino-Japanese agreements of 1918. President Wilson responded by pointing out that by that time Japan would be a member of the League Council. Why, in such a case, should not the Japanese request the mediation of the council? The record of the tough-minded ambassador's reply is significant:

Viscount Chinda said that even if the case was sent to the League of Nations, nevertheless Japan must reserve her rights in the last analysis to base her rights on her special Agreements with China. If the Chinese Government refused to do so, the only course left to Japan would be to invoke the agreement.⁹⁶

In short, Japan would not permit League of Nations procedures to invalidate past bilateral guarantees of vital interests.

The Shandong decision must also be seen positively as the event that firmly sealed Japanese commitment to membership in the League. Japan had bargained with Wilson for retention of Shandong in exchange for its cooperation in the League. For Japan to then renege on the League could have provoked a renewed challenge to the Shandong settlement as well as to the Japanese mandate in the Pacific. The roads to retreat from the League were closed. Japan's task for the foreseeable future was to ratify the treaty and forge its way in the new world order within the formal framework of the League of Nations.

The Covenant Comes Home

Chief plenipotentiary Saionji returned to Japan in late August with the signed Treaty of Versailles in hand. At Tokyo Station a crowd welcoming his train from Kobe was so enthusiastic that at one point the aged Marquis was pushed to the ground. Five hundred dignitaries, including the premier and foreign minister and with Baron Shibusawa Eiichi presiding, gathered for a luncheon in his honor. In his remarks to the group Saionji said, "Japan clearly understands her responsibility in aiding and promoting the usefulness of the League of Nations—that great international organization which, if whole-heartedly and effectively administered, is destined to insure the world against the menace of war."⁹⁷ The ratification process was notably uneventful, with no serious public or political challenges offered to either the Covenant or the treaty. Public interest in the League issue and its implications for Japan had subsided. In the fall of 1919 the media paid closer attention to the stormy events surrounding the ratification process in the United States than to the perfunctory procedure at home.

Saionji submitted formal reports of the mission's work to the prime minister and the Emperor. Looking back over its six-month sojourn in Paris, the returning delegation could report that it had made diligent attempts to modify the League of Nations Covenant and the International Labor Convention, both of which were components of the Versailles Treaty. Japanese amendment schemes had involved some ten articles encompassing the issues of mandates, disarmament, arbitration, sanctions, racial and national equality, and labor standards. Japan had achieved significant success in diluting disarmament and labor provisions. The mission had effected a minor change in the mandate article but had won informal assurance of becoming the mandatory of the Pacific islands north of the equator. The plenipotentiaries had fared poorly in efforts to amend the wording on arbitration and sanctions, inject a guarantee of racial equality, and require the periodic revision of the constitution of the League. Surveyed as a whole, Japan's efforts to alter the Cov-

enant reveal a desire to make it a more flexible instrument. While deeply desirous of status on a global scale, Japan displayed a strong will to protect the unique economic, political, and strategic advantages accorded the Empire by circumstances of geography.

Marquis Saionji's formal report to Prime Minister Hara dated 29 August briefly reviewed the problems Japan had faced on the labor, mandate, race, and Shandong issues. The foreign recognition of Japan as one of the five Great Powers was, in the estimation of the head of the delegation, Japan's most significant peace conference achievement. The veteran internationalist expressed pleasure that his nation's important position in the new League of Nations "allows it to take part in the affairs of Europe" and "has earned it the right of involvement in all future concerns of East and West." All this represented "an epoch of renewal (*isshinki*) in the history of the Empire," he said. In a speech a week later Saionji stressed the League as the salient feature of the treaty and declared that Japan was committed to make the new peace mechanism work. Japan's first duty was to help preserve peace. The nation must strive, he said, to correct its image as a militaristic, aggressive state.⁹⁸ Baron Makino's plenipotentiary report, while carefully noting conflicts between the League and Japanese national interests, echoed Saionji's emphasis on the crucial relationship of Japan's role in the organization to the nation's standing among the powers. Ishii Kikujirō, then ambassador in Washington, wrote that Japan's position in the League marked the concrete attainment of Japan's great power status, a position that since the Russo-Japanese War had been "a mere compliment," lacking substance. Recalling his Paris sojourn, Makino's son-in-law and future prime minister Yoshida Shigeru noted that, in the achievement of permanent membership in the League Council, "the strenuous labors of our Meiji forefathers since the opening of Japan came to noble fruition."⁹⁹

Even Konoe Fumimaro, author of a vitriolic attack on the League concept on the eve of the peace conference, seemed to mellow after five months in Europe as Saionji's secretary, during which time he was moved by the sight of the devastated French countryside:

Those who deem the League a mere product of an academician's interest, I beg of you to travel personally to the battlefields of France. The bottomless impoverishment and fatigue and boundless destruction would most eloquently and most adequately speak for the fact that the League was based upon the innermost desire of humanity.

The young aristocrat even found it within himself to praise the work of the president who personified American liberal-capitalist hegemonism:

... that the League has finally been given a chance to come into existence at all is owing to Wilson's efforts and sincere earnestness, we may say, above all other things. I do not hesitate to declare that on account of this fact alone, his name will forever keep shining through the history of humanity.

Konoe now judged the peace conference to be part of a transitional stage in "the progress of international politics."¹⁰⁰

The government designated 1 July as an official day of celebration of the signing of the Versailles Treaty, but in 1919 the day passed with little sign of public enthusiasm. An *Asahi* editorial on that day reflected the public mood by expressing relief that the five-month diplomatic marathon had finally been terminated. In any country, public images of foreign issues are unstable, and in the Japanese case popular opinion on the League question had swung from optimism at the opening of the conference to animosity with the defeat on race to quiescence when the final product appeared. Given the heated public reactions to unaccommodating peace treaties in the two preceding decades and the volatile nature of the equality issue, it is noteworthy that there was no groundswell of public hostility when the treaty came home. The government had acted more shrewdly this time by maintaining public silence on its peace conference aims and by sending a chief plenipotentiary of Saionji's prestige to carry titular responsibility for the outcome. The predominant media view was that Japan incurred fewer risks from accommodationism than from isolation. Even right-wing journalist Miyake Setsurei admitted that despite its negative aspects the peace settlement had infused a bit of idealism into the system of international relations.¹⁰¹

Editorial comment at the time of the signing revealed critical awareness of the limitations of the treaty and the League of Nations. Press readers were reminded that Bolshevism and labor unrest continued to lurk throughout the world to foment future conflicts. The League was incomplete in membership; press writers noted that China had declined to sign the treaty, that the Soviet government had been denied representation at Paris, and ratification of the accord by the United States was uncertain. Without the participation of Japan's continental and Pacific neighbors in the postwar settlement, the Versailles system could not assure the nation's security. The usually mainstream *Asahi* declared the League no consolation for these uncertainties and reserved the Empire's right to rely upon less pacifistic means of protection:

The League of Nations is supposed to guarantee world peace, but its effectiveness has yet to be demonstrated. We are apprehensive that the future of the League is fraught with uncertainty. Thoughtful consideration must be given to the choice of whether to entrust ourselves to the League of Nations or to rely upon armed defense.

The nationalistic *Kokumin* regarded the military alternative as a foregone conclusion. Its editorial on the day of peace treaty celebration asserted, with an air of self-righteousness, that “we lack nothing in the sense of justice, but we stand in need of increasing our power.”¹⁰²

One minority segment of Japanese society that took a deep interest in the founding of the League of Nations was Christians. In the World War I period, Christians in Japan were outspoken in the causes of liberalism and democracy. The emerging League of Nations seemed to be an embodiment of Christian ideals, and churches warmed to the son of a Presbyterian cleric who from the White House championed the League as a matter of “transcendent importance” to humankind. Like many Christians worldwide, those in Japan responded favorably to an alternative to war outlined in a “covenant” and predicated upon the assumption that universal moral values adhered in international affairs. While the peace conference was in session, the thirtieth anniversary of the Meiji Constitution provided the occasion for the Nihon Kirisutokyō Dōmei (Japan Christian Church Federation) to issue a declaration supporting democracy. This pronouncement placed Protestant Christians explicitly in the mainstream of postwar optimism: “Today a new situation lies before us. The idea of democracy is spreading like a swelling flood, with irresistible force. Humanity is to be revolutionized and society reconstructed from its very foundation. This is indeed a world force, and nothing can halt it.” Kozaki Hiromichi (1856–1938), Dōmei president and pastor of Tokyo’s Reinanzaka Church, tied a new worldwide hope for peace to the establishment of the League of Nations. To the former president of Dōshisha University, the emergence of the League symbolized the ascendancy of democracy over militarism and bureaucratic politics throughout the world. The Sunday following the anniversary of the armistice was designated an annual “League of Nations Sunday” by the major denominations in 1920.¹⁰³

Present at Paris in an unofficial capacity was Ebina Danjō (1856–1937), pastor of Yumichō Hongō Church in Tokyo, whose parishioners included Yoshino Sakuzō and Suzuki Bunji. The future president of Dōshisha University viewed the Great War as a struggle of democracy against autocracy and the League of Nations as the manifestation of international democracy. He lobbied among the Japanese delegation for Japan’s adherence to the organization. While still in Paris, Ebina laid plans to organize volunteer associations in Japan to further understanding of the League. In this project he envisioned a special role for Japanese Christians. “Christians must take the responsibility,” he wrote home to the readers of his magazine *Shinjin* (New man), “of enlightening Japan on the League of Nations and foreign affairs.”¹⁰⁴

Even theologically conservative voices adopted the rhetoric of the social gospel to assert that Christians were uniquely called and suited to promote the League of Nations. Uemura Masahisa (1858–1925), editor of *Fukuin shinpō* (Gospel news) since 1891, was the leading Japanese defender of orthodox theology in the Reformed

tradition. Throughout his career he emphasized the importance of separating the gospel and politics. Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the peace conference he described the League's birth as "one step bringing the Kingdom of God closer to realization."¹⁰⁵ Also voicing praise of the new international order in *Fukuin shinpō* was Tagawa Daikichirō (1869–1947), a member of the Diet and future president of Meiji Gakuin University. Having spent five months in jail during the war for offensive remarks about the Terauchi cabinet, Tagawa understood firsthand the need for democratic reforms. Writing from Europe during the peace conference, he declared,

It is now the trend for Christians to be on the move and commit their energy to the work of rebuilding the world. . . . I believe that the League of Nations is by all means a project for Christians. They can best understand the spirit of its work and are willing to bet their lives on it.¹⁰⁶

Tagawa went on to become a leading force in the Japan League of Nations Association, founded in 1920, and a prolific voice for internationalism in its journal, *Kokusai chishiki* (International understanding). But for Christian individualist Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930), founder of the Mukyōkai (Nonchurch) movement, the claim that human institutions could effect a new order was offensive. Once an optimistic Christian progressivist who, like Wilson, believed in the ongoing march of justice and Christian civilization, Uchimura had been soured by travel in Europe and America. The actions of the belligerents in World War I confirmed Uchimura's conviction that human progress was a myth. In a series of well-attended public lectures in downtown Tokyo in 1918–1919, the Mukyōkai leader preached that the war had been caused by the sins of humankind and that only the Second Coming of Christ would save the world from its predicament. Statesmen were remiss in placing their hope in the League of Nations, for it would not deal with the fundamental problem of the sins of individuals. His dour assessment of the world's fallen state led to his critique of the League as a "Tower of Babel":

No matter how great President Wilson may be, no matter how noble and earnest British prime minister Lloyd George and French premier Clemenceau may be, they cannot remove sin. It is even more impossible to establish permanent peace among humankind without first eliminating sin. Hence, a great many people doubt that the League of Nations can be realized in spite of the lofty claims made about it.¹⁰⁷

Uchimura's outspoken denial of the earthly triumph of righteousness placed him apart from the mainstream Christian thinkers, who heralded the advent of the

League of Nations. Throughout the 1920s, Christians like Tagawa Daikichirō and Nitobe Inazō were prominently associated with the League cause.

Given the peace mission's assertion of regional prerogatives in the process of refining the Covenant, it should not be surprising that some Japanese spokesmen during and immediately following the Paris Peace Conference argued the case for Japanese leadership in the region of East Asia. Thoughtful Japanese recognized that the only viable route of international ascent for Japan lay in strengthening its regional base and gaining the powers' recognition of the Empire's predominance in East Asia. The promotion of the regional point of view at the very moment of the League of Nations' debut is highly significant in view of Japanese foreign policy trends in the 1920s and 1930s. Writing in America at the time the conference opened, Ienaga Toyokichi, a propagandist of the East-West News Bureau, articulated the Japanese desire for a global League that would not invalidate regional interests:

I am confident that a League of Nations will not stand in the way of Japan's occupying the paramount position in the Far East — the fruit of her patient and laborious progress during the past half-century. . . . As the League is not a substitute for the Monroe Doctrine, which the American people are determined to maintain; as the League is not a substitute for the naval supremacy which the British people are determined to maintain for the safety of their Empire; so, I believe, the League will in no way ignore Japan's unique position in the Far East.¹⁰⁸

The year 1919 was also when Kita Ikki (1883–1937) wrote his *Nihon kaizō hōan taikō* (An outline plan for the reorganization of Japan). Kita was a fascist, and his ideas would inspire some of the radical militarists of the 1930s whose acts of terrorism silenced advocates of international accommodationism. He himself would be executed after the abortive coup in 1936. Kita's *Outline Plan* depicted President Wilson's advocacy of "justice and humanity" as a mere facade and ridiculed the League of Nations. He called for radical changes, including Japanese leadership in a union of resurgent Asiatic peoples and the suppression of "effeminate pacifism." Japanese guidance and protection alone could open the path to independence for "our seven hundred million brothers in China and India." Kita's book, which was banned by the police whenever it was published, admonished his countrymen to "lift the virtuous banner of an Asian league and take the leadership in a world federation which must come."¹⁰⁹ Advocates of a regional approach to international order would make concrete proposals for Pan-Asian federations and East Asian peace organizations when Japanese confidence in the universalistic League of Nations dimmed in the late 1920s and virtually disappeared in the 1930s.

Ratification

On 12 September the prime minister and foreign minister laid a translation of the Treaty of Versailles before the Privy Council. Hara avoided a discussion of the document's contents and echoed Marquis Saionji in calling attention to Japan's elevated status as one of the Big Five. The task of scrutinizing and evaluating the treaty was assigned to a special Privy Council committee headed by Viscount Kiyoura Keigo (1850–1942). Meeting from 15 September, the Kiyoura group pored over the document article by article. Before the committee reported back six weeks later, the Foreign Ministry demonstrated its confidence that ratification was assured by assigning Ambassadors Matsui and Chinda the “temporary duty” of attending a special meeting of the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference on 18 October.¹¹⁰

The committee presented its findings to the Privy Council on 27 October in the presence of the Emperor and council president Yamagata Aritomo. More than half of Kiyoura's thorough presentation was a discussion of the League of Nations and its domestic and international implications for the nation. He reflected the council's concern for Imperial sovereignty by pointing out the Covenant's inroads into precincts specified by the constitution as Imperial prerogatives. However, the committee voiced the rationale that the right of members to withdraw from the organization ultimately protected Imperial sovereignty from erosion by the League. The committee's report expressed apprehension over the prospect of disarmament and warned that the League would “restrict the expansion of Japan's national power,” but it voiced confidence that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance could survive within the League framework. Kiyoura went on to criticize the peace mission for poor timing in the presentation of the nondiscrimination demand. The episode, he said, had only served to make a public show of Japan's minority status.

Nowhere in the report was the option of nonparticipation raised. The committee affirmed the widely held view that though the formation of the League was contrary to Japan's interests, to stand alone outside it would be dangerous. The advisability of *taisei junnō* was stressed throughout. The report also stated that in the event of a major future challenge to Japan's national power and interest, Japan should not hesitate to stand apart from the League. Kiyoura concluded his presentation with the committee's recommendation that Japan ratify the treaty with no reservations. The prime minister requested the acceptance of the report as it stood, and the Privy Council approved it by unanimous vote. The Emperor was presented with a prepared statement of ratification.¹¹¹

The Gaikō Chōsakai met two days later to discuss ratification. Foreign Minister Uchida reported that Britain, France, and Italy had already acted favorably on the treaty and had thus opened the way for the League Council to convene. He

recommended that Japan not wait for the United States, but ratify the accord as soon as possible in order to qualify for full participation in League activities and to allay the powers' suspicions toward Japan. He also urged that Japan take action before the United States Senate attached a reservation to the Shandong provision of the treaty. The members of the council concurred in Uchida's view. Itō Miyoji gave his apprehensions about the League one final airing. Then, the archcritic of the Wilsonian order joined the others by stating his grudging endorsement:

Our nation's action of joining the League of Nations was not, of course, taken with total satisfaction. This course was followed simply in calculation of Japan's future self-interest and the necessity of avoiding the disadvantageous circumstance of international isolation that would accompany refusal to participate in the League.

Imperial sanction was obtained on the following day, 30 October, and Paris was notified that Japanese ratification was complete.¹¹²

Two weeks later, on 19 November, the United States Senate handed President Wilson the first of two refusals to ratify the Versailles Treaty. Japanese leaders were not surprised. During the peace conference the growth of American domestic antagonism to the president's peace program had been discussed in the *Gaikō Chōsakai*. By the fall the obstacles to Senate ratification appeared so serious that seasoned Japanese observers, including Itō Miyoji, wondered whether the organization whose Covenant had been signed in June would ever become a reality. The hard-line *Kokumin* advised that Japan should take a cue from the American Senate and resume the campaign for racial equality and other amendments to suit Japanese interests. Former prime minister Ōkuma stated that the cloud of American indecision that hung over the future of the League made the continuation of a strong Anglo-Japanese Alliance "a vital necessity." Anxiety focused on the Senate's determination to tamper with the Shandong settlement. When on 15 November the Senate passed a reservation dissenting from that item in the treaty, the *Yomiuri* was quick to condemn Yankee hypocrisy:

Carried away by their war success, the Americans are forgetting that it is the true spirit of democracy to respect the liberty of other countries. While insisting on their Monroe Doctrine, they would tolerate no Monroeism in settling the Shandong question between Japan and China.¹¹³

The Japanese media was unforgiving in its appraisal of Senate rejection of the treaty. The *Nichi nichi* opined that the American Constitution gave the Senate arbitrary power that had brought "disappointment and indefensible inconvenience

to the world." The *Yomiuri* feared that because of the Senate's "contrariness" and the concurrent crises over Fiume and Hungary the League might end up "a mere paper institution." One diplomat disappointed by the Senate's action was Makino Nobuaki. At Paris he had overheard Clemenceau and Lloyd George ask Wilson whether Senate passage was assured. Wilson had replied that if he were given the opportunity to personally explain the treaty to his people, there would be no reason to worry. "But," recalled Makino, "the tone of his voice was not reassuring." The plenipotentiary's assessment of the Senate vote was that it "cast an ineradicable pall over future prospects for the enforcement of the treaty." He lamented that "a key pillar has been removed from the structure of the League." Nonetheless, in an article in *Taiyō* the recently returned negotiator expressed the mistaken confidence that the United States, "the power most deeply committed to permanent peace," would eventually join.¹¹⁴

A formal Imperial proclamation was issued 10 January 1920, the day when ratifications were exchanged at Versailles. The Taishō Emperor admonished his subjects to "work for the attainment of that durable peace contemplated by the institution of the League of Nations." An accompanying message to soldiers and sailors praised their sacrifices and martial spirit in the defeat of the enemy. On the same occasion Prime Minister Hara reviewed the postwar settlement and announced a new internationalist role for Japan:

Japan's position in the world has thus been enhanced and with it her responsibility has also increased. The condition of the world no longer allows independent action for any country in an international affair and it will be necessary for all countries to maintain harmony and cooperation with each other. It is desirable that the Japanese should pay due attention to this phase of the new order of things.¹¹⁵

Hara's announcement could not overcome the dour realism that pervaded most circles of internationally aware Japanese. Ōkuma Shigenobu, whose cabinet had proffered the Twenty-One Demands, reviewed the peace and concluded that Wilson's goal of subordinating nationalism to the universal concerns of humankind had not been realized: "Every nation must continue to rely on its own strength, and the maintenance of peace depends solely on the restraining influence of might pitted against might. . . . The old order does not change." In a similar vein, journalist Kawakami Kiyoshi graphically expressed common apprehensions with regard to the settlement and Japan's future relationship to the powers:

It is highly doubtful that this anomalous relationship between the Orient and the Occident will be appreciably altered by the organization of the League of

Nations which refuses to accept the obviously just principle that no race in the League shall be discriminated against in any of the countries bound by its covenant. As far as Asia is concerned, the League is not likely to be harbinger of glad tidings. . . . The Far Eastern peoples, then, must not, under the new world regime, expect much brighter days, but must be prepared to trudge along the same thorny path as heretofore, making the best use of their own resources, and endeavoring not to trespass upon the domain monopolized by the great Powers of the West, even if they have to trample upon one another within their own sphere in the sheer struggle for existence.¹¹⁶

When viewed from the vantage point of Japanese realists, the League of Nations as it emerged from the Paris Peace Conference was a scheme to integrate East Asia into a rational global system whereby multilateral restraints would be imposed upon Japan's local prerogatives. In response to this specter, Japan displayed a paradoxical mixture of internationalist tendencies and regionalist proclivities. On the one hand, Japan was attracted by the potential enhancement of its international image that would accompany participation in a global peace structure as one of the Big Five. The sheer amount of energy the peace delegation devoted to the various aspects of the League Covenant reflected unprecedented Japanese recognition that Japan would not remain unaffected by diplomatic trends in Europe. On the other hand, Japanese efforts to insert provisions to limit the exercise of League members' obligations to their immediate vicinity concretely revealed the local priorities of Japan's own diplomatic program. In any case, Japan at Paris was not a "silent partner of the peace." As an aspiring middle power seeking to achieve its destiny in a world dominated by first-class powers, Japan took forthright steps to assure its predominance within its own geographical sphere. Japan judged that equal status with the powers could be reached only if the routes to preeminence in Asia were held open.

5

The Geneva Years

One must come to Geneva, as to Lourdes, filled with faith.
—*El Liberal* of Madrid

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS officially began its life when the Treaty of Versailles came into force on 10 January 1920. Acting from afar, the president of the United States — in accordance with the terms of the Covenant — summoned the first meetings of the Council and the Assembly. The Council was called first and convened on 16 January in Paris, for facilities in Geneva would not be ready until the first meeting of the Assembly in the fall. Representatives of four permanent and four nonpermanent members of the Council assembled in the Clock Room of the Quai d'Orsay.

Some of the delegates to the first meeting of the Council had been seen in the Quai d'Orsay the previous year, when the Covenant was drafted there. Returnees from the League of Nations Commission of the peace conference included Léon Bourgeois of France, Paul Hymans of Belgium, and Eleuthérios Venizélos of Greece. In the case of Japan, the old cast of characters had left the stage, bearing new peerage titles in recognition of their service in the postwar settlement. Chief plenipotentiary Saionji Kinmochi returned to court affairs and political advisory duties as a *genrō*, with the title of prince. Makino Nobuaki received the Grand Cordon of the Rising Sun and Paulownia and the title of viscount. He was elevated to the post of Imperial Household minister and later to lord keeper of the privy seal. Chinda Sutemi, exhausted from his labors at Paris, left the ambassadorship in London and returned to Japan to recuperate. He was made a count and a privy councilor and eventually became high steward and grand chamberlain in the Imperial Household Ministry. Peace conference plenipotentiaries Matsui Keishirō and Ijūin Hikokichi left their ambassadorial posts in Paris and Rome and received the title of baron; each served as foreign minister later in the decade. Matsui would represent Japan at Geneva after his appointment to the Court of St. James from 1925. Viscount Ishii Kikujirō resigned his post in Washington and was appointed

from October 1920 to succeed Matsui as ambassador in Paris, a post he had held during 1912–1915. While ambassador to France, he would serve as Japan's most noteworthy representative to the Council and Assembly of the League of Nations.

President Woodrow Wilson too was recognized for his service. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1920 for his role in the creation of the League of Nations, but in March of the same year his dream of bringing his own country into the peacekeeping organization went down to bitter and irretrievable defeat in a second vote in the Senate. When Warren G. Harding was elected president in November, he announced that as far as the United States was concerned, the League of Nations was deceased. Harding's first address to Congress upon his inauguration the following April reiterated the last rites. Some press spokesmen in Japan labeled the United States a murderer of the League, while others expressed relief that "the cobwebs of vagueness" had at last been removed from American policy. The *Nichi nichu* anticipated a healthier era of candor and pragmatism in Japanese-American relations:

Mr. Wilson's messages used to be based on justice and humanity, but President Harding's message is a claim for rights and interest from beginning to end.

Thus America is now reverting from an ideal kingdom of humanity to practical Americanism. The conversion of American politics along practical lines is by no means a deterioration. On the contrary, we rejoice to note that we are now able to discuss from the practical point of view the questions pending between Japan and America.¹

There is no doubt that the absence of the United States hampered the effectiveness of the League of Nations during its subsequent quarter-century history. As F. P. Walters, the leading historian of the League, noted, the nonparticipation of America was a circumstance "depriving the world organization of the material contribution of its wealth and power, and the moral contribution of its impartiality in the traditional quarrels of Europe." With the United States outside its ranks, the utility of the League in the settlement of disputes was limited to Europe, and there to disagreements among smaller states. There is also no doubt that without the United States and the Soviet Union as members, the League could never play a major role in security issues for Japan. Undersecretary-General Nitobe Inazō said their absence from the League "deprived it of two-thirds of its value to Japan."² Absent Japan's most powerful Pacific neighbors, the League could neither protect Japan from aggression nor restrain the Empire from pursuing autonomous aims. In this regard Japan was no different from other major powers in the League. While Japan consistently declared — conscientiously, in the opinion of this author — its support for the ideals and activities of the League until 1931, it was at the same time

candid about its reservations. For example, Japan announced at the First Assembly that it was premature for the League to discuss arms limitation while the United States remained outside the organization.³ The League of Nations that came into being in 1920 was, therefore, an entity substantially different from the edifice that had been projected in the blueprints of the Western victors of the war. It was not the embodiment of world order that Wilson had envisioned and Japanese had feared, but rather a partial representation of a still-fragmented world — nonetheless purporting the myth of its universality. League detractors in Japan could not but feel a sense of relief at this denouement.

One important neighbor did take its seat in the League, and that was China. China did not sign the Versailles Treaty with Germany, because of its provision for the transfer of former German rights in Shandong to Japan, but it joined the League by virtue of its adherence to the Treaty of Saint-Germain with Austria. That treaty, which came into force 16 July 1920, included the League of Nations Covenant but omitted the offending Versailles clauses on Shandong. Hence China returned to the League enterprise in time for the First Assembly in November. It would be represented at Geneva by no less than V. K. Wellington Koo, now minister to London.

Japan in the World of the 1920s

As the decade of the 1920s began, Sir Beilby Francis Alston, British minister in Tokyo, noted in his annual report to Whitehall that Japan stood at a crossroads in its relations with the rest of the world:

Japan has arrived at a critical period in her history, and it is now for her to decide whether she will fall into line with the rest of the world or stand apart. If she chooses the former course it means the renunciation of the ambition to the hegemony of the Far East, and it exposes her perhaps, as many of her thinkers believe, to the danger of having her own culture swamped in the flood of Anglo-Saxon civilization. It is sincerely to be hoped that this will not happen. On the other hand, the prospect of isolation, an isolation she is already beginning to feel, is almost equally unpleasant, and, in the circumstances, it may be conjectured that the former is the course she will ultimately adopt, though perhaps somewhat *à contre-coeur*.⁴

For the succeeding ten years, Alston's prediction was largely correct, for Japan did pursue foreign policies inoffensive to the powers. While the goal of East Asian predominance was not abandoned, Japan applied the self-restraint of "respectable imperialism" in its choice of means. By the end of the decade there was growing

disillusionment concerning the payoff of acquiescent policies and an increasing conviction that an accommodationist posture was inadequate in the face of new exigencies.

Japan's economic circumstances of the 1920s were conducive to cooperative relations with the West. A postwar recession and deflationary policies throughout the decade required prudence in military appropriations and fostered openness on the part of party cabinets to multilateral disarmament schemes. Though economic growth did not match the pace of the wartime boom or the bullishness of the heavily expansionist 1930s, the net domestic product grew at a respectable average of 3.2 percent a year from 1920 to 1930. It should be noted, however, that economic growth was entirely in manufacturing and services and masked stagnation in agriculture. Hence, while advance was experienced in that sector of the economy closely allied with foreign trade, poor agrarian performance would heighten political discontent in a volatile segment of Japan's population as the decade progressed. The United States was Japan's major trading partner. Americans bought 40 percent of Japan's exports each year, and Japanese purchased more from the United States than from any other country. U.S. cotton exports to Japan steadily increased to feed the expanding spinning industry. While Japanese dependence on foreign steel declined, imports of machine tools ran consistently high. Japan's slice of the China trade, by contrast, dropped sharply from its 40 percent level in 1917 to 23 percent in 1924, as Great War belligerents reentered the China market. Business leaders such as Shibusawa Eiichi reiterated throughout the decade their postwar admonition that the government should avoid any action that would lead to diplomatic isolation from the powers and sour trade relations with the West. As an expression of economic internationalism, Japanese participated in the formation of the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris in 1919. Also an eager participant in cultural internationalism, Tokyo a year later hosted the World Sunday School Convention. One of the convention's patrons was industrialist Shibusawa, who was also founding president of the new Japan League of Nations Association.⁵

In line with the trend established in October 1918 with the accession of the Seiyūkai cabinet of Hara Takashi, Japan's senior statesmen during the 1920s recommended to the Emperor the appointment of political party leaders as premiers. This practice continued with some exceptions until 1932, when, in the wake of the Manchurian Incident and the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi, a retired admiral was tapped. The deaths of Yamagata Aritomo in 1922 and Matsukata Masayoshi in 1923 removed the last of the Meiji founders from the political scene, and the chief advisory power in cabinet appointments fell to "last *genrō*" Saionji. Cabinet control passed back and forth between the leaders of the Seiyūkai and the Kenseikai (renamed Minseitō in 1927). As in the case of the Hara government, these party cabinets were beholden to the big-business interests that filled

their campaign coffers, and they generally pursued moderate policies of economic expansionism. Even the military, its wings clipped by disarmament commitments and compromise budgets, harbored voices for moderation and international accommodationism. Admiral Katō Tomosaburō, navy minister, premier, and leading advocate of naval disarmament, counseled that Japan would have to be content with a peacetime armament “commensurate with its national strength.”⁶

The Foreign Ministry prepared itself to fulfill new responsibilities attendant to Japan’s enhanced status in the world. During the Paris Peace Conference the inadequacy of training, preparation, and logistical support had been poignantly felt by the Japanese delegation. The mission lacked experts on critical economic and labor issues. It had hardly enough staff to attend the myriad commission meetings, let alone carry out research, drafting, private negotiation, communication, and public relations functions. Four young diplomats, led by Arita Hachirō, formed the Kakushin Dōshikai (Reform Fraternity) and drafted a petition demanding the recruitment and promotion of men of talent, more adequate provision of diplomats’ expenses, and the strengthening of the ministry’s machinery. Plenipotentiaries Saionji and Makino listened sympathetically to the Dōshikai’s complaints and encouraged the dissidents to communicate them to Kasumigaseki. Reinforcing the diplomats’ demands was a group of forty-five journalists, academics, and politicians who in August 1919 formed the Kaizō Dōmei (Reconstruction League), the purpose of which was to reform Japan along the lines of world democratic trends. Several Dōmei ringleaders, including Nagai Ryūtarō, had been present in Paris in lay capacities, and they were convinced that inept and uninspired diplomacy had led to Japan’s humiliation on race equality and hard going in its other demands. The Dōmei platform insisted on an end to “bureaucratic diplomacy.” Many of the postconference alterations carried out in the Foreign Ministry paralleled the suggestions voiced from Paris. A revised entrance examination system admitted as many new recruits (121) in the four years after World War I as had entered in the preceding quarter century. An Information Bureau was created, and separate Asia and Europe-America Bureaus replaced the Political Affairs Bureau. Implementation of the Versailles Treaty and relations with the League of Nations were assigned to the Treaties Bureau, newly created in 1919.⁷

The one name that stands out above all others as a symbol of the international accommodationism of the 1920s is Shidehara Kijūrō. Shidehara was foreign minister in the Kenseikai/Minseitō cabinets of 1924–1927 and 1929–1931, and the term “Shidehara diplomacy” commonly connotes cooperation among Japan and the powers and a conciliatory policy toward China. Shidehara had entered the Foreign Ministry in 1896 and served in Korea, the United States, and Europe. He was married to the daughter of the head of the Mitsubishi combine. Appointed ambassador to the United States in 1919, he was a delegate to the Washington Naval Conference

and took part in the negotiations over the return of the Shandong leasehold to China. Shidehara repeatedly affirmed his confidence in the League of Nations as a mechanism for maintaining world peace:

Before the World War such a system of maintaining international peace through the total cooperation of powers was thought to be nearly impossible. However, being impressed by the cruel sight of the great war, the public of the world began to seek seriously for such a system and at last we saw the establishment of the League of Nations. Hence, today, aggressive policies and the might-is-right attitude which were often taken in diplomacy can no longer achieve the goal, being suppressed by the general force of enlightened sentiments in the world.⁸

Tanaka Giichi, the Seiyūkai prime minister who concurrently held the post of foreign minister in the period intervening Shidehara's two terms, is often portrayed as the antithesis of Shidehara because of his "positive" policies toward China and his preference for bilateral arrangements. Tanaka's resort to a military incursion in the Jinan Incident of 1928 lends credence to this contrast. However, both Shidehara and Tanaka fall into the mainstream of Kasumigaseki diplomacy in that their end goal was the incremental extension of Japanese political and economic power on the mainland. Shidehara consistently made clear his aim of "the safeguarding of our rightful position" in Manchuria and Mongolia. He maintained that Japanese rights in these regions, legitimately acquired in "two great wars in the Manchurian plains," were "absolutely essential to our national existence." In negotiations with China over tariffs and extraterritoriality, the Foreign Ministry under Shidehara rigidly protected Japan's imperialist advantages.⁹

During the 1920s, no issue produced more Japanese ill feeling toward America than immigration. The Japanese population continued to grow at a steady pace, and government and private groups encouraged emigration to the continent and the Pacific islands to relieve the pressure at home. The impulse to promote emigration as national policy kept the issues of racial equality and immigration discrimination high in the consciousness of Japanese.¹⁰ The decade opened with a renewal of anti-Japanese agitation in California and a public referendum in November 1920 that imposed new restrictions on land ownership by Japanese aliens in the Golden State. The Japanese government tried to restrain the public outcry, but with the wounds of the defeat on racial nondiscrimination at the Paris Peace Conference nineteen months earlier still fresh, the press was unforgiving. One newspaper compared the actions of Californians to "the anti-foreign movements of semi-barbarous tribes." More than a dozen peace societies, including the Japan League of Nations Association, held a joint meeting in Tokyo on 1 December to protest the California land law as "contrary to the universal principle of righteousness and humanity." Indus-

trialist Shibusawa Eiichi, who had dedicated his life and wealth to the furtherance of Japanese-American understanding, was deeply upset by the exclusionist trend in the United States. When the Washington Conference failed to take up the immigration issue, Shibusawa instigated a campaign to get the governments of Japan and the United States to appoint a joint high commission to study the question of Japanese immigrants in America, with a goal to recommend a “fundamental and permanent solution to the entire question.” Japanese hopes for a reasonable resolution of the problem were set back in 1924, when Congress passed an Immigration Act that totally excluded Orientals. While American immigration policy was dissociated from the League of Nations, these events served to confirm the doubts of Japanese realists that universal norms of justice — an important notion underlying the League of Nations — existed.¹¹ Japanese efforts to institutionalize the principle of international equality at Geneva fared little better than at Paris, but internationalists in Japan throughout the 1920s clung to the hope that new norms of international relations established after the Great War would enable a solution to the difficult issues of population and race. “The new diplomacy of the changed world,” said Ishii Kikujirō in 1930, “must face these problems with extraordinary *sang-froid* and patience.”¹²

The revolutionary reintegration of fragmented China was also a trend of the 1920s of vital concern to Japan. Since 1917 two governments — in Beijing and Canton — had claimed national legitimacy, while an assortment of autonomous warlords in fact ruled most of the provinces. During the Paris Peace Conference a burst of nationalist fervor associated with the May Fourth Movement provided the ideological basis for reuniting the country. After the death of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, the revolutionary mantle fell to Japanese-trained Chiang Kai-shek, who with Soviet aid and communist support launched the Northern Expedition in 1927. By the following year Chiang’s Nationalist Party hegemony included all of China except Manchuria and disaffected communist pockets in the south and west. An important sentiment undergirding the nationalist cause was anti-imperialism, which became increasingly focused on the Japanese economic and police presence. The anti-Japanese boycott was the movement’s most common expression. A lack of consensus on how to respond to Chinese revolutionary nationalism led to deep divisions in the Japanese body politic. Soviet aid and propaganda in China made it easy for some to caricature Chinese nationalism as a subplot of the Bolshevik scenario whose ultimate objective was the replacement of Japanese predominance in East Asia with Soviet hegemony. In any case, the dual challenge of restored Russian power and Chinese nationalism was a real threat to long-standing Japanese interests on the continent, a threat that was keenly felt by Japanese by the end of the decade. As bases for security in the face of these new dangers, Shidehara-style noninterventionism and international accommodationism were weighed in the balances and found wanting.

But for the first half of the decade, Japanese political and military leadership pursued national self-interest within the context, and subject to the restraints, of international structures. This post-Versailles epoch was, as Akira Iriye has stated, “a period in which they seriously entertained a cosmopolitan image of the world.”¹³ As a conscientious member of the global community, Japan treated the League of Nations as an important arena for its cooperation with the powers.

Japan in the League Structure

Conventional accounts of Japanese international history in the interwar period address the League of Nations only at the stages of confrontation — the quest for equality at the Paris Peace Conference and the struggle with the League over Manchuria from 1931 to 1933. By overlooking the wide range of Japanese constructive involvement with the League during the years of Japanese membership, they obscure much of the practical outworkings of Japanese accommodationism. They also overlook the rich legacy of Japanese positive contributions to international stability through international organization. As a result, the standard history of the period is skewed toward a construction of Japan as singular, aggressive, and hostile to world order.

Japan was deliberate in seeing that its role in the League of Nations was commensurate with the stature of major powerhood. The League provided a European entrée broader in scope than that afforded by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. As the only permanent member of the Council among Asian constituents, Japan could claim to represent Oriental interests before the world, continue to press the issue of race equality, and speak with impartiality on European questions. In 1920, after conferring with Japan's ambassador to London on the mechanics of League representation, Secretary-General Sir Eric Drummond noted that the Japanese were eager to know what other governments were doing with regard to permanent envoys and living accommodations in Geneva. “My impression,” he recounted, “was that the Japanese Government were showing considerable interest in League of Nations affairs.”¹⁴

The Foreign Ministry set up a Japan Office of the League of Nations (*Koku-sai Renmei Jimukyoku*) in Paris. There, League matters were managed under the watchful eye of the ambassador to France, who possessed virtual veto power over Japanese appointments to the League Secretariat. Among the Foreign Ministry officers who served as chief of the office were Matsuda Michikazu, Sugimura Yōtarō, Satō Naotake, and Sawada Setsuzō. Diplomats dispatched to Geneva and posted to the Paris office generally rose to prestigious appointments later in their careers — an indication both that the ministry sent men of talent to conduct League business and that service connected with the League was an asset in career advancement.

The League of Nations consisted of three principal organs: the Assembly, the

Council, and the Secretariat. The Covenant stipulated two permanent commissions, one on armaments and one on mandates. There were two related but independent organs, the Permanent Court of International Justice and the International Labor Organization. In addition to these entities specifically mentioned in the Covenant or the Versailles Treaty, various technical organizations and advisory commissions were established by the Assembly and the Council as the need arose.

The Assembly

The Assembly was a deliberative conclave representing all member states. At one time or another sixty-three nations — every sovereign state and dominion in the world except the United States of America — were members. Besides Japan there were four Asian members — China, India, Siam, and Persia — with Turkey and Iraq joining in 1932 and Afghanistan in 1934. Australia and New Zealand were charter members. By the end of 1921, the twenty-four European members made up roughly half the roster, and there were seventeen members from Latin America. Despite allegations heard repeatedly in Japan that it was a European club, the League of Nations was in fact remarkably global and multicultural in representation.¹⁵ The Covenant gave a very broad definition of the purview of the Assembly: to “deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.” Each member state had one vote and could have up to three representatives. As one of the League’s Big Four, Japan held a seat on the executive board of the Assembly.

The First Assembly opened on 15 November 1920 in the Salle de la Réformation in Geneva. Flags hung from every window, Lac Léman sparkled on an unusually clear autumn day for Geneva, and special services were held in churches in the city and around the world. Japan was represented by former foreign minister and ambassador to France Ishii Kikujirō; Hayashi Gonsuke, ambassador to England; and Baron Megata Tanetarō, a member of the House of Peers. All told, thirty-eight Foreign Ministry personnel were in the Japanese entourage, along with military and naval attachés. A specially chartered ship, the *Kumano Maru*, left Japan in mid-September carrying Baron Megata and supporting members of the delegation. Ambassador Ishii told the Assembly that Japan sent a large mission because “the Japanese Government attached great importance to the meeting of the Assembly and wanted the Japanese people to understand and gain deep confidence in this novel attempt toward peace and good will among men.”¹⁶

The official instructions to the delegation, approved by the Hara cabinet and the Gaikō Chōsakai and wired to Ishii on 9 November, were the product of prudent deliberations in Tokyo. Stung by apt criticism of its inadequate groundwork for the Paris Peace Conference, the government had set up committees to research each of the dozen agenda items projected by the embassy in Paris. In both breadth and

depth, Japan was much better prepared for this round of diplomacy. The instructions also show a distinctly cooperative attitude regarding the League. The representatives were ordered to work to broaden the base of the League and thus to support the entry of Germany and Austria and encourage the adhesion of the United States. Foreign Minister Uchida explained that German entry would help offset French and British power in the League. If Covenant alterations were required to induce the United States, the delegation should act in concert with the powers and seek further instructions from Tokyo. Japan was prepared to shoulder its share of League expenses as one of the major powers. Japan was not to raise the issue of race equality unless an especially opportune situation arose; but Japan should support the cause if another nation took the lead. The variable of "the geographical situation and circumstances" placed by the peace conference in Article 8 on disarmament should be inserted in Article 16 on sanctions. The delegation was warned not to allow China to overturn decisions made at Paris regarding Shandong, but there was no instruction to stand in the way of China's quest for a nonpermanent seat on the Council. Throughout the instructions the principle of *taisei junnō* was repeatedly urged. The cable ended with a general admonition to respect the lofty principles of the League, to promote the peaceful development of Japan and secure its position among the five Great Powers, and to "take measures to build a base for the realization of Japan's just aims."¹⁷

Earlier, in September, the Cabinet had approved basic Japanese positions on disarmament and cabled them to military attachés in Europe in the expectation that the matter would be raised in the Assembly. Disarmament, the instructions said, must be simultaneous among all the powers. Armament levels must not be based on existing strength, for Japan had not expanded its arsenal during the war. The Assembly must not be permitted to threaten Japan's eight-eight naval expansion program nor to abolish conscription. As in the diplomatic instructions, the attachés were admonished to adapt to the general trends in the League and were warned not to jeopardize friendly relations with the powers in the pursuit of Japan's interests.¹⁸

While the instructions for the First Assembly reveal much about Japanese foreign policy and posture toward the League as the organization began its work, the course of the actual sessions required that little of Japan's defensive preparation be put into action. Disarmament questions were addressed in the Sixth Committee and did not emerge in open debate. When the proposal to freeze military expenditures for two years came up in committee, Ishii candidly asserted that so long as "one certain great power" remained outside the League, Japan could not submit to such a commitment. The proposal was then changed to a nonbinding recommendation. Though the Chinese had succeeded in raising the Shandong issue at two recent conferences of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies and

had threatened to bring it up at the League itself, Japan was able to keep the lid on that bitter topic in Geneva until it was laid to rest at the Washington Conference. Much of the four-week Assembly meeting was consumed in windy speechmaking, establishing procedural rules for the body, and working out its relationship to the League Council.

Ambassador Ishii did bring up racial equality, but in a manner far less confrontational than demanded by the public at home. The Union for the Abolition of Racial Discrimination, founded during the Paris Peace Conference, viewed the meeting of the Assembly, with its overwhelming majority of small and middle-size nations, as the ideal forum in which to press the issue of equality forward to victory. The government and its delegation, by contrast, were prudently concerned about the impact of such a crusade on the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and on American entry into the League. In a 30 November speech in English on the floor of the Assembly, Ishii reminded the delegates of the poignant feelings of the Japanese people on the race issue and reiterated Japan's commitment to establish the principle of equality in the League. However, he said, his government believed that the League had not yet reached a stage where it could "consider such fundamental principles which might involve revision of the Covenant," and therefore Japan would not pursue the point now but would "patiently bide her time until the opportunity offered." Newspaper editorials at home voiced disappointment at Ishii's diffidence, while General Ugaki reacted by describing the Assembly in his diary as a device to perpetuate class distinctions among nations. The First Assembly set up an Amendments Committee, which convened the following year in preparation for the Second Assembly. Again in this instance, the government instructed Ambassador Ishii not to pursue the race equality issue.¹⁹

As far as substantive Japanese input is concerned, the plenary sessions of the next ten annual assemblies were much like that of the first. A typical Japanese initiative was cosponsorship with eleven other nations in the Second Assembly (1921) of a resolution encouraging the teaching of Esperanto. Japan's more substantial contributions in the settlement of international disputes were made in behind-the-scenes Council operations. In committees, Japanese delegates generally spoke out only on such questions as disarmament, mandates, and efforts to strengthen the peacekeeping machinery of the League. The Paris pledge to renew the demand for a statement of racial equality in the Covenant was never directly carried out, but Japanese representatives did pursue the issue indirectly in the Second (Economic) Committee by promoting the concept of nondiscriminatory treatment of foreigners on the grounds of nationality. Accordingly, the League-sponsored World Economic Conference in 1927 recommended adherence to this principle. It will be seen in the context of mandates that practical application of nondiscrimination was not achieved, but Japan did successfully thwart the intention of the drafters of

the Covenant that the matter be regarded as “strictly within the domestic jurisdiction” of the countries concerned. Japan thus retrieved the question of the treatment of aliens from the vault of the unmentionable to which the peace conference had consigned it.²⁰ This was no small accomplishment.

The Council

The League of Nations Council was an executive body that, because of its small size, was more suited than the Assembly to convene on short notice and deal effectively with international disputes. Four major powers made up its permanent members (Great Britain, France, Japan, and Italy), with Germany increasing the permanent ranks to five in 1926. Smaller powers were represented in the nonpermanent membership elected periodically by the Assembly and numbering four at the outset, six after 1922, and nine after 1926. Council decisions required unanimity. While the Assembly met annually, the Council in a typical year met four to six times. Japan’s ubiquitous delegate from October 1920 until 1927 was Ishii Kikujiro, who, like the representatives of many other countries to the League, served concurrently as ambassador to France. He won praise for his service in stints as president of the Council and its rapporteur in the investigation of specific disputes.²¹ It was through the Council that Japan was able to most effectively play the role of disinterested party in heated European controversies.

The impact of year-after-year Council activity upon the representatives of Japan was profound. They had a deep certainty that their work was consequential and that the structure of peace they were building was permanent. After attending Council meetings for nearly a decade, Ambassador Ishii wrote that the League of Nations Council was “the supreme and most influential organ of peace in the world,” exerting “an irresistible force.” For Japanese, such an ongoing, multilateral forum for interaction among major world figures was without historical precedent. The commingling led to friendly sentiments and in turn to genuine camaraderie, in which delegates to the Council “share their labors, suffer their disappointments and enjoy their pleasures in common.”²²

Other diplomats stationed in European capitals who represented Japan in League Assembly and Council meetings included Matsui Keishiro (London), Adachi Mineichiro (Brussels, Paris), Kurusu Saburo (Rome), Satō Naotake (Berne), Nagaoka Harukazu (Berlin), and Yoshizawa Kenkichi (Paris). Matsuda Michikazu, Sugimura Yōtarō, Sawada Setsuzō, and Satō attended League meetings while serving as chief of the Japan Office of the League of Nations, in Paris. On rare occasions Japan dispatched special delegates from Tokyo to the Assembly, such as Baron Fujimura Yoshiaki, member of the House of Peers, in 1928 and Matsuoka Yōsuke in 1932–1933. Japanese representatives in Geneva, as Frank Walters attested, were exemplars of diligence: “During the long and often uninteresting debates of Coun-

cil, Assembly, Conference, or Committee, when many of their colleagues might be inattentive or absent, the Japanese delegation would always be there, following the dulllest proceedings with care and concentration.”²³

The journey from Tokyo to Geneva took about seven weeks, and this distance placed Japan at a marked diplomatic disadvantage vis-à-vis the other major powers in the League. Japan felt it could not send its prime minister or foreign minister to League meetings when an absence from the country of five months might be required. By contrast, foreign ministers and heads of state of major European nations frequently represented their governments in Geneva. Especially was this true after 1924, when the foreign ministers of Britain, France, and Germany normally attended some part of every session of the Assembly. In one year (1929), the Assembly was attended by every European foreign minister. Even politicians who lost confidence in the efficacy of the League scored political points with their electorates by putting in an appearance in what became known as the meeting place for the statesmen of Europe. These gatherings afforded excellent opportunities for “hotel diplomacy of Geneva” — quiet, personal exchanges among power brokers outside the formal sessions. For Uchida Yasuya, Tanaka Giichi, Ugaki Kazushige, Shidehara Kijūrō, and others who held the foreign minister’s portfolio during Japan’s tenure in the League, to have had such intercourse, even on a pro forma basis, would have been valuable and perhaps consequential for Japan. At the least it might have allayed the allegation, frequently voiced in Japan, that the League was a European club. Japanese delegates to League sessions, unlike their European counterparts, were unable to return home to explain in person to their leaders, parliament, and public the League’s policies and recommendations. Moreover, the practice of sending ambassadors stationed in European capitals to Geneva placed those diplomats in awkward situations when they needed to voice opinions contrary to the interests of the states to which they were posted. Ishii, for instance, might have been more forthright in advocating German admission to the League — clearly Japanese policy — had he not at the same time been the Empire’s representative in Paris, where French policy was to block the restoration of Germany to the ranks of the powers.²⁴

Japan tried to alleviate the distance handicap by urging the Assembly to hold its sessions biennially or triennially — with the thought that a Japanese leader might attend such a landmark conference — and to reduce the frequency of Council sessions. When in this, as in all else, Japan bowed to the majority view, Ambassador Ishii took pains to assure the Assembly that Japan’s inability to send delegates directly from home “should not be considered as a mark of scanty interest on the part of the Japanese Government in the work of the World Parliament.”²⁵

The Secretariat

The League of Nations Secretariat was envisioned as an international civil service — a wholly novel concept at the time — composed of impartial laypersons whose duties were not national but international. Unlike the professional diplomats who sat in the Assembly and Council, members of the Secretariat were not to represent their governments but to be servants of the League, responsible to it alone. They were to be recommended by their governments but appointed by the secretary-general, confirmed by the Council, and salaried by the League.

The task of organizing the Secretariat got under way even before the Versailles Treaty was signed, and it was guided by both internationalist ideals and big-power politics. An Organizing Committee drawn from the major powers at the peace conference deliberated and approved policies to guide Sir Eric Drummond (1876–1951), the designated secretary-general, in the formation of the League's bureaucratic structure. A shared sentiment in these discussions was that the personnel of the Secretariat should be drawn from as broad a range of nationalities as possible. All major states, especially those permanent members of the Council, should be adequately represented. As it worked out in League history, Drummond, a Britisher, held the top office until 1933. The deputy secretary-general was commonly a Frenchman. The three or four undersecretaries-general were usually Italian, Japanese, or (after 1926) German. Typically, the section directors were nationals of major countries. Jockeying for positions began at Paris. When it appeared that an Italian would receive a high post, Japan demanded equal treatment. The Japanese delegation was then asked to nominate an undersecretary, and it proposed Nitobe Inazō, an educator, international author and lecturer, and former colonial official in Taiwan. Nitobe was appointed and, since he was in Europe at the time, went to work immediately with Drummond in London and Paris setting up the machinery for the League.²⁶ Until the League moved into the new Palais des Nations in 1936, the Secretariat was housed in the Hotel National — renamed Palais Wilson in 1924 — overlooking Lac Léman and Mont Blanc.

The permanent contingent of League-employed Japanese in Europe was never large. Japan at no time supplied its quota of Secretariat personnel. In 1928, for instance, there were 5 Japanese, 143 Britons, 100 French, 126 Swiss, and 23 Italians. Japan sent no clerical staff to Geneva. The distance from Japan, the French-English official languages of the League, and the Euro-centered nature of Secretariat business probably account for the paucity of Japanese. Nitobe, who held the post of undersecretary until he retired in 1926, was director of the Section of International Bureaux. Because of his publicity work for the League throughout Europe and because of the reputation established by his widely translated books on Eastern culture, Nitobe's is the name most commonly associated with Japan in the League.

The Japanese undersecretary slot was filled after Nitobe's retirement by Sugimura Yōtarō (1884–1939), a career diplomat who since 1924 had served as chief of the Japan Office of the League of Nations. Sugimura was a colorful and beloved personality, of large physique and devoted to judo and swimming. The *New York Times* described him as a “courtly mannered Japanese giant” resembling Babe Ruth in build. When the Foreign Ministry refused him permission to attempt the English Channel, he swam the length of the Seine from one end of Paris to the other. He had spent several years as a student in Paris and Grenoble earning a doctorate of laws and was fluent in French. In reflections on the League published in 1930 by the Japan League of Nations Association, Sugimura wrote that the purpose of the world organization was not to mold all nations into one but to effect a brocade in which each color played an important role. Japan's mission was “to inject its unique culture into the total world culture, to let Japan's light shine while the flower of world civilization blooms.” Ambassador Ishii's nomination of Sugimura, who held the rank of minister, was symbolic of Japan's high valuation of its role in the Secretariat. Symbolic of Japan's established prestige in the League was Drummond's subsequent designation of Sugimura to head the Secretariat's sensitive Political Section. A clear motive in the secretary-general's selection of Sugimura was the desire to elevate a non-European who could mediate Franco-German rivalry, which because of German entry was expected to be acted out on the stage of the League. Sugimura directed the Political Section until Japan, much to his sorrow, withdrew from the League. Speaking privately of the undersecretary, Drummond said that though he had under him in the Secretariat a thousand men, the only one he could trust was Sugimura. Walters in his chronicle of the League singled out Sugimura as the only one among the mid-1920s generation of “innocuous” appointees who was a strong personality, and described him as “a sincere adherent of the League, who would have asked nothing better, had circumstances allowed, than to devote the rest of his days to its service.”²⁷

Other Japanese in the Secretariat included Harada Ken, Furukaki Tetsurō, and Aoki Setsuichi. Harada, a member of the Foreign Ministry, was loaned to the Secretariat when Nitobe was appointed undersecretary. He served in the Section of International Bureaux and was frequently seen at Nitobe's side as his personal secretary. When Nitobe left Geneva, Harada shifted to the Political Section to assist Sugimura. When Japan withdrew from the League and Sugimura relinquished his undersecretary's post, Harada remained with the Secretariat despite severe criticism from home, until 1938 when Japan severed remaining ties to League humanitarian organizations. After the Pacific War he became grand master of court ceremonies for the Imperial Household Ministry. Furukaki, a journalist, worked in the Press and Information Section from 1923 to 1930. Furukaki held a doctorate from the University of Lyons in France; his thesis, on the League and the mandate

system, was published in France in 1923. He authored a book on the League that was released in Japan in 1925 by the Japan League of Nations Association. In the 1930s Furukaki worked for the *Asahi shinbun* as Euro-American bureau chief. He became president of NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) in 1950 and ambassador to France in 1956. Aoki also served the Information Section in Geneva. In 1926 he returned to Tokyo to establish the Tokyo Branch of that section. In addition to these, several Japanese were employed by the Secretariat in the Information, Economic, and Health Sections. Compatriots held staff positions outside the Secretariat in such League agencies as the Permanent Mandates Commission, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, the Opium Committee, and the Health Organization.²⁸

Though Japan sent outstanding men—both lay and professional—to the League, Japanese in Geneva did little to erase the “silent partners of the Peace” epithet ascribed to their predecessors at the peace conference. William E. Rappard, a Swiss who served as director of the Mandates Section, reflected on the personality of the Japanese he knew in Geneva in an address to the Institute of Politics at Williams College in 1925:

I do not feel that I know, nor that I understand the Japanese. Never having visited their country, I can judge them only by what they say, and they say uncommonly little! . . . The reputation for exceptional wisdom of the Japanese is much more due to their silence, than their silence to any uncanny wisdom. They are wise enough to safeguard against the accidents of indiscretion, perhaps also the only bulwark protecting their reputation of unusual sagacity and—who knows?—the sole means of reconciling sincerity and politeness. . . .

Rappard attributed the taciturnity of the Japanese to their difficulty in learning Western languages, an opinion shared by retired undersecretary Nitobe when he lamented the weakness of the Japanese on their feet: “Reticent by training, and handicapped by the very meager linguistic talent vouchsafed to them by nature, the Japanese cannot win the confidence of nations by word of mouth. How inferior we are in this respect to the Chinese!”²⁹

The Geneva Protocol

In the first four years of the League, two efforts took place in the Assembly to strengthen the Covenant’s provisions for the settlement of international disputes. The first was the preparation of a Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, initiated by the Assembly in 1922. When the document emerged from the Assembly’s Political Committee in 1923, it included provisions to clarify and streamline the actions the League would take in a case of aggression. The Council was to decide in four days

which nation was the aggressor, which economic sanctions were to be applied, and which states were to apply them. The Council could also decide—and not merely recommend, as the Covenant provided—the armed forces to be placed at the disposal of the League to repel the aggressor. The Draft Treaty stated a limitation that reflected a standing Japanese principle from the time of the Paris Peace Conference, that of geographical circumstances. Nations summoned to the aid of a victim of aggression should be situated in the same continent. Japan was displeased that the Draft Treaty recognized “partial agreements,” or existing regional security arrangements. The Japanese representative argued that “the control of the League of Nations should be complete and that the Council should be the first to authorize the entry into effect of the partial agreements, and that in all cases of aggression the Council should have the right of preliminary examination.” It could be, as Matsushita Masatoshi speculated, that Japan sought to strengthen the prerogatives of the Council in view of its permanent seat in that body. In any case, Britain and the dominions were loath to accord the Council such extraordinary powers, and following their lead, member governments never accepted the Draft Treaty.³⁰

However, the advocates of “filling the gaps” in the Covenant, led by Frenchmen who sought to make the League into an ironclad security mechanism, would not let the matter rest. The movement received a boost in 1924, when new, left-leaning cabinets came to power in both Paris and London. The new Labor government of Ramsay MacDonald was willing to give the Assembly another chance to formulate a programmed response to aggression and vigorous guarantee of world peace. The second instrument that was drafted by the Political Committee in 1924 was called a protocol, to imply that it was an expansion of, and not a departure from, the Covenant. Officially titled “Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes,” it is commonly known as the Geneva Protocol.

The Protocol, as it was hammered out in a drafting committee, had judicial, security, and disarmament elements. It provided that disputes of a judicial nature would be brought before the World Court at the request of either party, and the Court’s decision would be binding. Cases not brought to the Court would go before the League Council, whose unanimous decision would likewise be binding. If the Council failed to reach a unanimous decision, the case would go to arbitrators chosen by the Council. Signatories to the Protocol would be bound to abide by the arbitrators’ decision, and a nation that did not would be labeled an aggressor. Economic sanctions and military measures would be enforced by the signatories. As in the case of the Draft Treaty above, signatories were bound to contribute forces only so far as their geographical circumstances allowed. The Protocol was not to come into effect until after a world disarmament conference, open to all countries and set for June 1925.³¹

Representing Japan in the drafting process were veteran diplomats, Amba-

sadors Matsui Keishirō, Adachi Mineichirō, and Ishii Kikujirō. They were uncomfortable with the fanatical zeal with which the Protocol was drafted. Ishii asked in his memoir, “Can a titanic task like the establishment of permanent peace by quickly accomplished by mob action of this kind?” The Japanese spokesmen were especially displeased that the Protocol categorically defined the party that struck the first blow as the aggressor and that it would exclude from arbitration — as did the Covenant — any question lying within the domestic jurisdiction of one of the parties. At a subcommittee meeting, the Japanese alone voted against the internal jurisdiction provision. The Japanese did not relent, and in the final days before the Protocol emerged from committee, they carried out vigorous personal diplomacy among the delegates of the powers. They protested that the Protocol as drafted would prevent Japan from asking the League to take action when its nationals were under duress in China, and that it would disallow Japan to protest humiliations inflicted by another nation’s immigration laws. Ishii alleged that the drafters were “treating a grave problem with unwarranted haste and even with recklessness.” The stand of the Japanese delegation became known in Geneva as “the Japanese incident.” Aristide Briand, the French delegate, was the first to call for serious consideration of the Japanese position. Other participants also moderated their views, and in the end the Protocol was changed to meet Japanese objections. The Council would be empowered to address *any question* that endangered the peace, and the provision on domestic jurisdiction was amended to read that a state “shall only be presumed to be an aggressor if it has not previously submitted the question to the Council or the Assembly, in accordance with Article 11 of the Covenant.”³²

The Protocol as amended was passed by unanimous vote in the Assembly on 1 October 1924 and was opened for signature to the member governments. By the next day, ten countries led by France had signed the Protocol. Though the atmosphere in Geneva was jubilant, the Protocol faced rough sledding in many capitals — particularly in the dominions, where the Japanese-initiated revisions were not welcomed, and in Britain, where a Conservative cabinet had replaced the Labor leadership. Many Britons feared that the fleet would have to be sent out in portions to quell conflicts around the globe. The new foreign minister, Austen Chamberlain, portrayed the Protocol as a device “to preserve peace by organizing war.” In March 1925 the cabinet voted to reject the Protocol. Japan, like the majority of the League’s members, did not ratify the agreement.³³ Writing during his retirement, Viscount Ishii reflected on the League’s effort to birth the Geneva Protocol: “Thus the great mountain labored and delivered itself of a mouse, and in course of time, owing to the firm opposition of Great Britain, it became uncertain whether this mouse was still alive or dead.”³⁴ The life of some of the Protocol’s provisions was extended when embodied in the Locarno Treaties, which by the fall of 1925 had displaced the Protocol as the object of the world’s hopes for a regime of peace. The Locarno

pacts presumably settled security issues unresolved at Versailles between Germany and its neighbors. They spelled out Protocol-like procedures for the settlement of disputes and ushered Germany into the League of Nations. Speaking in the Council to welcome the Locarno Treaties, Ambassador Ishii declared,

Japan, while remaining a spectator owing to her geographical position, was deeply interested in this work of peace, and, at the issue of the Locarno Conference, it was particularly happy to note that certain ideas entertained by Japan were there realized. The Japanese delegation during the last Assembly of the League of Nations had occasion to observe that, in view of new circumstances which had arisen, it appeared to her wiser not to insist on the immediate adoption of the Geneva Protocol; to confine the task of the League of Nations for the moment to the establishment of regional agreements; to extend these regional agreements, as far as circumstances permitted, to other parts of the world. . . . A regional agreement of the first importance was established by the Locarno Conference.³⁵

The events of 1923–1925 in Geneva and Locarno may be seen as a turning point in Japan's relationship to universal order. Japan reacted to the Draft Treaty by asserting the primacy of the League over regional security arrangements. Two years later, Japan rejected the Protocol, which would have applied a common security regimen to disputes anywhere in the world, and heralded a new model of regional comity embodied in the Locarno Treaties. The seminal nature of this shift was hardly apparent to actors and observers in the mid-1920s. But viewed from the vantage point of history, this change bears momentous meaning as a harbinger of things to come.

Japanese Activities in the League's Organizations

Japan sent authorized representatives to most meetings of the technical organizations, permanent advisory committees, and special temporary committees that were formed by the League to address specific issues of peace and human welfare. As the decade of the 1920s progressed, the number of such commissions and the frequency of their meetings increased steadily, with the result that Japanese diplomats in Europe spent more and more of their time attending to League business. Among the League-related groups in which Japan was represented were the Committee on the Codification of International Law, the Committee on Armaments, the Economic Committee, the Health Committee, the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, and the Permanent Mandates Commission. One

League constituent organization whose work clearly addressed Japanese practice was the one that dealt with narcotics traffic.

The Opium Committee

In the early-twentieth-century crusade to free the world of the abuse of addictive drugs, attention was naturally drawn to China. While an indigenous trade had a long history in that land, flagrant abuse began in the eighteenth century when the British began to import Indian opium to China. Unequal treaties forced upon the Qing dynasty legalized trade and distribution. In 1906 some estimates of the extent of opium smoking in China ran as high as 30 to 40 percent of the population. Strenuous efforts by the old Imperial government and the new Republic to stamp out poppy growing led to remarkable progress in eradicating the evil. Great Britain cooperated by restricting the export of Indian opium to China. However, the political and economic disruption and accompanying social malaise of the warlord period after 1916 led to a revival of trade and consumption. Revenue from the opium business became vital to military governors for the financing of their armies. Estimates in the 1920s held that the greatest source of annual revenue for the government of Guangxi Province was taxes on the trade in opium.

International action to curb the trade began in 1909, when President Theodore Roosevelt summoned an Opium Commission, which convened in Shanghai. Its recommendations were the basis for the Hague Convention of 1912, which required the cooperation of the signatories in the control of trade in opium and its derivative narcotic drugs. The convention also provided for assistance to China in its struggle against the scourge. The First World War broke out before the necessary ratifications were secured, but the convention was saved by its incorporation in Article 295 of the Versailles Treaty. Japan, therefore, became a party to the convention when it ratified the treaty. The peace conference also wrote into the League of Nations Covenant (Article 23) the charge that the organization supervise the execution of agreements with regard to "the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs." The League moved quickly in the First Assembly to set up the machinery for League leadership in the international fight against illicit drugs.³⁶

Japan's relative success in dealing with opium consumption at home was aided by the proscription of trade with the British until 1855. In negotiating its unequal trade treaties with Western nations in the 1850s, Japan was able to outlaw the importation of opium. As a colonial power, Japan implemented effective opium suppression programs in Taiwan and Korea.

But less admirable realities of the Japanese situation came to the attention of League committees and conferences. One was the large quantity of narcotic drugs—mainly the opium derivatives morphine and heroin—manufactured in Japan. The shift from Germany to Japan as the source of manufactured narcotics for Asians

was one consequence of the Great War. By 1931 the League's Permanent Central Board would report that more than half the world's heroin was made in Japan. Japan's reports to the League stated abnormally high figures for domestic medicinal consumption of these products, figures that no doubt masked a large amount diverted to smuggling operations abroad. A second notorious circumstance was the involvement of Japanese nationals in narcotics smuggling in Manchuria and northern China. Apprehended culprits, protected by treaties and extraterritoriality, were handed over by Chinese police to consular courts and given light penalties. Japan's leased territory at the tip of the Liaodong Peninsula in Manchuria, with its port of Dalian, was known to be a busy entry point for illicit substances. China frequently criticized Japan for contributing to its opium problem. These criticisms became all the more shrill after the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932, when Chinese charged Japan with a deliberate program to weaken the Chinese race as a preliminary to colonization. A third mark against Japan was the practice of drug trafficking on Japanese ships that called at East Asian ports. That these ships also docked in opium-rich Persia was brought to the attention of the League's Opium Committee from time to time.³⁷

The First Assembly established the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, commonly called the Opium Committee. Appointed as members were four Asian nations directly concerned with opium — India, China, Japan, and Siam — and four European countries having Asian colonies. Germany, with a significant narcotic manufacturing industry, and Yugoslavia, where poppy was extensively grown, were later added. The committee soon became marked by missionary zeal, calling for a 90 percent reduction in both cultivation and manufacture. The reformist bent of the body was further stimulated by the attendance of American "observers," committed to instant cures for China and described by Walters as "ruthlessly energetic." The committee went beyond the problems of opium eating and smoking to take aim at European and Japanese traffickers in morphine, heroin, and cocaine. Meetings of the committee and the conferences it organized were frequently the scene of immoderate accusation, violent language, and lurid publicity. Two conferences held in Geneva in 1925 produced new conventions strengthening the original Hague accord and established a Permanent Central Board, and another Geneva Convention in 1931 provided for the limitation of manufacture of narcotic drugs to actual medical and scientific needs. In 1929–1930, the League Council sent a commission of inquiry to several Asian countries, including Japan, to investigate narcotics trafficking. China refused the commission entry into its territory.³⁸

In the initial meetings of the committee, the Japanese representatives were tight-lipped, giving cryptic replies to inquiries about narcotics manufacturing and pleading ignorance when confronted with evidence of smuggling. Though

Japanese written reports dutifully submitted to the committee were more thorough, Japan came under severe criticism at the second session (April 1922). Sir John Jordan, the appointed assessor and an informed China hand, asked for an explanation for the great quantity of narcotic drugs produced in Japan. A report of the meeting charged Japanese merchants with smuggling opium into China and stated that almost all of the illegal trafficking in morphine there was related to Japan. European newspapers picked up on this report and castigated Japan in editorials. At the seventh session (August 1925), a similarly hostile attitude toward Japan was displayed by other members of the committee. The high levels of heroin and cocaine production in Japan were cited, and members alleged that Japanese ships were smuggling Persian opium.³⁹

Japanese diplomats and officials at home were not passive in the face of Opium Committee allegations. In response to calls from Japanese in Geneva, the Home, Foreign, Communications, and Army Ministries conducted investigations to determine whether Japanese laws and practices in the colonies were in compliance with the Hague Convention. New consular regulations were issued, and new controls in the postal system instituted. Japan implemented one of the committee's major recommendations, the establishment of a formal permit system for trade in drugs. Japan's competent representative, Sugimura Yōtarō, took an active and cooperative part in the 1925 Opium Conferences, and Japan ratified both of the Geneva Conventions that were drawn up there. An internal Opium Committee was set up in the Home Ministry from April 1931 to act as a clearinghouse for information and research on narcotics issues. A study of the documentary evidence gives no basis for judging whether these measures actually affected drug trafficking. It does show, however, that Japan's status of defendant in the international opium case was not altered. A 1925 statement on the opium trade by Sir Charles Eliot, British ambassador to Tokyo, is a case in point. "I am reluctantly forced to the conclusion," said the veteran scholar-diplomat, "that, though the attitude of the Japanese Government may be correct, most of the Japanese departments and officials concerned are indifferent to the illicit traffic in this and other dangerous drugs."⁴⁰

International revulsion against the Japanese seizure of Manchuria had a telling impact on U.S. State Department views of the opium question in China. As William O. Walker documents, by 1934 American analysts — while well aware of Guomindang profiteering in opium — were shifting the onus to the Japanese. U.S. minister to China Nelson T. Johnson alleged that the Japanese "have no moral scruples when it comes to opium or the use of the gun or the sword." The conjoining of the opium issue and Japanese aggression increased the moral base for anti-Japanese feeling in Washington and commensurately fed pro-Chiang Kai-shek sentiments there.⁴¹

As Japanese control solidified in Manchuria and Rehe (Jehol), bitter Chinese allegations of Japanese trafficking in North China became commonplace in the Opium Committee. At the nineteenth session in November 1934, the representative of China charged that Japanese and Korean operatives, protected by Japanese military authorities, operated a monopoly that brought Rehe opium across the demilitarized zone into Tianjin. Distribution in the port city centered in three hotels in the Japanese Concession. Whenever Chinese police tried to interfere, the Japanese military intervened on behalf of Japanese nationals. The Japanese representative on the committee denied that the traffic was tolerated by the Japanese authorities.⁴²

The heated exchange in 1934 is typical of the charges and denials that were made in the Opium Committee throughout the 1930s, until Japan withdrew from League of Nations humanitarian bodies in 1938. As the landmark study of Japanese involvement by John Mark Jennings has shown, embarrassing revelations were typically followed by denial and pledges to adhere to strict controls, and then failure to enforce such pledges among Japanese civilian and military operatives on the mainland.⁴³ American suspicions were rife in 1937 when a report for the Foreign Policy Association in New York stated:

Aside from the Chinese trafficker, there is overwhelming evidence that the Japanese national is the most sinister character in the illicit drug trade north and south of the Great Wall. . . . It seems that [Japanese government] inaction has now become a policy, a continuance of which may well alienate any sympathy which exists in support of Japan's claims to be the guardian of the best interest of China and the cultural leader of Asia.⁴⁴

In the context of deteriorating Sino-Japanese relations and growing world antagonism toward Japanese aggression in China in the 1930s, the problem of international drug trafficking in East Asia was a public relations disaster for Japan. Japanese governmental efforts to cooperate with the League of Nations in dealing with the narcotics issue did little to alleviate world suspicions.

The Permanent Mandates Commission

The inspection of the League of Nations mandate system was entrusted to the Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC), one of the two permanent commissions named in the League Covenant. The process the PMC followed was to receive an annual report from each mandatory power on its territorial administration, raise questions concerning that report with the power's representative, and advise the Council on "all questions relating to the execution of the mandates" in the fourteen territories. The eight or nine commission members were selected by the Council, could not hold offices in their governments, and in a majority of instances were

citizens of nonmandatory nations. By action of the First Assembly, at least one member was to be a woman, who would address the interests of women and children in the mandates. The body also included an assessor from the International Labor Office, whose function was to inquire concerning the condition of workers. The PMC had no power to force compliance with any of its recommendations, and distance, expense, and custom precluded on-site investigations by commission members. The PMC first met in 1921, and after 1924 it held two sessions a year. Its work was assisted by a small secretariat under William Rappard, head of the Mandates Section of the Secretariat.⁴⁵

The stipulation that laypersons alone be eligible for membership in the PMC was a major inconvenience for the Empire, making it difficult for Japanese of expertise and stature to serve. Active diplomats in Europe, the most ready pool for League assignments, were disqualified, and the lengthy travel time made it necessary for someone coming from Japan to be away from home for half the year in order to attend two annual sessions, each lasting about three weeks. Businesspeople, professionals, and academics in the field of colonial policy were not likely to agree to spend whole years in Europe waiting around for the meetings — as did Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), who passed the eleven months between the commission's second and third sessions traveling, touring museums and universities, and visiting with scholars. Nonetheless, a Japanese sat on the Permanent Mandates Commission continuously from its inception until 1938, and the Japanese missed only three of the thirty-four sessions during that period. Those who served were ethnologist Yanagita (1921–1924) and former Foreign Ministry members Yamanaka Kazuyuki (1924–1927) and Sakenobe Nobumichi (1928–1938). The Japanese members took an active part, interpolating accredited representatives of the mandatory powers about their annual reports and presenting reports of their own on problems like Palestine and Trans-Jordan, which were far removed from the Pacific islands. In this instance, as in many others, Japanese presence and diligence are indicative of the importance Japan attached to its activities within the League of Nations. None of the Japanese members of the PMC — and only one of the Japanese accredited representatives who answered the commission's inquiries in Geneva — ever set foot in the mandated archipelagoes. There was one unusual guest, however. In November 1932, Japan brought Horiguchi Mitsuda, a former governor of the islands, to the commission's twenty-second session in Geneva. Horiguchi was introduced with great fanfare and presented a translated, written report on education, health conditions, and economic development in the Nan'yō (South Seas). He then fielded questions from commission members. His replies were translated by Itō Nobumi, Japan's official representative at that session, and were entered, along with his report, in the minutes.⁴⁶

As an ethnologist, Yanagita was suited to make a unique contribution to the

Permanent Mandates Commission. He was a government bureaucrat turned journalist who established the field of folklore studies in Japan. Curiously, his younger brother was a naval officer who conducted the landing on German-held Ponape in 1914. His service on the PMC from 1921 to 1924 was solicited by Undersecretary-General Nitobe, a scholar of colonial administration who had worked with Yanagita in 1910 to found an association for the study of Japanese folkways. Statements and reports by Yanagita in the PMC reveal a commitment to respect and protect the culture and prerogatives of colonized peoples. Yanagita believed that traditional authority structures should be protected. The tribal chief, he observed, "is often the best judge on matters which affect the customs of his tribe." Inhumane customs, such as cannibalism, should be suppressed by the mandatory, but "that part at least of the native law which does not hinder the march of progress should be allowed to remain in force." Yanagita drew attention to the dangers of education conducted wholly by missionaries, which would create a privileged class alienated from the tribe. Rather, he advocated education in practical subjects, taught in the local tongue by trained native teachers. Moreover, schooling in the territories should be shorn of nationalistic propaganda by the mandatory government.

Yanagita argued that assimilation was not a legitimate goal of the mandatory power. In this, Yanagita took a position clearly contrary to Japanese (and mainstream Western) colonial theory and practice. He specifically criticized "the insistent teaching of patriotic songs and the names of emperors to the native children" and was sensitive to "how the mentality of the natives will be altered by the well organized teaching of history and geography." Recognizing, as would any ethnologist, that indigenous culture is a fragile thing in the face of alien education, he advocated teaching the people's own history and civilization. The principle of protection of native culture, he believed, was most compelling in the case of territories, like the Nan'yō, in the "C" category:

In my view there is only one principle which can serve as a guide in the establishment of complete equity in these areas — the principle laid down in Article 22 of the Covenant, which divides mandates into categories A, B, and C, granting protection to the natives in proportion to the level reached by their civilization. In other words, the least developed or weakest peoples call for the greatest amount of protection.⁴⁷

Ironically, the principle of cultural protection could also be employed as an excuse to deny South Sea islanders access to higher levels of education and leadership positions.

The views that Yanagita actively pressed in PMC meetings were a useful counterpoint to those of commission colleagues and mandatory governments who were

unconcerned about, or actively endorsed, the obliteration of indigenous customs by the tide of Western civilization. Significantly, he was the only representative of a non-Western society among his PMC colleagues. It should be noted that Yanagita spoke in Geneva in the early 1920s, before the education policies of the Nan'yō-cho (South Seas Bureau, established in 1922) were firmed, before the flood of Japanese immigration in the Pacific mandate made cultural preservation there less viable, and before a wave of ultranationalism swept the Japanese colonial establishment, as it did all Japanese institutions in the 1930s. His successors Yamanaka and Sakenobe were fully as dutiful but less attentive to issues of local culture. In any case, the progressive ideas propounded by Yanagita Kunio in the Permanent Mandates Commission are yet another example of the independent idealism that was released in the hearts and careers of Japanese in the ambience of Geneva.

The territories Japan superintended were classified in Article 22 of the League Covenant among those, elsewhere labeled C-class, with such a low level of political development as to place self-government in the far future and to necessitate administration "as integral portions" of the mandatory power's domestic jurisdiction. The question of actual sovereignty was never resolved. The Permanent Mandates Commission consistently maintained that the mandatory powers did not possess sovereignty, while no legal authority ever recognized the League's right to govern territory or people. Even after it withdrew from the League, Japan retained its mandate on the basis of the claim that the assignment had been made by the Allies through the Supreme Council and not by the League, a claim so correct that the international community never challenged it. So, from the opening months of the First World War until the close of the Second, Japan ruled the Mariana, Marshall, and Caroline island groups in the Pacific virtually like annexed territory. In this posture Japan was no different from European states in their administration of C-class mandates in Africa and the Middle East. In 1919 the Nan'yō mandate comprised 700 islands and reefs with 2,149 square kilometers of land and 40,000 people. The population grew — largely due to Japanese settlement — to 121,000 by 1938.⁴⁸

The tiny Caroline island of Yap was a station for one of the cables that connected Hawaii with the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies. Under the laws of Japan, which were to apply in the mandate, only Japanese subjects would be allowed to own or operate cables in Japanese territory. In the context of the general distrust of Japan generated during the Great War, Yap became a volatile issue in the U.S. Senate and among the American public and a handle by which the United States chose to challenge the legitimacy of the Japanese Pacific mandate. The matter was resolved for the time being by a Japanese-American treaty on Yap signed and ratified in 1922 after the Washington Conference. Therein the United States assented to the administration of the mandate by Japan and required that no modification of the mandate be made without the consent of the United States.

Japan's mandate obligations such as nonfortification and freedom of religion and labor were reiterated, and Japan agreed to provide the American government with a duplicate copy of its annual reports to the Permanent Mandates Commission. Concerning Yap, Japan accorded the United States equal right to establish electrical communications there and granted American citizens the right to reside and own land on the island.⁴⁹

It will be recalled that, at the Paris Peace Conference, Baron Makino had taken the initiative to tighten the wording of the Covenant so as to assure the application of the mandatory power's domestic laws in "C" mandates. This principle in one important regard worked to Japan's disadvantage once the mandates took effect, in that it permitted the enforcement of anti-Japanese discriminatory regulations concerning immigration and commerce in the former German islands south of the equator that were assigned to Australia. Rights enjoyed by the few Japanese who had emigrated to New Guinea and Nauru under German administration were in jeopardy. Throughout 1920, first in the Supreme Council and then in the League Council, Japan argued that the principle of economic equality, which applied to A- and B-class mandates, should be extended to C-class mandates. Here Japan fought and lost a major battle for equal opportunity. When the dominion position prevailed in the Council on 17 December, Ambassador Ishii inserted in the proceedings his reservation that the decision should not be construed as "an acquiescence on the part of His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Government in the submission of Japanese subjects to a discriminatory and disadvantageous treatment in the mandated territories." When the news of this defeat reached home, the *Nichi nichu* criticized Ishii for not persisting in Japan's demand and for precipitating a failure of Japanese diplomacy.⁵⁰ The legal consequence of the League decision was that Japanese nationals in the dominions' mandates were less favorably treated than they had been under German colonization before the war. The historical consequence was that the equator became a solid barrier to Japanese incremental expansion by emigration and economic penetration, until the heady months following Pearl Harbor.

What were the obligations Japan incurred in its "sacred trust of civilization" toward the native inhabitants of the Pacific islands? Mandatories' responsibilities were spelled out in Article 22 of the Covenant and in a mandate charter drawn up by a Big Five commission that met in London after the Paris Peace Conference, with Ambassador Chinda representing Japan. These guidelines for mandate administration were confirmed by the League Council on 17 December 1920, the act that brought the mandates into force. In the case of C-class territories, all mandatories were obligated to "promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress" of the indigenous populations; to control traffic in arms and ammunition and prohibit the slave trade and the sale of intoxicating liquors; to maintain

religious toleration and respect the rights of missionaries — a stipulation favored by President Wilson. Forced labor was banned, “except for essential public works and service, and then only for adequate remuneration.” Military and naval bases were not to be built. The nonfortification restriction was reinforced in the case of Japan’s Pacific mandate in the Five-Power Treaty of the Washington Naval Conference and, as noted earlier, in a subsequent treaty with the United States over Yap.⁵¹

Japan was scrupulous in the presentation of its annual reports to the Permanent Mandates Commission. The reports were organized in accordance with commission questionnaires and were mimeographed or printed (after 1923) in English. They were usually submitted in September of the year following. Mark R. Peattie, historian of the Japanese custodial experience in the Nan’yō, aptly describes the reports as “bland in tone, self-serving in content, festooned with statistical tables” — to wit, the expected products of colonial bureaucrats. The report covering 1923, for instance, gave figures on the number of Catholics, Protestants, and Buddhists in the Nan’yō and statistics on epidemics and cases of venereal disease. Displaying sensitivity to the concerns of the ILO assessor, the report asserted that “cultivated labor is entirely free in all respects,” laborers except tenants were furnished with houses, and a medical consultation office was maintained. The annual reports show increasing sophistication as the years passed. Preserved at the League Archives in Geneva, they range in size from 55 pages for 1921 to a 413-page tome for 1926, which included 19 printed photographs and a 243-page appendix of translated laws applied in the territory. The presentation covering 1923 was accompanied by 42 curios of Micronesian culture placed on display in a room of the Secretariat.⁵² The last report submitted covers 1938.

Poring over and critiquing the annual reports on fourteen mandates must have been pure drudgery for the members of the Permanent Mandates Commission. If the Japanese mandate reports are typical of those submitted by the other mandatories, that circumstance alone would suffice to explain why the foresighted diplomats who drew up the mandate charter specified that no government employees be allowed to serve on the PMC. The perfunctory nature of its task notwithstanding, the commission did play an interactive role, responding to each report with “General and Special Observations,” which requested additional information and suggested ways to improve subsequent reports. The aforementioned appendix of translated laws was provided in response to a PMC recommendation the previous year. The commission responded to Japan’s report for 1922 by soliciting more material on some rather substantial matters: “the participation of the natives in administration,” the application of International Labor Conference conventions to industrial labor in the islands, the curriculum of mission schools, and measures to protect the people from venereal disease. In response, the Japanese report for 1923 addressed all these issues. The PMC throughout the 1920s seemed content

with Japanese treatment of its queries.⁵³ In short, Japan amply fulfilled its formal responsibility to provide the Permanent Mandates Commission with information on conditions and administration in the Nan'yō territory.

Not everyone, however, trusted the candor of the Japanese reportage. One source of criticism of Japanese colonial practice was, understandably, Germany. Excerpts from the journal *Wirtschaftsdienst* charging Japan with maladministration were circulated among PMC members in February 1924. Under the German regime, said the writer, capable natives had received special advanced study, but this practice had been discontinued by the Japanese. Since 1914, foreign missionaries had been expelled and 60 percent of the white population had left the islands. Japan was creating an exclusive commercial zone and transplanting to the islands its domestic policies of economic inequality. While these criticisms bear the flavor of sour grapes over the loss of German imperial privileges, the allegation that Japanese educational policy stifled the development of indigenous leadership was well founded. The PMC itself would become more pointed and caustic in its "Observations" after the Manchurian Incident.

When all is said and done, did Japan fulfill its "sacred trust" under its League of Nations mandate toward the peoples of the Pacific islands? In his seminal study, Mark Peattie probes this question with sensitivity to the welfare of the inhabitants, Japanese national goals, and the expectations of the League. He concludes that Japanese administration was energetic, efficient, and humane, clearly resulting in material improvement in the lot of the Micronesian peoples. Colonial bureaucrats with high intentions improved health and sanitation, constructed harbors and roads, and erected a system of public education. Religious freedom was protected, at least through the 1920s. Criticisms, of course, can be made. The direct profits from the extraction of phosphates and the export of sugar went to Japanese entrepreneurs rather than Micronesians. Health conditions on the island of Yap were deplorable and contributed in the decline of the native population there. The flood of Japanese immigrants impinged on the culture and rights of the islanders. Micronesian children were given two or three years of elementary schooling, while dependents of Japanese settlers received, in segregated schools, eight years of education. There were rumors, never substantiated, that Japan was constructing fortifications in defiance of the mandate charter. The Permanent Mandates Commission called attention to these issues, especially in the 1930s. But the consensus of research is that Japan as a mandatory met the League's formal expectations with efficiency and honor.⁵⁴

Some Japanese were aware that the mandate system, unlike a colonial framework, obligated the mandatory power to meet the expectations of other nations and to conduct the people toward the goal of self-rule. Furukaki Tetsurō, a member of the Secretariat, emphasized this in his 1923 book on the mandate system:

Tutelage in this conception embodied in the Covenant, is no longer a simple moral duty, purely voluntary. . . . In accepting the mandate, [the mandatory] contracts an obligation as tutor; in accepting the tutelage, it accepts obligations and responsibilities. . . . The mandatory, as a tutor, must render account.

But the Japanese government did not accept the responsibility of tutelage toward political self-determination. Compulsory education in the larger islands was conducted to assure acquiescence and cultural assimilation and to train islanders for subordinate tasks—but never to develop economic or political leaders.⁵⁵ The League gave the mandatories no timetables, and Japan evidently regarded the time when Micronesians would attain a “civilized state” and congeal as a “nation” to be so far beyond the horizon as to impose no obligation for present tutelary action. In the colonial era before World War II, no power or international body was about to challenge this treatment of a territory so geographically scattered and lightly populated. Japanese policy was in accord with conventional wisdom. By the time the Japanese immigrant population exceeded that of the native inhabitants in 1935, the question of future independence became moot. As managed by Japan, the course of history in the Nan’yō in the interwar period implemented, for all practical purposes, the original World War I goal of annexation.

The World Court

Article 14 of the Covenant empowered the Council to formulate a plan for the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ). A Committee of Jurists, on which Japan was represented by its ambassador to Belgium, Adachi Mineichirō (1869–1934), was appointed by the Council in February 1920 to draw up a blueprint for the Court’s organization and operation. This Court statute in turn was enacted by the First Assembly. Though distinct from the League in both operation and location (The Hague), the Court in all essentials was inseparably bound to the League. The Assembly and the Council jointly elected its eleven judges, and the Assembly voted its budget. Disputes were submitted to it by individual governments, but the Assembly and Council could refer cases to the Court for advisory opinions. The PCIJ was kept busy until it ceased operations in 1939, and its reputation remained strong until the late 1930s. No case submitted to the Court directly involved the interests of Japan, but the Empire stoutly claimed a major place in the PCIJ as a symbol of its standing among the powers and its involvement in global affairs.

The League took geographical balance into consideration in the election of judges—a circumstance that, combined with Japan’s status as a power, virtually assured Japanese representation on the panel. However, since all members of the League voted on appointments, a candidate’s international reputation as a jurist

was an important asset. Japanese political scientists and legal scholars in this period were widely published in Japan, but their work was generally not accessible in the languages of other League members. Their lack of international eminence was a handicap poignantly noted by Viscount Ishii in his 1930 memoir. Despite this disadvantage, the three Japanese judges who served on the PCIJ were easily elected, demonstrated superb qualifications, and earned the respect of jurists in Europe. Oda Yorozu was a professor at Kyoto University in the field of Japanese and Chinese administrative law. At The Hague he won praise for his even-handedness and gentlemanly character in the judicial deliberation of the volatile cases of the *SS Wimbledon* (1923) and German interests in Polish Upper Silesia (1925–1926), for which he drafted the Court's decisions. Oda was followed in 1930 by Ambassador Adachi Mineichirō, who had represented Japan in the League Council and Assembly since he succeeded Ambassador Ishii in Paris in 1928. In the Foreign Ministry, Adachi was known for his research in international law and his fluency in the French language. After topping all other candidates with 49 of 52 possible Assembly votes in his election, Adachi was made president of the Court by his fellow jurists, a post he held for three years. He remained on the Court and retained its presidency when Japan withdrew from the League in 1933, but he was removed by death a year later. In his passing, Adachi was accorded the honor of a state funeral in the Netherlands. His unexpired term was filled by Nagaoka Harukazu, a career diplomat with a law doctorate from the University of Paris and a veteran of the Paris Peace Conference. Like Adachi, he had served as ambassador to France and a delegate to League meetings. Japan's effective cooperation with the PCIJ ended in 1938 and the Court's operations virtually ceased when war broke out in Europe the following year; but Nagaoka nominally remained on the bench until his resignation on 15 January 1942.⁵⁶

In adopting the Court Statute in 1920, the First Assembly appended the "Optional Clause," whereby any state could commit itself to compulsory jurisdiction on the basis of reciprocity. By the end of the decade more than forty states, including Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and China, had signed and ratified acceptance of this option. Japan never did. Viscount Ishii in 1930 expressed his regret that Japan "should have made such a conspicuous exception of itself" and warned that Japan was in danger of appearing as "an obstructionist in the work of consolidating the peaceful system of settling international disputes." Japan's obstinacy, however, pales next to that of the United States, which never joined the PCIJ, even though prominent American jurists served on the Court as judges. Despite the support of the Harding, Coolidge, and Roosevelt administrations and majority votes in both houses of Congress, determined isolationists in the Senate prevented the two-thirds vote necessary to ratify acceptance of the statute.⁵⁷

The International Labor Organization

The drafters of the Treaty of Versailles established the International Labor Organization (ILO) on the basis of the assumption that social justice and peace are intertwined. The world organization for labor, like the League of Nations, had its own constitution as a special section (Part XIII) of the treaty. The founders determined that the labor organization should be closely identified with the League. Hence the International Labor Office, as the ILO secretariat is called, was located at the seat of the League, and the ILO membership roster was initially identical to that of the parent organization. The founders also resolved that the expenses of the ILO should be paid from the general funds of the League. In other respects, the ILO operated independently, electing its own Governing Body through its International Labor Conferences (ILCs). Its autonomy increased as the years passed, enabling the ILO to survive the demise of the League during the Second World War virtually intact and continue its operations in Geneva in the era of the United Nations, still guided by the framework established at Paris in 1919. During the interwar years its International Labor Conferences drew up sixty-seven international conventions and sixty-six recommendations establishing international labor standards, which were then submitted to the member states for deliberation and adoption in domestic law. These models became one of the formative influences on the development of social legislation in many countries.

The Governing Body of the ILO acted as a board of overseers. It elected the director of the International Labor Office, who until 1932 was Albert Thomas, a French Right socialist and wartime minister of munitions. Eight of the twelve government representatives on the twenty-four-member Governing Body were drawn from the "eight states of chief industrial importance." Placing a high value on this designation as a symbol of international ascendancy, the Hara government in 1920 went so far as to establish in Geneva a Japan Office of the ILO (Kokusai Rōdō Kikan Teikoku Jimusho). Japan was the first League member to set up such an office, and other industrial nations soon followed suit. Japan's eagerness to monitor ILO activities reflects the extreme anxiety of the government over the potential interference by the ILO in Japan's presumed harmonious worker-management relationship. To the Japan Office were posted veteran bureaucrats of stature. During its eighteen-year history its chief was always someone with long experience in government. Among its initial appointees from the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce were Vice-Minister Inuzuka Katsutarō and Kichisaka Shunzō. Kichisaka had served as an aide to Baron Makino at the peace conference. Inuzuka and Kichisaka served on the first ILO Governing Body. Others in the Japan Office represented the Home, Communications, and Foreign Ministries. In the mid-1920s the number of Japanese in Geneva employed by the International Labor Office or posted to the Japan

Office neared thirty. Japanese who at various times were elected to the Governing Body by the ILC included Adachi Mineichirō (from 1922), ambassador to Belgium and later France and then judge of the World Court; Maeda Tamon (1923–1926), a former deputy mayor of Tokyo who would serve after World War II as minister of education; and Kitaoka Juitsu (1935–1938), a Home Ministry factory inspector. Maeda and Ayusawa Iwao, a member of the ILO secretariat until 1932, were both influenced by Quakerism and Nitobe Inazō.⁵⁸

Jockeying among ILO members over the formula for designating the “eight states of chief industrial importance” was a source of perpetual anxiety for Japan. It will be recalled that, in the Labor Commission of the Paris Peace Conference, Japan had pleaded for special treatment as a late-developing country. Japan’s intransigence over labor representation to International Labor Conferences and dilatory treatment of ILC conventions repeatedly subjected Japan’s status to criticism. Japan was never denied a government representative seat on the Governing Body, but the Japan Office occasionally had to inflate the statistics of Japan’s industrial might and modernity. Satō Naotake recalled that Kichisaka’s task of substantiating Japan’s ranking at each board election made his hair rapidly turn white.⁵⁹

The problem of how to select a labor representative to International Labor Conferences was vexing for Japan, given that labor unions — as well as strikes and collective bargaining — were outlawed in the Empire. Unions were pictured by industrialists and Seiyūkai politicians as radical-inspired, alien institutions deleterious to the traditional social fabric. Moreover, despite wartime membership gains, *de facto* labor unions like the Sōdōmei together never comprised a tenth of Japanese industrial workers in the interwar years. Nonetheless, organized workers loudly proclaimed their sole right to select the labor delegate and sought ILO backing to that end. The domestic and international dispute over the selection of labor delegates to the ILC is an important chapter in the history of organized labor’s struggle for legitimacy in Japan.

Suzuki Bunji, Japan’s cosmetic labor representative at the Paris Peace Conference, bid farewell to Western labor leaders in Europe in the summer of 1919, voicing the expectation that he would meet them again the following October at the first International Labor Conference in Washington. Sōdōmei members were enraged when the government chose instead Masumoto Uhei, chief engineer of the Kawasaki dockyards, to represent labor at the meeting. Unionists waving black flags and singing funeral songs staged an angry send-off for Masumoto in Yokohama, and the “worker delegate” had to be secreted aboard by police launch. Protests by Suzuki to Samuel Gompers and the president of the conference led to an ILC challenge of Masumoto’s credentials. However, the ILC accepted the government’s explanation that Japanese unions were too small to claim to represent all workers. The government continued to send surrogate labor representatives to the annual

ILC for the next four years. Protest broke out again in 1921 when Japan sent to the third ILC—which focused on agricultural workers—an agronomist and orphanage director, Matsumoto Keiichi, who was further handicapped by an inability to speak any of the languages of the conference. Leaders in the tenant farmer movement were disappointed that their complaints would not be given a world hearing. To everyone's surprise, at the meeting Matsumoto through a companion spokesman denied the validity of his own credentials and appealed to the ILO to induce the government of Japan to upgrade its treatment of workers. The Japanese labor delegates to the fourth (1922) and fifth (1923) conferences were selected by a system of caucuses designed to negate Sōdōmei influence. The union began to boycott the process entirely and sent its own representatives to the meetings in Geneva to lobby its position in the halls. The Credentials Committee warned Japan to abide by the peace treaty and issued a stern threat at the fifth conference that it would recommend against seating future delegates unless the selection process gave weight to labor organizations. The combination of the ILO ultimatum and new openness to moderate unionism led the Kiyoura cabinet in February 1924 to recognize large labor unions as the sole voting bloc for workers' delegates to the ILC. Accordingly, Suzuki Bunji was selected as a delegate to the sixth conference in 1924, and Sōdōmei supplied most of the labor delegates thereafter. Though the revised selection process fell short of formal recognition of workers' right to organize, it was a major turning point in the *de facto* acceptance of unionism. The credentials of Japan's labor delegates to ILO meetings were never questioned again.⁶⁰

Two prominent ILO officials made highly publicized visits to Japan to promote the ideals of international labor and elicit Japanese cooperation. In December 1928 came Albert Thomas, accompanied by other members of the ILO staff. The ILO director's major concern was Japan's low rate of ratification of ILC conventions. He was received by Emperor Hirohito, met with the prime minister and other members of the cabinet, and addressed gatherings of industrialists, unionists, and students. He visited factories and spoke directly with workers. Moderate labor leaders took advantage of his tour to launch a Committee for the Promotion of Labor Legislation (Rōdō Rippō Sokushin Inkaï), and Thomas addressed its inaugural meeting in Kobe. Thomas was followed three years later by Fernand Maurette, chief of the Scientific Division of the ILO. Maurette's mission had a more specific purpose—to investigate the charge of "social dumping" frequently leveled at Japan at international conferences. Japanese industry had been accused of forcing low wages and inferior working conditions in an unfair effort to undercut foreign competition. For a month Maurette visited factories and mines, meeting with government officials, industry executives, union leaders, and journalists in an effort to establish the facts. In the end he concluded that new machinery, efficient production techniques, and an industrious workforce accounted for the Japanese

competitive edge. Real wages, working hours, and labor environment were improving year by year. Maurette's investigation negated the charge of social dumping. It also served to enhance the reputation of the ILO in Japanese leadership circles.⁶¹

How responsive was the Japanese government to the ILO's prodding on labor standards and legislation? Unlike the malleable nation of the Meiji reformation, the Japan of the period under study was not solicitous of social change attributable to outside influences. Especially was this true throughout the 1920s and 1930s among bureaucrats of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, who steadfastly opposed the prerogatives of organized labor and anything else that smacked of socialism. In 1919, Kawai Ejirō, an assistant to the vice-minister, presented his superiors with a scaled-down plan to implement the Labor Charter adopted at the Paris Peace Conference. Where the charter had called for an eight-hour day, Kawai suggested nine; he did not recommend the right to strike. Yet ministry officials greeted Kawai's proposals coldly. A large part of Kawai's problem was that he had recently returned from a year's observation in the United States and was summoning a conservative ministry to measure up to alien standards. A frustrated Kawai resigned from the ministry.⁶²

The interwar years of Japanese membership in the ILO did see Diet passage of legislation benefiting workers. The scope of the Factory Act of 1911 was broadened in 1923 to cover smaller establishments. A Health Insurance Law (1922), a Labor Dispute Mediation Law (1926), and a Workers' Compensation Law (1931) were major advances. ILO pressure might have played a role in those laws that were enacted, but the ministries that drafted them never openly credited ILO conventions for inspiration or model.⁶³ The ILO specifically condemned Japan's lengthy workday as "social dumping," but interwar Japan adopted no eight-hour day. On the other hand, the ILO censured Japan on women and child labor practices, and Japan did ratify ILO conventions setting a minimum age for employment and forbidding women in mines. The scorecard on the ratification of conventions signed at International Labor Conferences shows Japan to be a conservative participant in the ILO enterprise. Between 1919 and 1938, the conferences adopted 63 conventions. Of these Japan ratified 18. In the same period France ratified 38 and Great Britain 29.⁶⁴ It must be kept in mind that higher standards for labor were already in place in many European industrial countries, and in such contexts ratification required less disturbance of the societal status quo.

The history of the Japanese labor movement written by Ayusawa—who had every reason to be prejudiced in favor of the ILO—rightly reserves judgment on whether ILC conventions moved the Japanese government to upgrade labor standards. The positive impact of ILO activity is more demonstrable in the fledgling interwar labor union movement. As Ayusawa has written, "the ILO furnished the most potent impetus for the growth and expansion of trade unions in Japan." For the nascent labor movement, the ILO was the embodiment of internationalism

and a critical source of confidence that unionism could succeed. In the words of labor historian Stephen Large, the ILO “almost compensated for the weakness of organized labor and proletarian parties within Japan. Lacking credibility at home, they tried to legitimize their activities by relating them to ‘respectable’ agencies abroad.”⁶⁵ For emerging Japanese labor organizations, the ILO provided a channel for the flow of information on more advanced labor movements and their goals in the industrialized West. After barriers to Japanese labor representation were overcome in 1924, International Labor Conferences afforded a small but significant group of Japanese labor leaders international experience and encouragement. Moreover, the ILO was an important factor in mainstream labor’s charting of a moderate course and, concomitantly, in the political isolation of radical socialists in Japan. The ILC representation battle served to widen the gap between the labor Far Left and the government. Moderate labor’s embracing of the ILO helped drive a permanent wedge between Sōdōmei and more revolutionary colleagues.

Supporting Mechanisms at Home

Among the populace of Japan, enthusiasm for the League was nurtured by the Japan League of Nations Association (Nihon Kokusai Renmei Kyōkai). The JLNA was formed in 1920 at the initiative of the Foreign Ministry. Its early members included scholars and diplomats who had visited war-ravaged Europe during the time of the Paris Peace Conference. Shibusawa Eiichi, Japan’s leading industrialist of the time, served as its founding president until his death in 1931. He was succeeded by Ishii Kikujirō, who remained in the office through the 1930s. The inaugural issue of the association’s organ, *Kokusai Renmei* (League of Nations), carried articles of felicitation and encouragement by Shibusawa, Prince Tokugawa Iesato (later the titular head of the Washington Conference delegation), and other nationally prominent figures.⁶⁶ The journal, retitled *Kokusai chishiki* (International Understanding) in 1922, was a major mouthpiece for internationalist thought during the 1920s. Each month’s issue carried a synopsis of current activities in the League Assembly, Council, and subsidiary organizations. Its leading writers throughout the 1920s were Tagawa Daikichirō and Yamakawa Tadao (1873–1962), both founding officers of the association. Tagawa was a member of the House of Representatives, an outspoken advocate of disarmament at the time of the Washington Conference, and president of a Christian university, Meiji Gakuin, from 1925 to 1939. Yamakawa was a former diplomat who accompanied the Japanese delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. He served as vice-chair of both the JLNA and the Japan Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR) in the early 1930s. Both were liberal internationalists, and their frequent articles conveyed that color to *Kokusai chishiki* in the internationalist decade.⁶⁷

Throughout the course of its fifteen-year existence, the JLNA sponsored lec-

tures and debates and organized committees to study such problems as disarmament and immigration. When League under-secretaries Nitobe and Sugimura came home on furlough, they crisscrossed Japan in lecture circuits sponsored by the association. The JLNA formed associated youth clubs and sponsored an annual student essay contest. Representatives regularly attended the annual meetings of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies. As membership grew from 683 in 1920 to almost 12,000 in 1932, the JLNA became one of the world's largest consumers of League publications. Members of the Diet and officials of the Foreign Ministry were well represented in its ranks. Corporate donations and government subsidies provided the bulk of the association's funding, with the government contributing as much as 100,000 yen a year in the mid-1920s.⁶⁸

The establishment and flourishing of the association are illustrative of the important role that "private," nongovernmental organizations played in Japan's international relations. At the time of the JLNA's founding, Prime Minister Hara encouraged business contributions and leadership. Preceded by the Japan Peace Society and followed in 1925 by the Japan Council of the IPR and in the postwar period by the Japan UNESCO Association, the JLNA provided a rallying point for those Japanese who believed that the League of Nations was a necessary venue for acting out Japan's role as a responsible power.⁶⁹ It also fostered an image of Japan as a humane citizenry conversant on international issues and engaged in global cooperation. When Japan incurred international opprobrium after 1931, the nongovernmental organizations and their spokesmen were utilized as propagandists to purvey a "correct" interpretation of East Asian realities to the world.

The International Labor Organization's Governing Body opened an ILO branch office (*Kokusai Rōdō Jimukyoku Shikyoku*) in Tokyo in November 1923. Such outposts also were found in London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Washington, and New Delhi. The office was first housed in the building of the *Kyōchōkai* (Cooperation and Harmony Society), an organization established in 1919 to foster industrial harmony and labor reforms. Interestingly, Tokugawa Iesato and Shibusawa Eiichi, names associated with the *Kyōchōkai*, were also leaders in the League of Nations Association. The branch office published pamphlets and a monthly journal on labor issues and the ILO and organized lectures and seminars. It was staffed by a half dozen secretaries. Both of its directors had worked as senior staff members of the ILO secretariat in Geneva. The first was Asari Junshirō, a former labor inspector who served as director until his death in 1935. He was replaced by Ayusawa Iwao, who in the postwar period authored a history of the modern labor movement in Japan. Ayusawa served as director until the office closed in May 1939.⁷⁰

In May 1926, a branch of the League's Information Section was opened in Tokyo. Similar branches had been previously established in London, Paris, Rome, Berlin, and Washington. Undersecretary-General Nitobe Inazō had formally pro-

posed locating a League office in Japan and secured Secretariat endorsement. The Sixth Assembly voted an annual appropriation of 20,000 French francs for a correspondent's salary and travel to Geneva every other year. Nitobe insisted that the branch office be headed by a Japanese with experience in Geneva and on good terms with the Foreign Ministry and the Japan League of Nations Association. Aoki Set-suichi, a secretary of the JLNA stationed in Geneva, accepted the position. Nitobe considered this a major personal accomplishment and a key step in the promotion of the League in Japan. The JLNA read this move as "concrete evidence of the League's interest in the Far East and in Japan in the particular" and predicted "added zest and increasing sympathy from the people of Japan." The office grew to employ five assistants by 1933.⁷¹

The Secretariat was supposed to operate free of government attachment, and the circumstances of the Tokyo office soon gave rise to the charge in Geneva of conflict of interest. With office space in Tokyo still scarce in the wake of the 1923 earthquake, the League of Nations Association found quarters for the office in the building it occupied. The Foreign Ministry-subsidized association paid the rent and gave the office a column in its organ, *Kokusai chishiki*, to publicize League activities. The ministry also supplied a telephone and free telegraphic service to Geneva. Correspondent Aoki disclaimed any compromise in the office's independence from government, but Secretary-General Drummond insisted on separation. The matter was laid to rest when the office moved to new quarters in Marunouchi in late 1927. Close liaison between the office and the association persisted nonetheless.⁷²

Japan was one of the League's heaviest and most reliable financial backers. The Diet made annual appropriations for Japan's assessed contribution to the budget established by the League Assembly. Only Great Britain, France, and Germany were assessed a higher amount; Japan's was on par with Italy's. In the late 1920s, Japan's annual contribution amounted to 600,000 yen, or roughly US\$300,000. The British figure was nearly double Japan's; China's was somewhat lower, at about US\$230,000. Japan met all League financial obligations through 1934 and made reduced contributions for four years thereafter in support of the League's humanitarian organizations.⁷³

The preceding survey of Japanese activity in League organs is a picture of full and conscientious involvement. Japan's role in the League of Nations was commensurate with the status of a major nation. The Japanese in Geneva earned their reputation as energetic and committed participants in every aspect of League operation. From the Geneva record to 1931 it would be difficult to characterize Japanese support of the League of Nations as anything less than wholehearted.

6

The Japanese Face at Geneva

Nitobe Inazō and Ishii Kikujirō

There is some one myth for every man, which, if we but knew it, would make us understand all that he did and thought.

—William Butler Yeats

EVERYONE WHO WORKED in the League of Nations Secretariat knew well what was meant by the “Geneva spirit.” The full poignancy of this ethos was apprehended by those who lived by the shores of Lac Léman. Sir Eric Drummond, Sugimura Yōtarō, Harada Ken, and William Rappard understood the ease with which nationals of diverse countries interfaced in their routine professional and social activities. Hand in hand they worked hard, with near-religious devotion, to make international organization efficacious and to nudge the nations of the world into harmony with League ideals. Those who, like Ambassador Ishii Kikujirō, journeyed frequently to Geneva for League meetings could not but be captivated by the unique atmosphere:

As a result of daily contact with one another the various delegates had lost much of their fierce patriotism and replaced it with moderation and a willingness to enter into conciliatory discussion. War they now considered a crime, while peace they wanted from the bottom of their hearts. At Geneva one might have been in another planet for all its resemblance to the old order.¹

In Geneva, the spirit of the peace enterprise was inseparable from the serenity of the natural setting: the mountain-framed lake, the greenness of the grass, the flowers, the quaint antiquity of the city. In the world viewed even today from the Palais des Nations, the state of nature and humanity seems totally incompatible with the state of war. Aggression and terrorism are remote. To the Japanese in the Hotel National in the 1920s, Mukden, Shanghai, and Vladivostok were very far away.

Such a creature of goodwill as Undersecretary-General Nitobe Inazō inter-

nalized the Geneva spirit quickly; such an expressive communicator made it infectious to others. He was frequently asked by Secretary-General Drummond to address European audiences on behalf of the organization in its early years, a time when the peoples of Europe eagerly longed for a permanent respite from the ravages of war they had recently endured. To a university gathering in Brussels, the undersecretary reported in September 1920 how the eight meetings of the Council so far had enabled representatives to sit around a common table and discuss freely and in private the questions before them. From this, Nitobe drew inspiration:

Few things afford a more encouraging prospect for harmonious co-operation, a more hopeful earnest of universal peace, than the sight of the leading statesmen of the foremost countries of the world coming together in close personal relations, holding different views and expressing them with utmost freedom, yet in the spirit of mutual understanding and concord.

In the Secretariat, reported the undersecretary, there was an *esprit de corps* in which "the members are actuated by a spirit of idealism, and spurred on by a strong sense of responsibility in this new venture of world reconstruction." He did not find in the Secretariat the cynicism and personal jealousy he had observed in government bureaucracies at home and abroad. The Covenant had dealt imperialism a fatal blow through the mandate system and had uplifted the status of women by assuring them equal access to the offices of the League.²

When he addressed assembled delegates of the Institute of Pacific Relations in 1929 on the advance of world order in his day, the retired League official made reference to the enchanting physical setting of Geneva. Nitobe asked, "Do we not find the spirit of the hills and the lakes . . . conducive to fellowship and interdependence? The Locarno spirit is such, and it is admitted that this was nurtured on the shores of Lac Léman, surrounded by its hills, the Jura and the Salève." Nitobe devoted much of his League career to spreading the ideas of the organization in Europe, but there were two special mission fields where he longed to transplant the Geneva spirit. The first was his homeland, Japan. He genuinely believed that the terrain of Japan was as hospitable to the spirit of international understanding as that of Switzerland. Hence he lifted the eyes of his IPR audience to the Kyoto around them: "Here we meet in this ancient city, called in olden times Heian, the City of Peace and Ease, at the foot of the Hiei range and with Lake Biwa close by. Thus does Japan provide . . . the geographical requisites for the peaceful discussion of international relations."³ The other special target of his endeavors was North America, his second homeland, which he visited nine times during his lifetime. Nitobe might just as well have applied the mountain-and-lake imagery to the Canadian Rockies and Lake Louise, the site of his last international conference.

Ishii Kikujirō and Nitobe Inazō were among Japan's best and brightest of the Bakumatsu (late Tokugawa) generation. More than any other persons, they were the embodiment of Japan at the League of Nations. Their backgrounds and roles were dissimilar. Ishii was a professional diplomat who represented Japan in Assembly and Council meetings while he served as ambassador to Paris from 1920 to 1927. Nitobe was an educator and former colonial administrator who was the highest-ranking Japanese in the employ of the Secretariat from the time it was organized in 1919 until his retirement in 1926. Both carried out their duties with diligence and cultivated networks of personal relationships that facilitated their work. Both drew praise in Geneva as exemplars of internationalism. Frank Walters, Secretariat official and historian of the League, wrote of Nitobe as "a courageous spokesman of the liberal movement in Japan" and one of "the brightest spirits" of the first team of Secretariat leadership. He named Ishii among those diplomats who, "by their courage and good sense, helped the Council through difficult discussions."⁴ Both Nitobe and Ishii had spent many years outside of Japan and possessed a studied acquaintance with the world at large. It was their expectation that Japan should function harmoniously within an interstate system. They also were willing to accept some limitations on independent national prerogatives in deference to the collective interests of other major nations. By any measure, both men would rank as leading internationalists of their day.⁵ In retirement, they played leading roles in organizations in Japan that promoted League ideals and international comity.

It is important to study Japan's interface with the League from a biographical as well as an institutional perspective. Personality and human interaction were the stuff of international relations at Geneva. In this enterprise the Nitobe lakeside home was a hive of social activity. Ishii also engaged in personal diplomacy from his hotel lodgings in Geneva. Their sociability countered the common caricature of Japanese as aloof and linguistically handicapped. We observe in their careers how the Geneva spirit released talents and instilled inspirations in many of the Japanese who served there. We also see in the next chapter how the acrid disputes involving the League and Japanese vital interests after 1931 exposed the contradictions in the myths that had formed their characters and worldviews. The crisis over Manchuria brought their celebrated internationalism into sharp confrontation with their inherent nationalism. As we probe their comfort and discomfort in the League connection, we discover much about Japan's stance toward international organization in the interwar years. We feel poignantly the inner struggle Japan experienced when it answered the calls of nation and world.

Getting to Know the Larger World

Nitobe Inazō (1862–1933) stands among those rare Japanese of the early twentieth century who attained a world reputation.⁶ He was known in Europe and North

America for his writings explaining East Asian culture to the West. His book *Bushidō* is still read in the Occident by those in search of “traditional Japanese values.” Son of a wealthy samurai from Morioka, he studied economics and agriculture at the Johns Hopkins University and at Halle University in Germany. His career included stints as a colonial administrator in Taiwan, where his supervisor was Gotō Shinpei; as the headmaster of the prestigious First Higher School (Ichikō) in Tokyo; and as a professor of colonial policy at Tokyo University. Along with Uchimura Kanzō, he was a member of the Sapporo Band of student converts to Christianity at Sapporo Agricultural College. He later joined the Society of Friends in Baltimore and married into a prominent Philadelphia Quaker family. A Baltimore reporter recorded his impression of the man in 1913 when he heard Nitobe lecture on a tour sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment: “A short, solidly built gentleman of extremely quiet bearing, who looks at one keenly from behind large spectacles and who speaks English like a native of the British Isles.”⁷ Few Japanese of his day acquired such thoroughgoing credentials of world citizenship.

Nitobe's posture toward the League of Nations in the 1920s and 1930s was conditioned by a complex background of ideas, moral convictions, international experience, and personal ties. From his Quaker cultivation and world travel he acquired a passion for peace and mutual understanding. From his career as an educator sprang his sense of need for international intellectual cooperation. As a student in New-Manifest-Destiny America, a colonial administrator in Taiwan, and a professor of colonial policy, he embraced notions of “enlightened” overseas hegemony. His nationalism was honed by a fixation on Japan's *bushidō* (warrior ethic) past, immersion in the heady patriotism surrounding the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, and service in the employ of the Meiji state.

Nitobe undertook graduate study from 1884 at the Johns Hopkins University. There he entered what historian Arthur Link has called “perhaps the most famous seminar in the history of higher education in the United States,” led by political



Nitobe Inazō (second from right) with delegates to the Fourth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, Shanghai, 21 October 1931. From Mainichi Photobank.

historian Herbert Baxter Adams. Nitobe's seminar mates included Woodrow Wilson and John Dewey, and he missed Frederick Jackson Turner by a few months. Wilson at age twenty-eight was six years Nitobe's senior and had entered the Hopkins program a year earlier. He was already married, held a law degree, and had completed the opening chapters of his later published *Congressional Government*. Nitobe afterward recalled that Wilson possessed the air and appearance of a man of the world, a "Southern Gentleman" not unlike the *shizoku* (persons of samurai lineage) he admired. When Nitobe revisited Hopkins in 1912, he took his traveling companion and former student Tsurumi Yūsuke to the seminar room and proudly showed him the places where he and Wilson, then governor of New Jersey and presidential aspirant, had sat during the two years they were students together.⁸ Did schoolmate ties to the American architect of the League favorably predispose Nitobe to the cause three decades later? It is hard to say. There is no extant correspondence between them, and Nitobe never publicly attributed his views on the League to Wilson. Yet among Japanese, *senpai-kōhai* (senior-junior) ties have long laid a basis for affinity that persists despite decades of no contact.

Frederick Jackson Turner entered Adams' seminar shortly after Nitobe departed for Germany in 1887 for further study. While at Hopkins, both Nitobe and Turner were influenced by progressive economist Richard Theodore Ely, who introduced his students to social Darwinism, to an economic interpretation of political and social change, and to a nascent "economic internationalism." There is a remarkable resemblance between Turner's famous Frontier Thesis (1893) and Nitobe's "Momotarō Doctrine" (1907). Both saw frontier regions as incubators of the national character of their respective countries. According to Nitobe, "Frontier life rejuvenates the human nature which we are apt to forget and lose. For human life there must always be a frontier. If it were not for it, man will be reduced to a trifling existence, under the pressure of the customs and traditions of society."⁹ For Nitobe the frontier was Taiwan and beyond. This is part of the intellectual baggage that he brought to Geneva and that may have influenced his response to the spread of Japanese power in the new frontier of Manchuria in 1931.

Nitobe encountered Makino Nobuaki in 1906 when the latter, as minister of education, prevailed upon him to accept appointment as principal of First Higher School. Later as de facto head of Japan's delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, the count would have the crucial voice in recommending Nitobe for the League Secretariat.

Well before World War I we can observe in Nitobe's mind the crystallization of important ideas on international order, including myths that would eventually reach fruition when Nitobe came into conflict with the League over Manchuria. One was his belief in the irrepressible, onward march of superior civilizations. This social Darwinian view had helped inspire the New Manifest Destiny in the United

States in the 1890s and the navalist theories of Alfred T. Mahan. To Nitobe, Japan was “in the forefront of the civilization of the East.” He had personally participated in Japan’s civilizing mission in Taiwan. His mantra, conveyed to each of his classes in colonial policy at Tokyo University, was “Colonization is the spread of civilization.” Nitobe would apply the idea of irresistible movement to Manchuria in 1932, when he wrote, “Japan’s advance . . . , in search of a life-line, is as irresistible an economic force as the westward march of the Anglo-Saxon empires.” If Nitobe’s expansionist ideology had a liberal component, it was his concern for the interests of the colonized. Here we see a Japanese counterpart of the “White Man’s Burden” sentiment so prevalent in America at the turn of the century. In his lectures at Tokyo University he urged the improvement of colonials’ living conditions, advocated assimilation policies, and reminded his compatriots that “the natives can teach us, too.”¹⁰

A second concept, a corollary image of the first, was his conviction that China was incapable of governing itself in accordance with twentieth-century standards. During China’s Republican Revolution, he expressed pessimism concerning the viability of centralized government on the mainland:

I do not believe a republic can survive in China, do not believe the people are prepared to govern their country so. They are fitted to govern it in small local governments. If China could be divided into many different States, each with its local government, it could live as a republic, but there remains the problem of forming a confederation.

Chinese incompetence, in Nitobe’s mind, was biologically based. He believed that racial superiority and inferiority were real. He discredited American hopes for republicanism in China and self-rule for Filipinos: “They are trying to make those people, who have never been nations, independent nation-states.” Skepticism that a unified China could govern itself was a common sentiment in Japan and throughout major capitals in 1912. It was shared in the years of the early republic by no less than Yoshino Sakuzō and would be heard among supporters of the League of Nations during World War I. Nitobe was like those intellectuals and bureaucrats who, Akami writes, “constructed their own ‘Orient’ in order to legitimize their superior position in Asia.”¹¹ To Nitobe, revolution and warlordism confirmed the allegation of Chinese political incompetence. Nitobe and Ishii both would emphasize this theme in 1932 to vindicate Japan’s policy in Manchuria. Similarly, the framers of the New Order in East Asia were wedded to the construction of China as a culture without borders, unsuited to ever be a political entity.¹²

Third, Nitobe believed that lack of understanding was the prime cause of international conflicts. This was the controlling myth of his international career.

Empathy was to him the heart of the Geneva spirit. In 1912 he told an audience of Americans at the Johns Hopkins University,

If it is sometimes knowledge that brings the sword, it is still better knowledge that keeps the sword away. If this country and mine can come to a better knowledge of each other, to a fuller and deeper understanding of the missions and aspirations of each other, that will be a great stride toward the advancement of the human race.

Confident as he was that true knowledge would uncover human commonality, Nitobe tended to blur the concrete differences between nations and their interests. His lifelong theme song was, *there are no real bases for Japanese-American animosity*. War talk, he told his audiences in his lecture tour of the United States in 1911–1912, was stirred up by selfish people on both sides who profited from marketing munitions and newspapers.¹³ International ill will and conflicts were, in short, misunderstandings, resolvable when each side was willing to view the situation through the eyes of the other. Embracing this myth as truth, Nitobe was driven to strenuous activity for the cause of cross-cultural, intellectual understanding. He pressed the assumption to his dying day, certain that intellectual cooperation was the key to peace, confident that Japan could explain its Manchurian policy to the League, and sure that he could convince Americans to accept Manchukuo.

Nitobe demonstrated his ability to cross bridges by promoting the League of Nations in rhetoric understood by educated people in the West. He often inspired his reading and listening audiences with references to classical Western civilization and literature. In anticipating the upcoming First Assembly, Nitobe borrowed imagery from William Penn and St. Luke. When a hundred delegates from forty countries gathered, “a holy experiment in world politics” would take place, “a day of Pentecost with tongues of fire each understanding the other.” Nitobe compared the Covenant to the Magna Charta and likened “world-conscience” to the still, small voice that moved the prophet Elijah. He mused that “it is on the broad field of humanitarian ideals that the League of Nations desires to outrival the conquests of Julius Caesar.”¹⁴ In the context of the idealism that swept Europe in the postwar months, the humanist summons struck a responsive chord.

A fourth idea was the validity of armed force for national defense and expansion. Despite his ties to the Society of Friends, Nitobe did not oppose the Sino-Japanese War and was openly supportive of his nation in the Russo-Japanese War. In this latter stance he parted ways with Sapporo Band colleague Uchimura and had great pain explaining his position to his Philadelphia Quaker in-laws. As Japan besieged Port Arthur, he and his wife, Mary, were drawn to embrace “Japan’s sense of the importance of her mission in the development of the Far East. . . .” In 1931

Dr. Nitobe reiterated the lesson of the Triple Intervention, that “only in armament lay security.”¹⁵ Like Makino Nobuaki, Yoshino Sakuzō, and other Japanese internationalists, Nitobe affirmed the legitimacy and necessity of Japanese territorial expansion in East Asia. To the undersecretary, the League system was not a bridle for Japan’s expansionist inclinations but a context for the moderation of Japanese methods of growth and an arena for the positive acceptance of Japan’s rising stature. An understanding of the secure place of expansionism within Japanese mainstream internationalism is important for comprehending Nitobe, whose love for the League and vindication of Manchukuo could otherwise be pictured as incongruous.

Ishii Kikujirō (1866–1945) was one of Japan’s most distinguished men of foreign affairs of the early twentieth century.¹⁶ His name is attached to the 1917 exchange of notes with the United States that acknowledged Japan’s special interests in China. The Lansing-Ishii encounter exemplifies Ishii’s career-long efforts to secure the powers’ recognition of Japan’s position on the continent.

Ishii was born in Awa Province (now Chiba Prefecture) in the twilight years of the Tokugawa shogunate. The father in his adoptive Ishii family was a member of the first house of peers. Following his graduation from the law faculty of Tokyo University in 1890, he entered the Foreign Ministry and was sent immediately on his first overseas assignment as attaché at the legation in Paris, where he remained until 1896. After serving as consul in Korea, he was posted as secretary to the lega-



Ishii Kikujirō, ambassador to France and Japanese delegate to the League of Nations Council and Assembly. From League of Nations Archives, United Nations Office at Geneva Library.

tion in Beijing from 1900. Just before the Russo-Japanese War erupted, he became head of the ministry's Commerce Bureau. At this time he was also associated with a group of ministry section chiefs and members of the army and navy general staffs who exerted pressure on the government to pursue a hard line in the pre-war negotiations with Imperial Russia over the two nations' respective rights in Manchuria.¹⁷

In his first China posting, Ishii confronted violent disorder. This experience helped mold his lifelong perception of the danger the continent posed to Japan and the necessity that Japan play a stabilizing role in China. In 1900, as first secretary of the Japanese legation in Beijing, he survived the siege by the Boxers. In reflections penned around 1930, he recounted the desperate defensive measures taken by the legation. With no weapons or uniforms, he and his colleagues bartered with the rebels to obtain guns; his mourning coat was his fighting attire. The Japanese lost more defenders than the other legations, but the others trusted and relied on the Japanese. Ishii's perception of Japan's international position was dominated by the bogey of an avaricious mainland. In history he highlighted Korean and Mongol attacks on Kyūshū, and he alleged Chinese complicity in the Ezo incursions from northern Honshū. "Our country was always threatened by powers from the continent," he reflected. "We never slept easily. . . . Under the guidance of the unbroken line of emperors, the people of Japan, firmly committed to sacrifice bone and blood to defend the fatherland, have never once from time immemorial surrendered to foreign threat." The Russians, unaware of this history of Japanese valiant defense against invaders, suffered ignominious defeat when they moved southward through Manchuria and Korea. To secure its survival and the peace of East Asia, Japan established a special position in China after the Sino-Japanese War and made Korea sovereign Japanese territory in 1910. By 1930 Ishii could declare, "Now recognized as one of the Five Powers, we are in a high position to contribute to world peace."¹⁸

Another personal episode after the Russo-Japanese War reiterated the threats that faced Japanese abroad. In 1907 Ishii was sent to California and British Columbia to look into anti-Japanese agitation there. He heard from white California workers how deeply Japanese laborers were hated. While he was in Vancouver, an anti-Oriental riot erupted. Japantown organized its own security force, armed with swords, and escaped damage. Vancouver's Chinatown, by contrast, was undefended. Most of the Chinese shops were destroyed. Ishii inferred from the Beijing and Vancouver episodes that the Japanese people had courage and drew on their own resources to defend their vital interests.¹⁹

Ishii was center stage in Japanese diplomacy at key junctures of the Taishō and early Shōwa periods. He was ambassador in Paris (1912–1915) when war broke out in Europe. He was called home to replace Katō Takaaki — architect of the Twenty-One Demands — as foreign minister. His continental European outlook was said

to be the major factor in this wartime appointment.²⁰ After a year heading the ministry, he was sent to Washington as a special envoy and then as ambassador until June 1919. Passed over when Paris Peace Conference plenipotentiaries were selected, he represented Japan in Washington while the postwar settlement was being hammered out in France. Then he returned to Paris as ambassador from 1920 to 1927. In the dozen years surrounding the First World War, Ishii was Japan's senior diplomat in continental Europe, and Paris was probably the place where he was happiest.²¹ Roland S. Morris, U.S. ambassador to Tokyo during the second Wilson administration, described Ishii as "a cultivated gentleman of rare personal charm, whose mental processes seemed more European than oriental."²² During his second Paris posting, Ishii doubled as Japan's chief delegate to the League of Nations; he also represented Japan at the Geneva Naval Conference in 1927 and the London Economic Conference in 1933. His career, more than that of any other Japanese diplomat, was intertwined with the enterprise of the League of Nations. The workings of international organization, the enterprise of disarmament, and the peaceful resolution of international disputes were the hallmarks of his diplomatic service.

With the publication of his *Gaikō yoroku* (Diplomatic commentaries) in 1930, Ishii as a practitioner of diplomacy rose to speak about specific outworkings of continental policy. Going back to the Russian menace at the turn of the century, Ishii drew a sweeping vindication of Japanese actions vis-à-vis the continent. After victory over Imperial Russia in 1905, Japan had no alternative but to colonize Korea in the face of the danger of a Russian war of revenge. On the Twenty-One Demands, Ishii regretted the "crude procedure" by which they were pursued, but he emphasized Japan's primary goal of securing extensions on Japanese holdings in Manchuria. Stability had not improved in the region, and retention of the Japanese position there was essential. The foreign allegations of imperialism and militarism hurled at Japan in 1915 had no justification: "The Demands in themselves were just and reasonable, and Japan unquestionably had the right to make them." It was Japan's intention from 1914 to restore Shandong to China, and "such magnanimity as the return of Shandong and Manchuria [1905] is not duplicated in history." Japan's diplomacy of the World War I period was exemplary of Japan's consistent efforts to get the powers to respect the territorial integrity of China:

Japan had not only called upon other countries to enter into agreements to respect her territorial integrity, but when peaceful alternatives failed, at enormous sacrifice to herself, fought and compelled them to recognize this integrity. It is not overstating the case to say that China owes her present political independence and territorial integrity to her affinity with and to the protection afforded her by Japan.²³

In sum, Ishii Kikujirō viewed Japan's positive continental policy as magnanimous toward China and essential for the security of Japan. Ishii's construct of China was a hotbed of foreign intrigue — first Mongol, then Russian, then German, then Soviet. Without naming it as such, Ishii was in effect asserting an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine. The Japanese policy that he affirmed was structured to keep hostile foreign powers from conducting political and economic activities in East Asia inimical to Japan's security interests. Ishii interpreted "interests" broadly to include political interests and believed that they were self-vindicating: "Japan's special interests in China are eternal realities, and do not require the recognition of other nations." Apropos to events about to come, he emphasized the gravity with which Japan viewed any state of disorder on the continent:

If China falls into a state of semi-permanent disorder, it is possible for European and American governments and people to dispose of their possessions and property and leave China, but . . . in the case of the Japanese government and people, it is not possible satisfactorily to do the same thing. There is the fear that the disorder may have harmful repercussions in Japan and for this reason Japan has no alternative but to devise means of quieting turmoil in China.²⁴

Though only Nitobe was educated abroad, both men had overseas experience in their early careers that broadened their horizons and gave them insights into Japan's role in the world and in East Asia. Despite his training in agricultural economics and colonial administration, Nitobe's strongest impulse was humanistic: to lead people of many nations and cultures to understand each other. Ishii, ever mindful of politics and Japan's strategic needs, learned through hard knocks the precariousness of the nation's security in the face of hostile forces on the mainland. During the volatile years of World War I and the Paris Peace Conference, he held Japan's most influential diplomatic posts in Paris, Tokyo, and Washington. Having studied and worked extensively outside of Japan in Asia and the West, both Nitobe and Ishii were logical choices for Japanese service in the League of Nations.

Lac Léman

When Japan as one of the peace conference Big Five was asked to nominate an undersecretary-general for the League Secretariat, Japanese diplomats in Paris sought a candidate fluent in English and French, a pleasing personality of high reputation in Japan and abroad, and someone who was neither a diplomat nor a politician. Prominent Japanese were not hard to find in Paris in the spring of 1919. Among those who wanted to see for themselves the state of affairs in the wake of the Great War was Gotō Shinpei. When Baron Gotō set out for Europe en route

around the world, he asked the Nitobes to accompany him as his English-speaking escorts. The story goes that Marquis Saionji and Baron Makino were gathered with others at the Japanese Embassy in Paris, wrestling with the question of whom to nominate for undersecretary. Several names had been discussed and rejected, when Nitobe walked through the door with Gotō. Makino looked at Nitobe and exclaimed, "Here is a splendid candidate!" True or not, it is a fact that Gotō pushed for Nitobe and that plenipotentiaries Makino and Chinda were enthusiastic. When Nitobe sought Gotō's counsel, the baron gave his former Taiwan subordinate his full blessing and pressed the nomination with Sir Eric Drummond.²⁵ No Japanese was more poignantly aware than Makino of the reluctance of Japanese elites to acquiesce in the League program. The appointment of a former colonial administrator with ties to the nationalistic Gotō could allay conservative fears that Japanese vital interests would be compromised in the new organization. At the same time, someone with genuine internationalist views could serve the Secretariat wholeheartedly. Moreover, to make conspicuous a Japanese so cultivated, well-traveled, and eclectic could help refurbish the atavistic image of Japan that so dismayed Makino. As for Nitobe himself, he viewed his appointment as providential, evidence that "there is a Guiding Hand above me." Confident that "this is the career for which my past experience and my domestic life have been pointing," he plunged forward to fulfill the dream of his youth "to be a bridge across the Pacific Ocean, over which the ideas of the West and those of the East could travel back and forth unimpeded."²⁶

Appointment to the League of Nations Secretariat enabled Nitobe to set into action two of the principles that guided his life: international understanding and intellectual cooperation. When the Secretariat moved to Geneva in late 1920, the Nitobe home overlooking Lac Léman became a place of hospitality for women and men of goodwill and intellectual curiosity. Like all members of the Secretariat, Nitobe served the League as a layperson and not as a governmental representative. In political matters handled by the League he carefully adhered to the bounds of his position as an impartial, international civil servant. He also found that his job as an undersecretary-general afforded causes large enough to fully absorb his energies and passions. To a host of observers, Nitobe epitomized the spirit of the League and was one of the most effective communicators of its ideals.

Nitobe's immediate assignment was director of the Section of International Bureaux. In this capacity he was responsible for fostering communication among existing and future international governmental and nongovernmental organizations and for developing an educational arm of the League. He helped produce a *Handbook of International Organizations*, fully confident, as he wrote to his nephew in Philadelphia, that "it is through voluntary organizations, in which men and women of like minds scattered all over the world take part, that the real inter-

national spirit is fostered.”²⁷ Most celebrated was his contribution in the founding of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), the forerunner of today’s UNESCO. Its first meeting was held in August 1922. The members included Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, Hendrik Lorentz, Marie Curie, and Gilbert Murray. Bergson, the most distinguished French philosopher of his generation, was president. Nitobe was especially drawn to this thinker, and the two enjoyed friendly and unhurried private conversations in the early years of the committee.²⁸

The philosophy underlying the committee was one that Nitobe naturally affirmed: the world of knowledge knows no national frontiers. The committee purposed to facilitate contacts between teachers, artists, scientists, and authors; to establish ties between universities in different countries; to foster the protection of intellectual property; and to encourage the development of international bibliographical facilities. Nitobe viewed the enterprise of world intellectual cooperation with mixed pessimism and hope. When the first committee was announced, he commented that

the problems that lie before them are so vast, and it is not impossible that what they can accomplish under present circumstances is very little to the world desiderata; but I believe they owe it to their own names to do something towards bringing at least the intellectuals of different countries a little closer together.²⁹

An additional purpose of the ICIC was to strengthen the League’s influence for peace. In implementing its projects, the committee gave substance to the ideal of the League’s universality by transcending differences in race, religion, gender, and language. This, in the minds of the committee’s partisans, demonstrated to the larger League and to the world a genuine internationalism that could prevail in the political arena as well. Into that arena, the ICIC envisioned projecting the voices of poets, historians, and scientists. It sponsored high-level conferences and exchanges of open letters between leading intellectuals of the time. The most famous interface was a well-publicized correspondence on the subject of war and peace between Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud in 1932.³⁰

One of the committee’s projects in which Nitobe played a direct hand was the publication of a series of twenty-two booklets on intellectual life in various countries. Nitobe himself authored one of the booklets, *Use and Study of Foreign Languages in Japan: A Study in Cultural Internationalism*, in which he treated the history of Chinese linguistic influence on Japan and the state of the study of Western languages in his home country.³¹

A secondary but nonetheless important assignment Nitobe fulfilled for the Secretariat was as publicist for the League. As a writer and lecturer he conveyed the goals and spirit of the organization to audiences in Europe and Japan. When Am-

bassador Ishii asked Drummond why he so often tapped the Japanese undersecretary to address European audiences on behalf of the League, the secretary-general explained, "Because Nitobe is the most highly qualified. He is not only a good speaker, but he gives audiences a deep and lasting impression. In this respect no one in the Secretariat can excel him." Ambassador Ishii at first read Drummond's praise as flattery, but after years of close observation of Nitobe's eloquence, declared, "I discovered that it was just as the Secretary-General had said; my admiration was as strong as his."³² An Asian's appearance on behalf of the League was very effective, for it lent credence to the myth of the organization's universality.

When he spoke concerning the League, the undersecretary did not ignore its deficiencies. The United States, one of the institution's leading organizers, was missing from its rolls, as were Germany and the Soviet Union. The League peace machinery was designed to prevent war but was powerless to restore peace once armed conflict had erupted. Nitobe warned against unrealistic expectations. The League could not sweep away atavistic institutions at once but over time would remold them into instruments of universal cooperation. As a true liberal, Nitobe asserted his preference for working through existing institutions to effect gradual change. He assured his audiences that, despite its defects, the League of Nations was "the organization most compatible with existing conditions."³³

Nitobe did not ignore his home country in his publicity efforts for the League. His essays were published in Japanese journals and circulated in Japan by the Japan League of Nations Association. He spent eleven weeks on furlough beginning in December 1924, speaking on behalf of the League to a combined live audience of more than fifty thousand and giving twenty-five press interviews. As result of this tour, the number of local branches of the association rose from nine to nineteen. His schedule included a lecture before Prince Regent Hirohito, during which the future Emperor was more than a passive listener. The prince's first question concerned America's attitude toward the League, in answer to which Nitobe reported American participation in committees of the League and voiced optimism that the United States would enter the organization. Several gatherings of dignitaries heard him in closed session, including a group of court personages, members of the cabinet and the Privy Council, a group of Lower House dietmen, and a large meeting of bankers and industrialists. Nitobe reported that he was warmly welcomed as a spokesman for the League.

The detailed report Nitobe submitted to Secretary-General Drummond on his return to Geneva provides evidence of his continuing belief in the efficacy of global order. It also shows the undersecretary's dismay at his discovery in Japan of widespread cynicism concerning international organization as a means to secure Japanese national interests. Nitobe found that Japanese zeal for the League was confined to "the educated youth," while "the older generation as represented in the

higher governmental service, the parliament, the larger business circles and the professions, is lacking in enthusiasm except in a few instances.” Though the press had dutifully reported debates in Geneva on the opium question and the Protocol, “the League looked so far off, and its work touched the country so lightly. . . . Many studied the League, but few knew it.” Among the specific complaints Nitobe encountered at home and reported to Drummond was the assertion that the League had failed to achieve universality. Some Japanese viewed the League as Eurocentric and asked whether participation was profitable for Asian nations. Nitobe confessed that the question of universality was the hardest to answer satisfactorily. His reply to Japanese questioners concerning the practical value of League membership is a classic statement of international accommodationism:

Japan will find in a few years that the wisest course for her to pursue in her diplomacy is to bring it in line with the world’s public opinion as mirrored in the League. Such a course, far from being a passive obedience to a super-national body, as some ultra-nationalists fear, can rightly be viewed as an active utilization of the League on the part of Japan.

The station of permanent member of the Council was adequate return on Japan’s investment. “This position,” Nitobe said, “is not only highly honorable, but very valuable in ordinary times and priceless in extraordinary times.”

Nitobe ended his report with an appeal for better communication from Geneva to Tokyo. Japanese in the Secretariat should write more frequently for the press at home, he suggested. He called for the dispatch of League functionaries to the Far East and for the holding of some League-sponsored, international conference in Tokyo. Secretary-General Drummond responded warmly to Nitobe’s report, going so far as to state his own desire to go to Japan and pledging his efforts to send League officials to East Asia.³⁴ One direct result of Nitobe’s appeal was the Secretariat’s establishment of a branch of the Information Section in Tokyo in 1926.

Before Dr. Nitobe went to Geneva, his reputation for applying Christian virtues to issues of cross-cultural conflict was well established in Japan and the United States. Service in the Secretariat made him a citizen of the world, recognized in Europe as he was in America and in his homeland as an apostle of international understanding. The gracious charm that had endeared him to his Ichikō students two decades earlier now won friends for the League and led men and women otherwise prone to cynicism to believe that international order was viable. The reputation of the League was enhanced by his personal magnetism, and stereotypical images of Japanese as humorless, unprincipled pragmatists were countered by humane example. Satō Naotake, a frequent Japanese personage in Geneva, testified that all

Japanese there benefited from his reputation for integrity.³⁵ Ayusawa Iwao, who worked in the secretariat of the ILO during the Nitobe years in Geneva, later reminisced about the scene by Lac Léman:

The Nitobes selected a residence on the west side of Lake Geneva in the village of Bellevue. The mansion overlooked the pure water of the lake, which lapped the edge of an expansive lawn. From time to time a flock of swans floated by to accent an elegant picture. Beyond the lake rose the glistening white cap of Mont Blanc amidst a thousand mountains and ten thousand peaks of the Alps. Here and there in shady spots across the lawn were small white tables and chairs. On weekends one could observe seated there sipping tea and engaging in friendly conversation such world-renowned authorities of philosophy and science as England's classicist Gilbert Murray, Germany's Albert Einstein, and France's Madame Curie, along with various musical geniuses. Had it been a century earlier, no doubt the faces of the English poets Shelley and Byron would have been counted as well.

In Ayusawa's estimation, the international interaction at the Nitobe home was the starting point for the Geneva peace experiment.³⁶

One might expect that seven years in a world center of international relations would turn such a versatile mind as Nitobe's toward political science. The Secretariat, the context of his daily activity, was constantly humming with issues of national power and national interest. During the annual meetings of the Assembly and the more frequent convening of the Council, Geneva teemed with diplomats, foreign ministers, and heads of state. Despite these stimuli the Japanese undersecretary remained very much a humanist. Said James Shotwell, "International understanding meant to him . . . sympathetic study of all those varied expressions in the field of art and literature as well as of politics in which a nation reveals its complex personality." Ambassador Ishii recalled the comprehensiveness of his vision, the richness of his cultivation. More than a scholar of broad knowledge, he was "something of a philosopher . . . a spiritual man (*seishinka*)."³⁷ Herein lies a crucial key to understanding Nitobe's concept of internationalism, his perception of the institution of the League, and the myths that energized him. The Japanese humanist's message was profoundly appreciated in the salons by Lac Léman. Would it communicate in the tense air of an international crisis?

In the Japan-League connection, Ishii Kikujirō was to the Assembly and Council what Nitobe Inazō was to the Secretariat. Common threads are evident in their thinking and behavior, both before and after Mukden. But their styles and personalities were distinct. In his professional life and postretirement assignments, Ishii rarely departed from the demeanor of an official diplomat. As Ambassador

Morris described him, "His approach to diplomatic problems was realistic and rigidly logical, suggestive of the French rather than the English tradition."³⁸ Objectivity and restraint characterized his writings. Though he was widely respected, Ishii did not attract personal admirers like those who relished Nitobe's company, wrote loving reminiscences at the time of his death, and promoted ideals in his name thereafter. Ishii Kikujirō was Japan's ubiquitous delegate to League gatherings until 1927. He was frequently chosen to be president of the League Council and was often designated its rapporteur in the investigation of disputes. In the Upper Silesia case (1921) involving contested territory between Germany and Poland, Ishii made a noteworthy contribution. The investigatory committee, which he chaired, worked late into the night for two weeks and drafted a plan that was later unanimously adopted by the League Council, endorsed by the Supreme War Council, and successfully applied in the disputed territory. Such Japanese active interest in a purely European question was evidence that Japan was no longer a "silent partner" but a genuine colleague in League operations.³⁹ Ishii, wrote Frank Walters in his history of the League, displayed "the personal courtesy and modesty that distinguished all Japanese statesmen in those days, combined with bold courage and wisdom." Walters commended the Japanese entourage for setting "a standard of courtesy, industry, and thoroughness which no others surpassed and few equaled." He named Ishii among those diplomats who earned admiration for their patience in reconciling the divisions between Germans and Poles over minority questions.⁴⁰ The Ambassador also kept a watchful eye over the Japan Office of the League of Nations, which was located in Paris. He exercised virtual veto power over Japanese appointments to the League Secretariat and the various agencies of the League.

Ishii was also a leading figure in the First Committee of the Assembly that drafted the Geneva Protocol in 1924. In this instance, Ishii typically pressed upon his colleagues in the Council and Assembly the necessity of exercising patience in the achievement of the goals of the League. He particularly felt that the delegates had moved too fast in drafting the Protocol and were too optimistic in their expectation that governments would ratify it. "Seized with a mob psychology," he wrote, "the Geneva statesmen were carried away by fanatical zeal and were determined that at this very meeting they would draw up a Magna Charta of international peace." Addressing a luncheon of the International Press Association, Ishii told the story, familiar to all Japanese, of how Japan's three military unifiers of the sixteenth century responded to the question of what to do if a cuckoo would not sing. In the legendary tale, the first two recommended killing the bird or forcing it to sing. But Tokugawa Ieyasu showed his patience and wisdom by suggesting that one should wait around until it sang. Applying this story to the immediate issue of the Protocol, Ishii counseled,

My wish is that the League of Nations, whose mission it is to promote international peace, should be careful not to kill the cuckoo of peace but wait instead until it sings its sweet melody of its own accord. I think that this is the wisest policy in the present condition of the world.

Ishii believed that the episode of the Protocol illustrated “the folly of approaching big issues with haste and emotion.” Just as the patient Ieyasu instituted a long era of peace, so Ishii hoped that the painstaking and responsible work of the League would bring about effective procedures for arbitration of disputes.⁴¹ Ishii applied the same ethic of patient, deliberate work to the enterprise of disarmament.

The ambassador represented Japan for several years on the Preparatory Commission for the Reduction of Armament. In League meetings he consistently argued for arms limitation and never overlooked an opportunity to praise arms control. He lauded the results of the Washington Conference on the floor of the League Assembly in 1922. Writing eight years later, he reaffirmed that “the Washington Conference gave heart to the friends of world peace and invigorated the movement for disarmament all over the world.” He attributed the success of the Washington and London (1930) conferences to the consistent advocacy of arms control by the League of Nations.⁴²

Ishii had the opportunity to contribute directly in the enterprise of disarmament when he and Admiral Saitō Makoto were asked to be the Empire’s plenipotentiaries at the Geneva Naval Conference of 1927. The Geneva Conference was not a project of the League of Nations. Its intention was to bring the five naval powers of the Washington Conference together to address the unresolved issue of auxiliary ships. When France and Italy dropped out in the preparatory stages, the conference took the form of a tripartite — United States, Great Britain, and Japan — gathering. The Japanese delegation tried to get its British and American counterparts to accept a compromise plan, but to no avail, and the conference dissolved. The Japanese plenipotentiaries earned the respect of the entire parley, and newspapers in both the United Kingdom and the United States praised the Japanese attitude and efforts.⁴³

Ishii’s sympathies for disarmament were tempered by a realist’s understanding of the world. The absence of the United States and the Soviet Union from the League of Nations was reason enough to maintain a strong self-defense. “In this world,” he surmised, “it is essential to be both a good warrior and a good scholar.”⁴⁴

After a decade of Japanese involvement with the League, the retired ambassador looked back to posit the organization as the agent that had brought to fruition Japan’s claim to major power status:

In retrospect, after we won the war against Russia, our nation was accorded recognition as one of the eight great powers of the world. But this was nothing more

than a complimentary membership. After World War I we became a permanent member of the League of Nations Council, one of five such powers. This act was no mere compliment; Japan's aspirations became concrete reality. We gained genuine respect and authority. Our special privileges were not just the talk of the newspapers, but were given expression in the Versailles Treaty. So long as the Covenant and the Treaty exist, our special privileges will be protected. The accrual of a special position in the League of Nations carries with it weighty responsibilities. If the nation carries out its important and honorable duties, peace will be established through the League of Nations, and the will of the late Emperor will be fulfilled.⁴⁵

Writing in his 1930 memoir, Ishii was supremely confident of the efficacy of the League. He asserted that had the organization existed in 1914, Germany would have restrained itself from invading its neighbors and Serbia would have reported the Austrian ultimatum to the League Council.⁴⁶ Like Nitobe, he recalled how the comingling of diplomats at the headquarters of the League had led to friendly sentiments and in turn to genuine camaraderie. "Through daily association with the representatives of these states, a mutual knowledge of national affairs and local conditions was acquired, statistical reports were exchanged, political and commercial matters were discussed, friendship and benefit in many other ways were afforded." He noted that in Geneva he saw a great deal more of the French foreign minister as a colleague on the Council than he did as Japanese ambassador in Paris.⁴⁷

So, by word and deed, Ambassador Ishii demonstrated commitment to international order as framed in the League of Nations. It should be noted, however, that during the years 1920–1927, when he served in Europe, no major issue involving Japan came before the League. Like Nitobe, Ishii carved out his internationalist reputation while grappling with agendas that were essentially European. In Japan's relations with the United States, the major diplomatic issue of the decade — naval arms limitation — was settled not in Geneva but in Washington in 1921–1922. And, as in the case of Nitobe, we detect in Ishii's later Geneva career the impulse to defer to regional imperatives.

Breaking Ranks with Universalism

By the time Nitobe resigned from the service of the League in December 1926, the Secretariat had reached its pinnacle of prestige and power and Japan had elevated its international reputation considerably through its deportment in Geneva. He remained vocal in the assertion that "the League seems to me the only hope of the world at present." Yet one can detect a loss of his earlier assurance. His writings more openly complained about the League's failings and limitations. Though Ger-

many's admission in 1926 pleased him, the organization's Europe-centered agenda, the continuing aloofness of the United States, and the absence of the Soviet Union made it obvious that the League was not universal in scope. Back in Japan, he tried to assure his countrymen that "in these years Japan has lost nothing by her membership. The imponderable advantages she has gained more than justify her presence in that parliament of the world."⁴⁸

Like most Japanese, Ishii Kikujirō never consented to global order at the expense of regional order. Japanese who, like Ishii, were schooled in world affairs understood that concrete disputes between states had to be resolved on a local basis. Like all diplomats in Geneva, he observed in 1923 that Italy and Greece settled their competing claims to the Ionian Sea island of Corfu at a conference of ambassadors when Italy refused to accept the League's jurisdiction in the case. He also knew that a Japanese claim to major powerhood had to be based on regional predominance.

The regional impulse came to the surface in Ishii's enthusiastic endorsement of the Locarno Treaties when they were concluded by European nations in 1925. When this set of European security agreements was deposited with the League of Nations, Ishii rose in the Council to herald "this masterly work for peace—a work of historical importance." He declared that Japan, though a bystander in the negotiations at Locarno, was "deeply interested in this work of peace" and was "particularly happy to note that certain ideas entertained by Japan were there realized." His words that followed gave a clear indication of what those ideas were. After the fruitless escapade of the Geneva Protocol, the Japanese delegation to the League had concluded that it would be best

to confine the task of the League of Nations for the moment to the establishment of regional agreements; to extend these regional agreements, as far as circumstances permitted, to other parts of the world. . . . A regional agreement of the first importance was established by the Locarno Conference. It is hoped that this agreement will serve as a valuable mode for other regional agreements of the same character in other parts of the world.⁴⁹

When he reiterated this theme in 1928 in an article for the Japan League of Nations Association, Ishii was more specific about where the principle of regional accommodations could be applied:

The Geneva atmosphere relieved the tension between France and Germany and led to the Locarno Pact between them, but it did not stop there. It spread to all parts of the world, and now we see it, in the League nursery, forcing the growth of a Balkan Locarno pact and a Baltic Locarno pact. How far-reaching is the effect of the Geneva atmosphere may be judged from the fact that it is even giving rise to suggestions for a Pacific Locarno.⁵⁰

In the wake of Mukden and Japanese withdrawal from the League, some diplomatic thinkers would actually propose a Far Eastern Locarno pact.

New assignments awaited Ishii and Nitobe when they arrived home in Japan. Upon retirement from the Foreign Ministry in 1929, Ishii was appointed to the Privy Council. Two years later he accepted the presidency of the Japan League of Nations Association, a position made vacant by the death of founding president Shibusawa Eiichi. During Ishii's tenure as president, the organization reached its highest membership.⁵¹ Sixty-three-year-old Nitobe was given a seat in the House of Peers and an appointment to the Imperial Academy, and he was named advisory editor by the English-language *Osaka mainichi* and *Tokyo nichii* newspapers. His column of "Editorial Jottings" appeared daily on the back page, keeping his ideas before the international community in Japan. Through this mouthpiece he called on Japan to take a more active position in the League of Nations and to comply more fully with the resolutions of the International Labor Conferences. The League of Nations appointed the retired undersecretary to the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation; though he accepted the honor, he never returned to Europe for a meeting.⁵²

In 1929 Nitobe was named chairman of the Japanese Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations. In this capacity he served for four years on the Pacific Council of the IPR and headed the Japanese delegations to the Kyoto (October 1929), Shanghai (October 1931), and Banff (August 1933) conferences. As in the case of his Secretariat appointment, Nitobe's scholarly background, world experience, and reputation as a bridge builder made him the obvious choice to represent Japan in the IPR. The internationally minded intellectuals who made up the Japanese Council were already known to be "apostles of the Nitobe faith." At the core of this group were such Ichikō graduates as Takagi Yasaka, Tsurumi Yūsuke, Takayanagi Kenzō, and Maeda Tamon, who regarded Nitobe as their personal mentor. The Japanese Council of the IPR was truly an extension of Nitobe's shadow.⁵³ It was at the 1929 conference, where he acted as host, that Nitobe publicly parted ways with universalism.

In his keynote address to the Kyoto gathering, Nitobe referred to Geneva as "that world capital, the Mecca of international peace and cooperation," and rated the League of Nations "indispensable for the future of our species." But more telling than his benediction was Nitobe's call for a regionally based mechanism to supplement the Geneva order:

As the League grows in membership and geographical dimensions, it will presumably be compelled to conduct some of its business in regional congresses. For, though theoretically and ideologically the concern of one nation is the concern of the whole world, there are, in practice, international questions that affect

only restricted areas. Questions of this character can be best discussed by the parties interested in a regional gathering, under the general direction or oversight of the central body.

Nitobe suggested that the IPR could provide the model for such a regional institution.⁵⁴

Roundtables among the IPR delegates scrutinized in depth the notion of peace machinery for the Pacific, and in the discussion the Versailles order as then constituted came up wanting. Japanese delegate Rōyama Masamichi depicted existing systems as incapable of enforcing such multilateral arrangements as the Nine-Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, which had replaced the more effective bilateral agreements preceding Versailles. "It will be very necessary," Rōyama stated in a formal paper, "to consider means of developing a proper organization for their full enforcement in order that international relations in the Pacific in general, and in the restless regions in particular, may be regulated and adjusted in harmony with the provisions and intent of these more comprehensive agreements." Matsuoka Yōsuke, an expert on Japanese interests in Manchuria, was also a delegate to the Kyoto Conference. In a well-researched paper and a subsequent roundtable exchange with a Chinese political scientist, Matsuoka asserted the legality of the Japanese presence and influence in China's northeast. After Matsuoka carried the day for the Japanese entourage, delegation chairman Nitobe clasped Matsuoka's hands in warm appreciation. David J. Lu, biographer of Matsuoka, says that between the two at Kyoto there was, for the first time, "a meeting of minds." Matsuoka's smooth defense of Japanese treaty rights in this international setting would later be recalled when he was considered for appointment as special envoy to Geneva during the Manchurian crisis in 1932. It is significant that Rōyama and Matsuoka would later become advocates of an East Asian order to displace, rather than supplement, the Versailles system in the Orient.

The Chinese Delegation articulated widely held views when it expressed frank suspicions concerning the fairness of League procedures and the relevance of the system to Asia. China had received both injustice and neglect; the League was too far away, too absorbed in European affairs, and too much under the domination of the great powers. Other delegates added that the League, with its successes mainly in Europe, might reasonably be regarded as a European regional organization. In the Pacific, practical advance had been made mainly by regional conferences outside the League. Thus, the suggestions advanced by the keynoter were sustained in conference discussion.⁵⁵

The 1929 Kyoto Conference of the IPR provides ample evidence of a shift in Nitobe's world order view well before Mukden. The League had a positive role to play, but in its present form it could not be the instrument for order in East Asia.

Nitobe's universalistic principle that the concern of one nation is the concern of the whole world was displaced by regional schemes and bilateral approaches. Significantly, Nitobe's book *Japan*, published in 1931, stated that the 1922 termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had been a mistake.⁵⁶ Nitobe's *senpai* Woodrow Wilson, who had promoted the League as an alternative to such regional ententes, must have been turning in his grave.

Nitobe Inazō and Ishii Kikujirō served admirably as Japan's leading figures in the League of Nations. Both devoted their talents to make the League effective. They nurtured and basked in the Geneva spirit. But the acid test of their internationalism would come from 1931, when the Manchurian affair stirred Ishii's long-standing apprehensions about China-based threats to Japan, and when the League challenged Nitobe's firmly rooted perceptions of the Empire's prerogatives on the continent. The turmoil in northeast China would permanently separate Japan from the League of Nations. Both men tried to mediate the international estrangement that the incident created, but the chasm across the Pacific was too wide to bridge.

7

Crisis over Manchuria

If [the Japanese] will only consent to adopt the world's way I believe they could get all they really want and have peace at the same time.

—Lord Lytton, 1932

WHEN THE 1930S OPENED, Japan had been a charter member of the League of Nations and a permanent member of the League Council for a full decade. Japan had served conscientiously and effectively, and its diplomats and lay members of the Secretariat had carried out their tasks with distinction. Carping could be heard at home that the League was a European club and too distant to be a reliable mechanism to effect stability in East Asia, and continental adventurers in the Guandong Army schemed to extend the Empire in Manchuria. A few radical voices urged that Japan “return to Asia” and quit the League of Nations in order to break the international status quo.¹ But no one in 1930 contemplated that Japan’s tenure in the world body was limited, and there was no palpable conspiracy afoot to extract the Empire from Geneva. The extension of Japanese power in East Asia was embraced as a given by nearly all Japanese, and the vision of expansive power replicated the worldview of the European powers who dominated the League. So long as Japan maintained reasonably good ties to the powers, League membership would present no insurmountable obstacle to Imperial destiny. Ogata Sadako, who produced pathbreaking scholarship on the Manchurian Incident, summed up Japan’s stance in this instance as follows: “The clue to the Japanese reading of international affairs lies in the distinction Japan made between the condemnatory action of the great powers as League members and their compromising attitudes as pursuers of individual national interests.”²

Nonetheless, the late 1920s had brought new challenges to Japanese security and vital interests. China was recovering from the governmental fragmentation that had attended the fall of the Imperial institution in 1912, and it was congealing politically under Nationalist leadership. It was asserting its territorial sovereignty with new determination and effective means. The popular movement that had erupted when Japan insisted on retaining Shandong at the Paris Peace Confer-

ence had spawned a Communist Party and invigorated the nationalist movement. New modes of communication and transport hastened the spread and enlarged the effectiveness of both citizen movements and centralized government. Events culminated in 1927–1928 in the Northern Expedition, when the Nationalist armies under Chiang Kai-shek united much of the fragmented republic. Some warlords were subdued and other provincial hegemony threw their lot with the new regime in Nanjing. Among the latter was Zhang Xueliang, the “Young Marshall” who succeeded his father, Zhang Zuolin, as the leading military power in the three northeastern provinces at the time of Zuolin’s assassination by Japanese Army adventurers in 1928. Robust patriotic feelings were increasingly expressed in anti-Japanese propaganda and economic boycotts.

The Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin was growing in military strength, and Japan rightfully feared communist ideological influence on the Chinese nationalist movement. In 1929 the U.S. dollar collapsed, silk exports to the United States declined precipitously, and the economic props supporting international accommodationism were irrevocably weakened.

In response to the altered international environment, anxious voices in Japan called for an autonomous diplomacy to secure reliable markets, dependable sources of raw materials, territory to absorb Japan’s excess population, and a stable and defensible regional order amenable to the Empire’s leadership. Japan’s military action in Manchuria in 1931 and subsequent establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo brought Japan for the first time into direct confrontation with the League of Nations. Eighteen months after the opening volley, Japan announced its withdrawal from the organization.

The Manchurian Incident and the League

The course of events in 1931–1933 that led to Japan’s exit from the League of Nations is, needless to say, a vital segment of the saga of Japan’s relationship with the organization. The subject has been treated with thoroughness by respected scholars in Japan and Europe, and their works are readily available.³ Let it suffice here to summarize the major components of the 1931–1933 history and then to treat in more detail the ways in which major internationalist figures, whom we have met in the preceding chapters, dealt with Japanese military action and estrangement from the League.

On the night of 18 September 1931, Japanese railway guards reported that a bomb exploded on the South Manchurian Railway main line just north of Shenyang, known then internationally by its Manchu name of Mukden. Fighting between guards and Chinese troops followed, and by the next morning the Guangdong Army had occupied the city. Forthwith the army, despite orders from the General Staff in Tokyo not to expand the fighting, proceeded, with reinforcements

from Korea, to occupy much of southern Manchuria abreast the narrow railway zone where its presence was permitted by treaty. International concern increased as Japanese forces entered Qiqihar, north of the Soviet-controlled Chinese Eastern Railway, and invaded Jinzhou, distant from the railway zone and just north of the Great Wall. The attack on Jinzhou began on 9 October with aerial bombing.⁴ Prime Minister Wakatsuki Reijirō and Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō of the Minseitō Party were thwarted at nearly every turn in their efforts to corral the Guandong Army and return it to its base in the railway zone. A rush of nationalistic fever in the public and press made it difficult for voices of restraint, even within the Imperial Household, to be heeded. By November the army had moved into northern Manchuria, and the frustrated Wakatsuki cabinet resigned on 11 December. It was replaced by a Seiyūkai cabinet headed by veteran politician Inukai Tsuyoshi, which was even less effective in restoring discipline in the Imperial Army.

While some units of the Chinese Army, who reported to Zhang Xueliang, did put up resistance, the Nationalist government's policy in the main was not to resist militarily but rather to evoke international pressure to check the Japanese invaders. As early as 21 September, China brought the case to the attention of the powers and the League of Nations, asking under Article 11 of the Covenant for a meeting of the Council. China had recently taken its seat as a nonpermanent member. On the following day the Council passed a resolution that appealed "to the Chinese and Japanese Governments to refrain from any action which might aggravate the situation" and declared that the Council would endeavor, "in consultation with the Chinese and Japanese representatives, to find adequate means of enabling the two countries to withdraw troops immediately."⁵ In the ensuing weeks, the Council reiterated the demand that the parties disengage and the Japanese withdraw. Japan's first diplomatic response was to try to persuade the Chinese government to enter into bilateral talks rather than pursue the matter in the League. Yoshizawa Kenkichi (1874–1965), the Japanese delegate in the Council, told the body on 30 September that troop action had taken place to guard the South Manchurian Railway and protect rights and interests of Japanese citizens, and that Japan had no territorial designs. Despite Council resolutions and pained Japanese assurances, the Guandong Army moved forward with what seemed to be its premeditated scheme to subjugate all of Manchuria. The Japanese public was euphoric, and the General Staff and the government in time acquiesced. Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson on 7 January issued his Nonrecognition Doctrine, which specified that the United States did not "recognize any treaty or agreement" between China and Japan that impaired American treaty rights, "including those which related to the territorial and administrative integrity of China."⁶

In January 1932, fighting erupted between Chinese and Japanese troops in Shanghai, the commercial center of central China. Anti-Japanese boycotts had been effective in the city since 1926, and Japanese aggression in Manchuria exac-

erbated feelings in Shanghai against Japan. An attack on five Japanese on 18 January led to retaliation by Japanese expatriates. Riots and a set of official Japanese demands followed. Japan sent in warships and soldiers. Japanese planes bombed the Chapei district of Shanghai from the air, in full view of horrified expatriates, journalists, and film cameras of Western nations. The powers worked diplomatically to effect a truce, and the British minister to China, Sir Miles Lampson, finally succeeded in negotiations with Japanese Foreign Ministry special envoy Matsuoka Yōsuke. Not until 3 March did the fighting in Shanghai cease, and not before casualties registered 10,000 Chinese and 2,500 Japanese — more severe losses than in Manchuria. The spread of the fighting to Shanghai, where the powers' commercial interests were centered, impressed upon the international community the danger the Manchurian crisis represented to stability in East Asia. It evoked a shift of opinion in the minds of those Western observers who previously were sympathetic to Japan's exasperation in Manchuria with regard to treaty violations and threats to the enterprises and safety of its citizens.⁷

In February the League decided to send a commission of inquiry to the East to gather information and assess the situation. Ambassador Yoshizawa was successful in persuading the League to select a commission representing the great powers — including the United States. He was also able to influence its itinerary so that it visited China proper. There the commission would, Japan hoped, observe directly how Chinese disintegration threatened the interests of major nations. Headed by a British lord, Victor Bulwer-Lytton (1876–1947), it reached Tokyo to begin its work on 29 February. Before the commission left for China in mid-March, the Guandong Army had engineered the creation of the “independent” state of Manchukuo. It established a new capital at Shenyang, renamed Xinjing, and installed as head of state Pu Yi (1906–1967), the last, child emperor of the Qing (Manchu) dynasty, dethroned in Beijing in 1912. The inquiry moved to Nanjing and Beijing, then to Manchuria, and finally to Beijing, Tokyo, and Beijing again before returning to Europe in September. In China and Manchuria, the commission was accompanied by Wellington Koo as its Chinese assessor. Both China and Japan lobbied the group effectively, filtered the testimony it received, and poured lavish hospitality and what Ian Nish calls “high-quality propaganda” upon the commission members.⁸

In May, Lord Lytton met in Dalian with the Uchida Yasuya, president of the South Manchurian Railway. Uchida was a veteran diplomat who had twice held the office of foreign minister, including at the time of both the Paris Peace Conference and the Washington Naval Conference. He held the further distinction of Japanese signatory to the Pact of Paris. Uchida addressed the Manchurian affair in consonance with his long-standing conviction that Japan should act decisively to seize unusual opportunities when they appeared. When the Guandong Army campaign in Manchuria appeared unstoppable, the railway president swung quickly to embrace the army's scheme to establish an independent state. He reasoned that a pup-

pet state would be easier for the powers to swallow than direct territorial control by Japan. Placated by orderliness and lured by commercial opportunity in Manchuria, the powers would eventually come to accept the reality of Manchukuo. Uchida tried to persuade Lord Lytton that Japanese recognition of and assistance to Manchukuo would bring development to the region and provide a model of stability for China to emulate. When a “national unity” cabinet was formed under Admiral Saitō Makoto following the 15 May 1932 assassination of Premier Inukai, Uchida was prevailed upon to accept the foreign minister portfolio. The senior statesmen who ended the fourteen-year predominance of party cabinets believed that Uchida could bridge the policy conflict between the ministry and the military. By the time Uchida took up his post in July, sentiment in the press favored the immediate recognition of Manchukuo, and the Diet had passed, on 14 June, a unanimous resolution in favor. Matsuoka Yōsuke, who held a seat in the Diet, was a prime mover behind that resolution. Uchida’s aggressive stance in support of an independent state was mainstream. Uchida met again with the Lytton Commission when it returned to Tokyo soon after he became foreign minister. He conveyed the conviction that Manchukuo was an established fact, that it was born of the indigenous will of the Manchurian people, and that Japanese recognition was forthcoming. He also asserted that the Manchurian affair was a local issue best addressed by direct negotiations among the parties involved.⁹



Lord Lytton (foreground) and the commission of inquiry at the site of the alleged explosion on the South Manchurian Railway, north of Mukden, April 1932. From Mainichi Photobank.

The commission's final report was laid before the League Secretariat on 24 September, a few days after Japan formally recognized the state of Manchukuo. The document, along with a hundred-page set of "Japanese Observations," was discussed by the Council on 21–28 November. The Lytton Report was not an outright condemnation of Japan. The commission made every effort to be objective and to offer constructive recommendations. Some parts of it put Japan in a good light; others were strongly critical. It upheld Japanese colonial interests in the region of East Asia and recognized the special nature of Japanese rights in Manchuria. It advised that the administration of Manchuria should involve a large measure of autonomy but be consistent with "the sovereignty of China," with foreign consultants appointed by the League of Nations. It was critical of the rule of Zhang Xueliang in Manchuria and the deplorable state of political instability in China. Regarding the event of 18 September 1931, the commission stated that "the military operations of the Japanese troops during this night cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defense." The commission judged that the birth of Manchukuo was not a spontaneous act of the people of Manchuria and that independence "was only made possible by the presence of Japanese troops." Regarding the regime in Xinjing, the report stated that "the main political and administrative power rests in the hands of Japanese officials and advisers" and that "they have been constrained more and more to follow the direction of Japanese official authority."¹⁰

Foreign Minister Uchida Yasuya (front center) and Lord Lytton (front right) and the commission of inquiry at the Foreign Ministry, Tokyo, 7 July 1932. From Mainichi Photobank.



To represent Japan in the Council and Assembly deliberations over the Lytton Report, Japan sent Matsuoka Yōsuke (1880–1946) to Geneva as special envoy. Reputed for his straight talking and more articulate in English than any of the senior Japanese diplomats in Europe, Matsuoka was well equipped to be an aggressive proponent of the Japanese position. He had worked and studied in the United States and had been a junior diplomat at the Paris Peace Conference where the League was founded. He left the Foreign Ministry in 1921 to become a director of the South Manchurian Railway. In this act, Matsuoka signaled his preference for Manchuria over the ministry bureaucracy as a venue for creative statesmanship. He was also at heart an imperialist who believed that a Japanese upper hand in Manchuria was both deserved by, and vital to, his country. By the time he became vice president of the railway in 1929, his mind had processed many scenarios of a regional state under Japanese control. In 1932 he was held in esteem for his role in negotiating a truce in Shanghai. His selection as special envoy to Geneva also had the assent of both the civilians in the cabinet and the army. Matsuoka took his time accepting the summons, first suggesting that the assignment of an elder statesman like Makino Nobuaki would be more effective, especially for dealing with the domestic scene. After extensive consultations with Uchida and after Prince Saionji made assurances that he would try to restrain the military, Matsuoka agreed to go.¹¹ Like nearly all those Japanese who interacted with the League over Manchuria, Matsuoka deeply desired a solution in which Japan could achieve its Imperial goals and still remain in the League. In another replay of history, China sent Dr. Wellington Koo to Geneva to press its case.

Japan was hopeful that the matter could be concluded in the Council and not sent to the Assembly. In the larger body, smaller nations harbored sympathy for China and were disinclined to excuse the movement of the army of a powerful neighbor into a weak country. But Matsuoka behaved in a pugnacious manner and objected curtly to the presence of members of the Lytton Commission at the Council sessions. Historian Ian Nish observes,

Matsuoka and Uchida, and indeed Japan as a whole, appear to have lost the long-term perception of their national interest. By antagonizing the Council, they left it with little alternative but to refer the case to higher authority and give up the opportunity of conciliation under its auspices.¹²

The Assembly met to discuss the Manchurian question on 6 December. After stirring speeches from both sides, the body referred the matter to a mediation committee, the Committee of Nineteen, to draw up recommendations. Before the Assembly convened again, Japan's case was weakened by rumors that its troops were poised to push from Manchukuo into Rehe (Jehol), the province north of the

Great Wall. Efforts by Secretary-General Drummond and Sugimura Yōtarō, who as head of the Political Section was the highest-ranking Japanese in the Secretariat, to effect a compromise solution foundered on the Japanese government's refusal to budge on the principle that Manchukuo was distinct from China. On 24 February, the Assembly convened to consider the recommendation by the Committee of Nineteen. The committee's report included all but the last two chapters of the Lytton Report, but it stated recommendations that were essentially parallel to those sections omitted from the findings of the inquiry. The Assembly voted 42 to 1 to accept the report of the Committee of Nineteen. The one negative vote was Japan's. Thailand abstained.¹³ Matsuoka rose to intone his memorable words,

The Japanese Government now finds itself compelled to conclude that Japan and the other Members of the League entertain different views on the manner of achieving peace in the Far East, and the Japanese Government is obliged to feel that it has now reached the limit of its endeavors to cooperate with the League of Nations in regard to the Sino-Japanese differences.¹⁴

Then in an act recorded on film as the symbolic moment of Japan's break from world order, Matsuoka summoned the members of the Japanese delegation from their seats and left the hall. In both its solitary negative vote and the Japanese departure from the Assembly, the delegation followed instructions from Tokyo.



Matsuoka Yōsuke addressing the League of Nations Assembly in Geneva, immediately prior to walking out, 24 February 1933. From Mainichi Photobank.

A U.S. State Department official was deeply disturbed by the turn of events in Geneva. Hugh R. Wilson was minister to Switzerland and a delegate to the General Disarmament Conference then in progress. Japan's departure from the 24 February Assembly session, he wrote in his memoir, "remains indelibly printed on my mind." Wilson's reflection reveals that Matsuoka was not unpersuasive and that Japan's case evoked sympathy in one unexpected quarter:

Matsuoka's speech on that day in the Assembly was delivered with a passionate conviction far removed from his usual businesslike manner. He pointed out the danger of pillorying a great nation. He warned that the Assembly was driving Japan from its friendship with the West toward an inevitable development of a self-sustaining, uniquely Eastern position. He terminated by saying that as Christ was crucified on the Cross, so was Japan being crucified by the nations of the League.

... [W]hen I listened to Matsuoka, for the first time the gravest doubts arose as to the wisdom of the course which the Assembly and my country were pursuing. I began to have a conception of the rancor and resentment that public condemnation could bring upon a proud and powerful people. . . .

If the nations of the world feel strongly enough to condemn, they should feel strongly enough to use force, if necessary, to rectify a situation which they find so deplorable. To condemn only merely intensifies the heat. Condemnation creates a community of the damned who are forced outside the pale, who have nothing to lose by the violation of all laws of order and international good faith. It is exasperating without being efficacious. If it were only exasperating that would be bad enough, but it is worse, it is profoundly dangerous. The community of the damned can bring together unnatural allies, allies who in their hearts despise one another but who can unite in their hatred of the smug and respectable nations. . . .

I left the Assembly that spring afternoon of 1933 troubled in spirit as I have seldom been. Not only did such doubts regarding arraignment arise in me, but for the first time I began to question the nonrecognition policy. More and more as I thought it over I became conscious that we had entered a dead-end street. I could see no way out of this situation with dignity for either side.¹⁵

The Japanese walkout from the Assembly was not in itself an explicit declaration of withdrawal from the League of Nations. The Foreign Ministry press release that followed the Assembly vote expressed the hope that the League would "change its attitude" and cease relying on "academic and inapplicable" approaches to peace-keeping. It justified the Japan-Manchukuo relationship as one of the "regional understandings" legitimized in Article 21 of the Covenant. It denied that Japan had

any desire for “territorial gains or commercial advantages.” In anticipation of the Assembly vote, the cabinet had already decided unanimously on 20 February to secede from the League, but the move required an incremental process of consensus and sanction that took nearly the whole month of March. The European powers in the League, for their part, made no effort during these crucial weeks to mollify Japan. The invasion of Rehe and recent Japanese recalcitrance in the Council and Assembly debates dampened hopes that Japan could be induced to remain in the organization. Moreover, the powers were preoccupied with worries over the recent takeover of the German government by the Nazi Party and the withdrawal of Germany from the Disarmament Conference.¹⁶

The cabinet decision of 20 February to withdraw was made under tense circumstances of public and press clamor against the League and rumors of assassination plots. In the cabinet discussions, War Minister Araki Sadao (1877–1966) and Foreign Minister Uchida led the assault on the League’s refusal to accept the validity of Manchukuo, and the other ministers followed.¹⁷ It is ironic that Uchida had been foreign minister in 1919 when Japan, for pragmatic reasons, threw its lot with the League at the Paris Peace Conference. Desiring the sanction of the throne, the cabinet asked for an Imperial rescript. The Privy Council in its advisory role to the Emperor took up the matter and appointed a committee to review the question of withdrawal. Among the committee’s nine members was Ishii Kikujirō. The committee’s unanimous report, dated 22 March, began by affirming the peacemaking spirit of the League of Nations. It stressed the peculiar circumstances in China and reiterated Japan’s position that it was inappropriate to apply the general principles and procedures of international law there. The Empire, it said, had tried to point out the unfairness and mistakes of the Lytton Report, but the Council, the Committee of Nineteen, and the Assembly had ignored Japan’s objections. Japan could not accept the demand that it withdraw its forces to the railway zone and recognize the sovereignty of China over Manchuria: “Because of our total disagreement with the League of Nations regarding peacekeeping policy — especially regarding the Orient — there is no reason to continue cooperation with the League.” Reflecting on the fourteen-year relationship between Japan and the League, the report stated that the League from the start had been blind to conditions in the Far East, especially in regard to the unique Sino-Japanese relationship. League investigations and discussions in the immediate case had been marked by superficial observation, empty speculation, and mistaken interpretations of international law and treaties. The attitudes of the League, it said, “are fundamentally contrary to ours.” The report, reflecting the Emperor’s known displeasure over the Guandong Army’s indiscipline, admonished the need for careful formulation of the Empire’s future policies, the necessity of a friendlier relationship with the powers, and the “avoidance of incidents.” In that spirit, Japan would continue its sincere participation in

disarmament conferences and international projects for the security and welfare of humankind. It called upon China to resolve disputes by direct negotiation with Japan and warned that Japan would use military force to resist any sanctions or threat to Japan's Pacific island mandates consequent to its withdrawal from the League.¹⁸

The full Privy Council recommended withdrawal. After difficult negotiations over the wording, the Emperor issued a rescript on 27 March. It expressed the Emperor's personal regret that Japan had withdrawn and his hope that good relations with other nations would be restored. He maintained that withdrawal did not signify that Japan would "isolate itself thereby from the fraternity of nations."¹⁹

On the same day, the foreign minister formally notified the secretary-general by telegram of the decision to withdraw. The notification did not state the Emperor's sentiments of regret but cataloged Japan's dissatisfaction that the League applied international law and the Covenant to the situation in a China "characterized by extreme confusion and complexity and by many abnormal and exceptional features." The League was mistaken in its assessment of the moves taken by the Japanese Army following 18 September and the "actual circumstances that led to the formation of Manchukuo." Action by the League could never be "of any possible service in securing enduring peace in these regions." The statement concluded,

For these reasons, and because of the profound differences of opinion existing between Japan and the majority of the League in their interpretation of the Covenant and of other treaties, the Japanese Government have been led to realize the existence of an irreconcilable divergence of views, dividing Japan and the League on policies of peace, and especially as regards the fundamental principles to be followed in the establishment of a durable peace in the Far East. The Japanese Government, believing that, in these circumstances, there remains no room for further co-operation, hereby gives notice, in accordance with the provisions of Article I, paragraph 3, of the Covenant, of the intention of Japan to withdraw from the League of Nations.²⁰

As stipulated in the Covenant, the withdrawal did not take effect until the lapse of a waiting period of two years. Hence Japan's departure from the League is dated 26 March 1935. During the waiting period Japan did not send representatives to Council and Assembly meetings. However, Japan continued for five more years to participate in and support financially the work of the subsidiary organizations of the League.

Exhausted from his travail in the Council and the Assembly and disappointed by his failure to effect a satisfactory solution, Japanese special envoy Matsuoka began a long journey home. In Germany, where he met the new National Socialist

government, he made a statement to the press in which he called Germany "the one and only country the history of which shows many parallels with that of Japan and which also fights for recognition and its place in the eyes of the world."²¹ He passed through The Hague and addressed a radio audience in London before sailing to New York. He intended to dialogue with the American people and correct misapprehensions about Japan and its policies. In New York, Boston, and Chicago, he spoke to gatherings of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Japan Society, and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce. In Washington he met with Secretary of State Cordell Hull and recently inaugurated President Franklin Roosevelt, who told a press conference that he had enjoyed "a very pleasant conversation with Mr. Matsuoka." He engaged in press interviews and radio broadcasts on CBS and NBC as he crossed the country, ending up at his alma mater, the University of Oregon.²² In a formal address at the university, Matsuoka praised the new nation of Manchukuo: "The new government is a better one than the people of Manchuria have ever known before. It is already a better government than any that exists in any part of China proper. Japan has freed the people of Manchuria and they know and appreciate it." While Japan and the League were both committed to the cause of peace, he noted, "the League, far away at Geneva, is indulging in dreams, while Japan, right on the spot, cannot afford to dream. She is today actually fighting for her very existence."²³

Matsuoka employed his direct, accusatory manner in speech after speech. In a radio broadcast he alleged that the China's anti-Japanese campaign was inspired by American missionaries and led by Chinese educated in American universities. Ultimately, he warned, these Chinese would induce the United States to fight a war with Japan. He noted that he himself was a Christian and an admirer of many missionaries and philanthropists in China, but he asserted that "as a whole the body of missionaries has become a group of propagandists among Americans in behalf of China and opposed to Japan." Bemoaning the impact of American attitudes on other nations, he complained, "I feel that Japan would be a member of the League of Nations today had it not been for American influence upon the members of that organization."

Since the Russo-Japanese War, he continued, "it was the Japanese who developed Manchuria along modern lines. It was we who prevented the civil wars of China from spreading to Manchuria, who made Manchuria so desirable a land that millions of Chinese migrated to it." The purpose of recent Japanese action, he said, was "to assist the newly organized Manchukuo government to establish law and order in Manchuria," a region that "China has never, in all her history, ruled." In Geneva he had tried to make the League of Nations understand the facts of the situation, but the League had already made up its mind against Japan. Matsuoka took comfort in the justness of Japan's project and the belief that his stand at the League had made it "a wiser body of men":

There is little doubt that among the more intelligent and experienced members of that body the opinion prevailed that Japan had ample reason for her action.

The League had before it a theoretical problem. Japan has before her a practical one. We deplore our disagreement with the League, but we feel we had no other course. We had to promote the security of our position and the peace of the Far East. We cannot permit the danger of Communism to spread farther into any part of our sphere of the world.

We have done a good job in Manchuria. As American newspaper correspondents reported a few weeks ago, the people of Jehol Province came out to welcome the Japanese and Manchukuo troops, not as aggressors or invaders but as benefactors and liberators. That tells the tale.²⁴

The Reaction of Internationalists

Japanese internationalists, even those closely identified professionally and ideologically with the League of Nations, proved themselves in the final analysis to be capable of acquiescence in their nation's aggression in Manchuria and defiance of international organization. The League of Nations Association of Japan attributed the conflict in Manchuria to rampant anti-Japanese campaigns, anarchy, and irresponsible nationalism. The lead article of the December 1932 issue of *Kokusai chishiki* criticized the League for its lack of understanding of the "peculiar and complicated situation in the Far East." It called for the establishment of a permanent committee of the League of Nations in that part of the world.²⁵

Nonetheless, during the months of the Manchurian crisis some members of the association spoke out in ways that revealed continuing commitment to the League of Nations. One such spokesman was Yamakawa Tadao, vice president and consistent leader of the association since its founding in 1920. Yamakawa was a former member of the Foreign Ministry, seconded to the association. His articles in support of the League and international mechanisms for peace were ubiquitous in the association's organ, *Kokusai chishiki*, throughout the 1920s, and tellingly scarce after 1933. In September 1932 his article "Should Japan Leave the League?" was printed in the new English-language magazine *Contemporary Japan*. Yamakawa laid out the reasons commonly voiced in Japan for withdrawal, beginning with the organization's failure to comprehend Japan's project in Manchuria and its propensity to apply European precedents to Far Eastern disputes. He then listed arguments for Japan's remaining in the League: to perpetuate the mandate of the Pacific islands, to secure a podium from which to make Japan's policies understood, and to certify Japan's past contributions in the League. He closed with a resounding statement of the value of the League's work:

With all its imperfections, in spite of the many ways in which its machinery has been used in the service of sectional interests, in spite of its being in many respects the custodian of the status quo rather than of justice in the completest sense of the word, the League is still the most inspiring organization that mankind has so far evolved, perhaps the only definite good that the Great War produced. . . . The imperfections of today will become the perfections of tomorrow, only if the nations work to that end. In this task Japan, as one of the great Powers, has an important part to play. She should not and, the present writer hopes and believes, will not, renounce what is at once an international duty and a national service.²⁶

Another member of the board of the League of Nations Association was Yoshino Sakuzō, professor of political history at Tokyo University, columnist for the widely read journal *Chūō kōron*, and early sympathizer with the diplomatic ideas of Woodrow Wilson. Through the 1920s Yoshino had become sympathetic to the nationalist aspirations of China. His affirmation of a Monroe Doctrine for East Asia under Japanese leadership was adjusted to require self-determined Chinese participation in the enterprise. At the time of the 1928 Jinan Incident, he rejected the policy of armed intervention pressed by the Tanaka Giichi cabinet, arriving at a posture similar to that of Shidehara Kijūrō, whereby the extension of Japanese influence should proceed without the use of military force.

When the Manchurian Incident first broke out, Yoshino was bold in labeling the army's action "aggressionist imperialism" and the notion of an independent Manchukuo as "a breach of the Nine-Power Treaty." As the atmosphere of war fever and intimidation cast its pall over writers, Yoshino as late as December 1932 — and shortly before his death — argued, in defiance of the official line, that Manchuria was in fact part of China and that the new state of Manchukuo could not exist without Japanese support.²⁷ Yoshino died in March 1933 before Japan's secession from the League was formally announced.

In the context of burgeoning sentiment to quit the League, Yokota Kisaburō (1896–1993) wrote in bold opposition. Yokota was a leading figure in the Japan Council of the IPR and an international law scholar at Tokyo University. Unlike other pro-League internationalists, Yokota denied that army moves in Manchuria were acts of self-defense. He justified League intervention and spoke favorably of the Stimson Nonrecognition Doctrine. Yokota wrote not on the basis of any sentimental attachment to universalism or the League, but out of his conviction that international law, the foundation for stability, must be strengthened.²⁸ Soon, Yokota found it hard to publish his views in mainstream organs and resorted to expression in university newspapers and women's magazines. In an early 1933 piece titled "What to Expect after Withdrawal from the League," Yokota described to a

women's audience a gloomy scenario of consequences. Japan's right to the Pacific mandates will be questioned, he said, and the legal issues are by no means clear. If Japan is asked to transfer the mandate to another power, Japan will lose face internationally and incur "moral and legal criticism." Japan's international isolation, already displayed in a 13 to 1 vote in the Council and a 42 to 1 vote in the Assembly, will be perpetuated. Increased military expenses will bring pressure on the Japanese economy and "a burden to domestic living conditions." If Japan remains within the League, it will have more stable relations with the United States, England, and Russia, nations whose influence in East Asia is substantial. Yokota warned in closing that "we might have to show deference to others and compromise. . . . We cannot maintain the present truculent attitude."²⁹

Among Japanese in Geneva, Undersecretary-General Sugimura Yōtarō showed a grief that was palpable. Sugimura was head of the Secretariat's Political Section and a genuine universalist. During the crisis over Manchuria, he had worked assiduously behind the scenes with Secretary General Drummond to craft a compromise that would have kept Japan within the League. He acknowledged that the inability to achieve a workable formula was an "indescribable disappointment" and a personal failure that left him heartbroken. He regretted that, in its departure, Japan sacrificed the stature it had earned in the halls of Geneva: "Japan's position in the League which my superiors helped build up by ceaseless labor was becoming more elevated and stronger year by year. In its international contributions, the future was bright for the Yamato race." When Japan departed Geneva, Sugimura was obliged to resign from the Secretariat and took a leave in the Bernese Oberland for recuperation and contemplation. There he wrote a memoir in which he voiced veiled criticism of his country's foreign policy. In place of "rash action" and "head-long rush," Japan should return to the prudence of *taisei junnō*:

Japan's international policy must be established solely upon our heritage, national conscience, and national faith. But in these times our countrymen must by all means develop national policy by looking at the world broadly, taking the distant future into consideration, and, on the basis of comprehension of the overall situation, discerning the changes of the times and the trends in international affairs.

When he returned to Japan, Sugimura was rumored to be a target for assassination. He subsequently was appointed ambassador to Rome (1934–1937), where his anti-Axis sentiments were an irritation to the host government. His death from cancer in 1939 removed him from the scene before Japan experienced the worst consequences of its defiance of universal order.³⁰

The withdrawal of Japan from the League in 1933 naturally brought grief and

frustration to the officers of the League of Nations Association. It was a denouement they would have given almost anything to avoid. Yet the association took no action to protest Japan's resignation. The officers explained that Japan had no other option when faced with the rigidity of the Assembly. Honorary president Sakatani Yoshirō expressed the hope that, during the mandatory two-year waiting period before Japan's withdrawal became effective, the League would reconsider its position on the Manchurian problem and act in a more conciliatory manner.³¹ The board met on 6 March to discuss whether the association should continue. Ishii Kikujirō argued strongly that despite Japanese withdrawal, Japan needed to send a signal to the world that it was still active in world affairs. To sustain the League of Nations Association would demonstrate continued engagement. His will prevailed, though the organization changed its name to Nihon Kokusai Kyōkai (Japan International Association) and Foreign Ministry funding was sharply reduced.³²

Similar adjustments seem to have been made in the Japan Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations. Council member Tsurumi Yūsuke journeyed to the United States and Europe from January 1932 to convey the Japanese position on the Manchurian affair. Council chair and Tsurumi's former teacher Nitobe Inazō would follow him three months later on a similar mission to North America. Tsurumi's trip was backed financially by the Foreign Ministry. At the Banff Conference of the IPR in August 1933, Japanese delegates presented papers that toed the official line. The papers on economy, strongly influenced by Professor Rōyama Masamichi, argued for the rationalization and state control of industry as an antidote to the Depression. In a paper treated in more detail in the next chapter, Takagi Yasaka and Yokota Kisaburō proposed a regional security framework as an alternative to security dependence on the League of Nations. Non-Japanese delegates criticized the paper for its resemblance to Japanese governmental policy.³³

Japanese of international standing were directly involved in efforts to vindicate before foreign audiences Japanese policy and actions in Manchuria. The Foreign Ministry, through its Information Division, arranged or encouraged lecture tours and speaking engagements by diplomats and laypersons in Europe and especially the United States — where press opinion in the years 1931–1933 was markedly more hostile than it was across the Atlantic. The ministry had an established tradition of orchestrating propaganda tours in times of crisis in East Asia. Kaneko Kentarō was dispatched on a similar mission during the Russo-Japanese War and found fellow Harvard graduate President Theodore Roosevelt a sympathetic listener.³⁴ Some tours in the early 1930s are known to have been funded by the ministry. Other lecturers received at least briefings by ministry and other officials before their departure from Japan. The ministry also arranged for the envoys to meet with government leaders abroad. Following in the train of Matsuoka and Tsurumi, others such as Nitobe Inazō, Ishii Kikujirō, and labor leader Suzuki Bunji traveled overseas in

the effort to gain acceptance of the government's policies. Suzuki went to Europe in November–December 1932, tasked with persuading socialist and labor parties of the validity of Japan's position. He was not well received, particularly by socialists who viewed him as a mouthpiece of the government. Across America, Japanese consuls maintained rigorous speaking schedules, with messages tailored to labor, business, and community groups. They spoke on university campuses, in churches, and to civic clubs. Engaging in cultural diplomacy, a large Japanese contingent journeyed to the Los Angeles Olympic Games in the summer of 1932. Hoping that the image of a nation devoted to sports would mute anti-Japanese feeling, Japanese officials at Los Angeles successfully lobbied the International Olympic Committee to give Japan the nod to host the Olympiad in Tokyo in 1940. The ministry intended that personal diplomacy counter the impression that Japan was acting with disregard for popular sentiments in other countries. It made available to consulates some four thousand copies of a book by Japanese journalist Kawakami Kiyoshi, *Manchoukuo: Child of Conflict*, which sought to persuade Americans that they had common cause with Japan in Manchuria. "For the first time in history," wrote Kawakami, "a non-white race has undertaken to carry the white man's burden."³⁵ In the following pages, we look closely at the propaganda forays of Nitobe and Ishii.

Nitobe Inazō

The explosion on the South Manchurian Railway on 18 September 1931 confronted Nitobe Inazō with the most frustrating dilemma of his internationalist career. Retired from the Secretariat since 1926, the Quaker educator had been devoting his time to chairing the Japanese Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

In the midst of tense exchanges between Tokyo and Geneva as Japanese forces spread throughout Manchuria, the fourth conference of the IPR convened in Shanghai from 21 October 1931. Nitobe headed the Japanese delegation, as he had two years earlier in Kyoto. As in the preceding conference, the question of diplomatic machinery for the Pacific was the central political issue, and the immediacy of the Manchurian crisis made the discussion all the more poignant. Nitobe's direct input on this question is not recorded, but Takayanagi Kenzō (1887–1967), a Nitobe protégé and professor of the Law Faculty of Tokyo University, made a formal presentation of the Japanese delegation's position in which he tackled the universalism-regionalism problem head-on:

It seems to me that the conception of universalism — the League as a universal organ, to deal with all disputes arising throughout the world — is a very valuable one. There should not be too many competing organs. There is much justifica-

tion for that argument. But that conception may well be reconciled with an attempt to set up here in the Pacific an organ to investigate in a realistic way the conditions in China and Japan, and ultimately to solve the international difficulties in the Pacific area. Arrangements may be made in such a way that such an organ will not do away with the idea of the universality of the League.

Takayanagi then took up the issue of Manchuria, contending that a League without American and Soviet representation could not deal adequately with such complex matters as Chinese nationalism and Soviet designs on the region. His conclusion was a clear challenge to existing League machinery:

My main thesis tonight is that Geneva is too far away to appreciate the complex conditions obtaining in the Far East. Members of the League Council may fall into the error of judging things by superficial observation of events and the mere study of the provisions of the treaties contained in MacMurray. A permanent body, either a part of the League or an independent unit affiliated with the League, and with America and Russia cooperating, is highly desirable for dealing, not only with the Manchurian question, but with questions relating to the whole international situation in the Orient.

It will be recalled that China reacted to the Mukden affair by throwing its fate into the hands of the League and the powers. Not unexpectedly, the Chinese IPR delegation at Shanghai reversed its Kyoto position that the League was too distant to be a force for order in East Asia. The Chinese now argued that the mechanisms of the League were indeed adequate for the present situation.³⁶

These were difficult days for Inazō and his wife, Mary. As though uncontrollable events, soul-searching, and constant danger of assassination to internationalist figures in Japan were not enough, Nitobe was suffering from a crippling back ailment. While her husband was at the IPR conference in Shanghai, Mary wrote that she felt "as though I had lived through a life-time in the past month." She opined in a letter to her nephew in Philadelphia that the League in its initial effort to restrain Japan "went off half-cocked."³⁷ Despite his personal pain over the Japanese invasion and instigation of Manchukuo, Nitobe Inazō went public and international as an apologist for Japanese continental policy. While the Guandong Army was machinating the creation of the new "independent" state, Nitobe proposed that it represented an embodiment of President Wilson's doctrine of national self-determination. "Nothing would have pleased Mr. Wilson more than . . . the Mongol-Manchurian state," he told readers of the *Osaka mainichi*.³⁸

Business related to the Institution of Pacific Relations provided Nitobe the occasion to take his message to the United States and Canada in two trips in 1932 and

1933. He entered the United States in defiance of his vow not to set foot in America while the Immigration Act was in force. He went, he said, not to justify Japan's behavior but to explain why Japan had followed its course of action in Manchuria. He was impelled by his lifelong, humanist conviction that correct knowledge brings understanding and peace. He did not deny that his government deserved criticism, but he resolved to speak advice to Japan at home and not abroad. As he traversed the United States and Canada, he tried to place Japanese policy in perspective — not only the perspective of the real circumstances of Asia, but also the perspective of the expansionist and regional hegemonic impulses that had shaped the historical development of the United States. For this task Nitobe — Quaker Christian, Hopkins-educated student of America, retired League official — was as qualified as any Japanese could be. Into this mission he poured all the arts of articulation and persuasion he possessed. His message was not well received or understood. Even some of his friends regarded the trip as a mistake and his message defensive and nationally self-serving. His closest in-law, J. Passmore Elkinton, concluded that Nitobe had subordinated his pacifist convictions to loyalty to his government.³⁹

Disembarking in California in April 1932, Nitobe headed for the East Coast, telling reporters along the way that he had come to study American opinion, correct misinformation, and confront American prejudices with regard to Japan's China policies. He denied any Japanese intent to colonize Manchuria and expressed confidence that knowledge of the truth would cause Americans, "with their common sense and idealism," to moderate their judgment of Japan.⁴⁰ In New York he addressed a nationwide radio audience on "Japan and the League of Nations." He depicted a China that "does not or cannot function as a sovereign state, in the modern sense of the term." He warned, prophetically for sure, that if the League refused to "recognize the justice of our claim which involves our honor and our very existence as a nation," Japan would withdraw and "carve out, unaided and alone, her own destiny."⁴¹

After a polite interview on 1 June with President Herbert Hoover, Nitobe had a more substantial and apparently unconvincing session with Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson. In a subsequent radio interview Nitobe castigated the Stimson Doctrine as a "hair-splitting interpretation" of the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Counseling forbearance and moral suasion, he argued that the ideas of the Peace Pact could be implemented only incrementally over time. To rush that day by clamping the treaty rigidly on a nation whose self-preservation was at stake would destroy the treaty. "Nations will not offer themselves for martyrdom for an interpretation of a pact," he said. Citing the historical cases of Panama, Outer Mongolia, and the Nanjing government of China, Nitobe tried to vindicate the helping role of an outside power in the birth of Manchukuo. Why, he asked, should such action be right in one place and wrong in another? The American secretary of state's nonrecogni-

tion policy was, he contended, a replay of the hated Triple Intervention of 1895.⁴² Expanding on the allegation of American hypocrisy in another speech, Nitobe asked Americans how they had responded to disturbances in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and he reminded them that they had sent gunboats to Haiti in 1915 when there was a faint rumor of German interference. With reference to the winning of the West, he said, "I do not know by what title you got this vast territory from its occupants — perhaps not always by fair means, but now no one questions your right to it." He chafed, "We have learned many things from America, especially in dealing with neighboring unstable governments, and when we put the lessons into practice we are severely criticized by our teacher."⁴³

In many instances Nitobe and Matsuoka read from the same script. Both charged North American missionaries with creating misunderstanding of the situation in China. "My advice to missionaries," Nitobe told a Toronto audience, "is to keep their hands off Chinese internal politics and international questions. They are sent out to teach the gospel to the Chinese people as men, not as politicians." China and Japan should work out their disagreements bilaterally, he asserted, without the third-party interference of missionaries, the United States, or the League of Nations. Like Matsuoka in Geneva, Nitobe pleaded with the West not to relegate Japan to the company of the condemned. He warned that an ostracized nation whose honor was challenged might take even more extreme actions. He foresaw that the nonrecognition policy would evoke an autonomous policy for Japan, a policy deaf to the restraints of the League, the Peace Pact, or any other multilateral mechanism.⁴⁴

When in 1925 no vital interest of Japan was at issue in the League of Nations, Nitobe had told his countrymen that the stature of a permanent Council seat was adequate reason for adhering to the League of Nations. Now in 1932 when a perceived lifeline of Japan was challenged by the organization, his message implied that no amount of international favor was worth capitulation to League directives. Nitobe spoke in North America as though Japan's fate hung in the balance. He also spoke from the heart, not as a mere dutiful mouthpiece of the national line. His speeches at home and his correspondence give no cause to believe that in addressing the North American public he was anything less than sincere.⁴⁵ Like Matsuoka, Nitobe was ultimately frustrated in the dream that Japan could be the predominant power in East Asia and remain in the League too.

Nitobe's crash course on mutual understanding in the case of the Manchurian crisis was doomed to failure from the start. His North American audiences showed little empathy for the exigencies that moved Japan. When Matsuoka Yōsuke walked out of the League of Nations Assembly in February 1933, Nitobe consoled himself with the rationale that it was the League that had failed Japan. Small-power members had goaded the League into misapplying the Covenant "like lawyers" in a nar-

row and technical way, violating the broad and tolerant intentions of the statesmen who had drafted it. He urged his countrymen to renew their commitment to international comity. Speaking at the fifth IPR conference in Banff in August 1933, he issued a final warning about "the dark forces of intolerance born of ignorance."⁴⁶ A few days later Nitobe took ill and died.

Ishii Kikujirō

After the Manchurian Incident erupted, Ishii Kikujirō also became heavily involved in the effort to persuade the world of the rightness of Japan's policy. The retired ambassador to Paris and frequent presence in Geneva in the 1920s had done much to advance the cause and effectiveness of the League in Europe and Japan. Since 1927 he had been serving as a member of the Privy Council and president of the Japan League of Nations Association.

Though no longer an officer in the Foreign Ministry, Ishii during this period was able to secure insider knowledge through his nephew Shiratori Toshio (1887–1949), who was head of the Information Division of the ministry. Shiratori was associated with the aggressive Renovationist Clique among ministry officials and later in the decade was numbered among its "axis faction."⁴⁷ Shiratori confirmed Ishii's suspicions that the incident in Mukden had been provoked by young officers in the field, without the initial support of top officials in the War Ministry and the army General Staff. Ishii believed that insubordinate action in the field was a vital threat to the nation, and he raised pointed questions in meetings of the Privy Council during 1932. He made an issue of the report that a commander in Korea had moved troops across a national border into Manchuria without consultation with the General Staff and the Foreign Ministry. On 28 October he complained in the Privy Council about aerial bombing in northern Manchuria, again carried out without the prior knowledge of the chief of staff or the Foreign Ministry. Ishii lamented that because of such strident actions by the military, Japan had become isolated internationally. A situation that might have been resolved in Sino-Japanese negotiations had now become a matter between Japan and the League of Nations.⁴⁸ His conservative approach could also stem from the Privy Council's long-standing role as a defender of Imperial prerogatives, and it is now known that the Emperor was agitated by indiscipline in the Guandong Army.

When Ishii expressed himself in public, however, he swallowed his compunctions about military insubordination. Focusing on the broader issues of Sino-Japanese relations and the political state of Manchuria, he consistently spoke in support of the actions of the Japanese military and government. In speeches and articles in 1932 and 1933, he argued dispassionately, with conclusions developed logically from his basic assumptions about foreign conspiracies in China and the

vital threat that Chinese disorder, duplicity, and citizen boycotts posed to Japan's survival. As a veteran diplomat with an established, internationalist reputation in America and Europe, his apologia were publicized by Japan in the effort to allay Western fears that atavistic militarism had overwhelmed Japan. In one instance, Prime Minister Inukai arranged for Ishii and five "liberals" associated with the Japan League of Nations Association to send a letter to the London *Times* (published 27 February 1932) denying that Japan was "launching on a course of military domination" in China. The writers asserted that Japanese action in Manchuria had been a defensive response by legally stationed Japanese troops to moves by Chinese warlord bandits "who obey no will but their own." The United States, they ventured, would surely pursue similar measures were the Panama Canal Zone threatened.⁴⁹

The Lytton Commission came to Tokyo on 29 February 1932, before it went to China and Manchuria. Ishii, as a veteran associate of the League and president of the Japan League of Nations Association, was selected to play a visible role before the entourage in the vindication of Japan's position. Lytton and Ishii had striking parallels in their careers. Lytton had represented a nation (India) in the League of Nations and was an officer in the League of Nations Union in his home nation of Britain. When the commission arrived, Ishii had private discussions with Lytton and made a prepared presentation to the assembled commission on 3 March. He began by assuring the group that the present situation in China should not be viewed as a sign of either Japanese militarism or Japanese disaffection for the League of Nations. He recounted how Shidehara Kijūrō, foreign minister from 1929 to 1932, had left no stone unturned in his efforts to "settle by mutual concession the numerous important questions pending between the two countries. But all was in vain." Chinese generals totally disregarded Japan's treaty rights and international standards of propriety in their program of "Recovery of Rights." Japan had acted in Manchuria out of self-defense, when all conciliatory avenues of redress had been exhausted. Ishii defended Japanese policy from every conceivable angle and expressed doubt that the machinery of the League was competent to deal with the situation in China.

Ishii went on to complain that under the influence of Wilsonian ideology and the League of Nations Covenant, self-determination had been perverted into license to break treaty engagements that people judged to be inconvenient. Nowhere were these abuses more common than in China. When the Chinese had proceeded to strike Japan at the heart of her interests in China — that is, in Manchuria — Japanese patience and forbearance had reached their limits. Ishii closed by calling upon the League of Nations and the Pact of Paris to recognize boycotts as economic aggression and acts of war, and self-defense as a legitimate recourse for the strong. Lytton was not impressed and wrote Lady Lytton expressing his disappointment in Ishii. He was particularly dismayed by Ishii's assertion that Shidehara's policy

of moderation toward China had failed and that the time had come to teach China a lesson. Ishii's prepared remarks to the Lytton Commission were published the following June in the inaugural issue of the English-language magazine *Contemporary Japan*.⁵⁰

Four months later the League of Nations Association published in booklet form an essay by Ishii titled "Manchukuo and the Manchurian Question." Whereas Nitobe would have approached this subject by attacking China's qualifications as a nation-state, Ishii rather described a series of patterns of pretentious behavior. China, he wrote, historically made outlandish claims over border regions. It treated these regions with disinterest and neglect, until a challenge to Chinese sovereignty by some foreign force provoked China to assert its hegemony in that area. This had been the case in Annam, when the French challenge evoked the Chinese assertion — never previously actualized — of Chinese suzerainty. Only once or twice in its long history had China actually ruled Mongolia, Manchuria, and Korea; in fact for longer stretches of time, China was ruled by its border peoples. When China broke free of Manchurian rule in 1912, the republican government simply confiscated Manchuria and Mongolia, rather than restoring them to their rightful rulers. Even then, the northeast region returned to near autonomy under warlord Zhang Zuolin, who at least twice proposed alliances with foreign countries. One border area after another has been separating from the heartland: Siam, Annam, Burma, Korea, Tibet, and recently Manchuria and Mongolia. "The wonder is," wrote Ishii, "that China could have succeeded in maintaining until recent times her extravagant and often baseless pretensions of sovereignty or suzerainty over regions so extensive and so scattered." The claim that Japan created Manchukuo was "unfounded and impudent"; rather, Manchukuo's birth was "the natural outcome of a deeply rooted force." As such, the independence of Manchukuo was outside the purview of the Nine-Power Treaty, the League of Nations, and the Pact of Paris.⁵¹

On 27 March 1933, Ishii addressed a conference of government officials convened by the Emperor to address the state of Japan's foreign relations in the wake of the nation's withdrawal from the League. Ishii's presentation completely toed the official line. Despite Japan's support for League activities since the organization's inception, the League had denied Japan's right of self-defense in the Manchurian situation. Contrary to the accusations made in Geneva, Japan did not instigate the founding of Manchukuo. Under pressure from small states, the League had lost its sense of judgment. But the day will come, he said, when the League of Nations will recognize its error and welcome Japan back.

In the summer of 1933, representatives of leading nations met in London to explore means of combating the World Depression. Newly inaugurated President Franklin Roosevelt invited several of the London Economic Conference delegates to come to Washington for preliminary, informal discussions during April and

May. Ishii was prevailed upon by the government of Japan to accept appointment as one of Japan's two delegates. He was solicited not only because of his expertise as a retired diplomat and his prior experience in Europe, but also because his persona might mute some of the hostility generated by Japan's resignation from the League of Nations earlier that year. Viscount Ishii took this mission deeply to heart. He believed that wholehearted participation in such a parley was important to demonstrate to the powers Japan's intention to remain a cooperative member of the world community.⁵² The purpose and agenda of Ishii's visit to America bear uncanny resemblance to those of the previous public relations trips by Nitobe and Matsuoka. Ishii's passage through the United States came between Nitobe's two tours.

Before his 4 May departure for San Francisco, the plenipotentiary had a round of meetings with very high-placed individuals in Tokyo. The first was with General Minami Jirō, war minister at the time of the Manchurian Incident. Ishii was briefed on the state of affairs in Manchuria by Major General Koiso Kuniaki, military affairs bureau chief in the War Ministry and chief of staff of the Guandong Army. He had a useful meeting with Makino Nobuaki, who had been Japan's major spokesman at the Paris Peace Conference and was now an Imperial Household officer and confidant of the Emperor. Makino earnestly desired to know what Ishii had heard from the generals. Finally, Ishii, in the company of other government officials, went to the palace for an audience with the Emperor. Like Makino, the Emperor was deeply concerned that Ishii's mission promote goodwill toward Japan. In Ishii's diary entries concerning these meetings, we see some implications that he was not totally pleased with military and government policy in Manchuria. When Koiso said that Japanese forces were not planning to move south of the Great Wall, Ishii was relieved. Ishii voiced displeasure at the Treasury Ministry's cutting the budget for the London Conference delegation, at a time when there seemed to be no shortage of funds for operations in Manchuria. He criticized the Foreign Ministry for not standing up to Treasury on this issue.⁵³ Given the authoritarian context of the time, we can read into these oblique complaints dissatisfaction with the actors in Manchurian policy and their tactics, dissatisfaction that Ishii would not, or dared not, voice in his public writings on the subject. As a retired official, he was undoubtedly frustrated that the military was taking initiatives and creating policy when the prerogative rightfully lay with the government.

The viscount delivered eleven speeches in San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, New York, and Boston and had a "heart-to-heart" talk with President Roosevelt on 25 May. Ishii spoke as an ambassador of goodwill, recalling the historic common interests of Japan and America. He drew attention to the sympathy that the United States had shown toward Japanese continental aspirations in the past, including the instance of the notes he and Secretary of State Robert Lansing had exchanged in 1917. While he avoided public discussion of recent events in Manchu-

ria, which by that time had separated Japan from the League, he did address what he deemed to be flaws in the existing League of Nations machinery for the settlement of international disputes. The League Covenant provided no redress for economic aggression in the form of boycotts intended to strangle a neighbor nation. "The Covenant as it stands," he complained, "denounces that nation which uses force even as the last and only means of self-protection against treaty violation, as an aggressor. . . . Any peace organization which permits such obvious injustice and inequity is bound to be ineffectual." As a remedy, Ishii proposed that the League prohibit treaty-breaking—along with boycotts and related forms of nonviolent aggression—just as it forbade military aggression. When pressed to define aggression, Ishii retreated to relativism: "Acts which would be considered aggression in some parts of the world are not aggression in other parts of the world, depending on the circumstances surrounding them."⁵⁴

In his writings and speeches in the 1932–1933 period, Ishii laid the blame for the immediate crisis at the feet of China, for its disregard for treaty obligations and its unrealistic claims to sovereignty in Manchuria and Mongolia. He faulted the Covenant of the League of Nations for failure to address the issues that he believed were the crux of the Sino-Japanese dispute. These same arguments were raised by Nitobe Inazō in his mission to North America and by Matsuoka Yōsuke at League sessions in Geneva. There were some differences, however. Matsuoka complained frequently about misinformation on the Manchurian situation purveyed by Western diplomats, the Western press, and Western missionaries. Ishii was silent on this point. Moreover, Nitobe liked to place Japanese continental diplomacy in the perspective of the expansionist and regional hegemonic experience of the United States. Ishii did not voice this cogent argument, perhaps because, unlike Nitobe, he was not a student of America. Both Matsuoka and Nitobe, but not Ishii, warned the West not to relegate a great nation like Japan to the company of the damned. Most significantly, Ishii did not voice in public the eternal optimism and idealism for which Nitobe was beloved. He did not raise the hope that Japan and China could resolve their differences, and he rarely voiced the desire that Japan would someday return to Geneva.

Had Ishii remained in diplomatic service in Europe through 1933, it is unlikely that Japan would have dispatched the pugnacious Matsuoka Yōsuke to Geneva as special envoy to displace a seasoned diplomat respected for his service to the League. Would Ishii have avoided the walkout for which Matsuoka is infamous? Would he have imposed his seniority and prestige to keep Japan within the organization despite its censure? We will never know. It is believed that palace insiders like Makino Nobuaki were desirous of some compromise with the world body.⁵⁵ What is certain is that Ishii tried to exert his influence throughout the dark episode to prevent Japan's total diplomatic isolation from the existing world order. None-

theless, his effort to persuade North American audiences of the justness of Japan's Manchurian policies was no more successful than those of Nitobe and Matsuoka. After the London Economic Conference, Ishii continued as president of the successor organization to the League of Nations Association and served in the Privy Council. But his voice was muted. He died in a firebombing raid on Tokyo in the closing months of the Pacific War.

The Palace

The picture of internationalist responses to the Manchurian Incident and conflict with the League of Nations is not complete without attention to the role of the Emperor and his entourage. The close and powerful advisers surrounding him were led by Prince Saionji Kinmochi, the "Last Genrō" and cabinetmaker, a former premier and foreign minister who had been chief plenipotentiary at the Paris Peace Conference; and Count Makino Nobuaki, former foreign minister, leading Japanese spokesman and League advocate at the Paris Peace Conference, and now lord keeper of the privy seal. Emperor Hirohito (1901–1989) was thirty years old at the time of Mukden and in his sixth reign year. Few question that the young Emperor resented army insubordination, sought to limit Japanese military aggression in Manchuria, wanted Japan to remain in the League of Nations, and demanded that Japan protect relations with the powers. There is controversy over why he pushed this agenda and why he and his officials vacillated in applying the influence they possessed. That the palace won some skirmishes with the forces of imperialism but ultimately acquiesced in its Manchurian program is clear from the record.

The Mukden Incident took place without the Emperor's permission or knowledge, but a week before he had made the war minister, General Minami Jirō, promise to tighten discipline in the army. Soon after 18 September, the Emperor ordered both Prime Minister Wakatsuki and General Kanaya Hanzō, the army chief of staff, not to enlarge the incident. The first question in which the Emperor had direct input was whether military units should be transferred from Korea to Manchuria. Being told that the cabinet had no alternative but to approve this move because Japanese forces in Manchuria were severely outnumbered, Hirohito reluctantly approved the action but again warned the army chief to exercise restraint.

Through October 1931, a mood of mounting desperation prevailed in the court as the army seemed to advance at will and make foreign policy in the field. The Emperor was incensed that Guandong Army commander General Honjō Shigeru announced that the army would pacify all of Manchuria and Mongolia. He worried that a move into Rehe would evoke intervention by the Western powers. When fighting opened in Shanghai, he urged the Japanese commander there to bring it to a swift end, lest it lead to conflict with other nations. When Inukai Tsuyoshi

replaced Wakatsuki as premier in December, the Emperor informed the new premier through Saionji of his displeasure at the indiscipline of the military and its meddling in policy making.⁵⁶

After three months of army activism, domestic terrorism, and policy making by *fait accompli*, all that the court and the cabinet could hope for was to confine operations to Manchuria, skirt direct conflict with the armies of Chiang Kai-shek, and avoid an open split with the powers. War hysteria was rife; voices of restraint were intimidated. Assassination plots against the Emperor's advisers were hatched in October 1931 and May 1932. The Emperor and court officials feared that to confront the military through direct and public reprimands would result in a revolutionary coup at home, which would bring down the carefully designed and assiduously protected court-government-military balance of power that had evolved under the Meiji Constitution. To challenge the military in this instance would mean that Imperial and civilian power would give way to a military dictatorship. It seemed prudent to protect the constitutional institutions by placating the military. Those close to the Emperor wanted to neutralize him in order to protect the throne and indeed his very life. When the army was positioning itself to invade Rehe, the Emperor wanted to call an Imperial conference to discuss the military's plans, but Saionji and Makino dissuaded him.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, the public and the troops were not aware of the Emperor's cautionary views conveyed privately to civilian and military leaders. The soldiers fought on and the press and public cheered them, in the belief that they were fulfilling an Imperial commission.

The impact of current events on Japan's relationship with the League of Nations was a matter of deep concern to the Emperor. He brought this up with Foreign Minister Shidehara as early as October 1931. As the Lytton Commission's report was under study in Geneva, the Emperor expressed anxiety to General Koiso that planned operations in Rehe would worsen Japan's isolated position in the upcoming deliberations. When the cabinet decided to withdraw from the League on 20 February 1933, the Emperor wanted to hold an Imperial conference on the matter, but go strategist Makino opposed the meeting because those who held the Emperor's cautionary views were in a minority, and a conference would simply result in higher endorsement of the policy to secede. In his February 20 diary entry, Makino expressed concern about the future in view of the "careless minds" of Japanese people, who "do not understand the gravity of this problem." The press was justifying withdrawal, he complained, "as an end in itself." He only hoped that the people would eventually come to their senses. Even while the Emperor was preparing his rescript on withdrawal, Hirohito wistfully inquired of his advisers whether the decision could be revisited. In the view of Stephen S. Large, a historian of Hirohito's career, the court viewed the League relationship as "the greatest casualty of the Manchurian incident."⁵⁸

A few historians cut the Showa Emperor less slack and reject the idea that he was a principled agent of restraint and international cooperation during the Manchurian crisis. Herbert Bix portrays a court more worried about loss of prestige for the Imperial personage than either the welfare of the nation or the issues at stake on the continent. What concerned Hirohito most was the military's success in the field:

Hirohito accepted the situation as a *fait accompli*. He was not seriously opposed to seeing his army expand his empire. If that involved a brief usurpation of his authority, so be it — so long as the operation was successful.⁵⁹

On Japan's separation from the League, Bix's view is that the Emperor gambled and lost. He acquiesced in the military's program in Manchuria, hoping in vain that Geneva too would come around and accept the *fait accompli* of Manchukuo. Bix's judgment of the input of the Emperor's chief in-house adviser is scathing:

Belief in a policy of expansion, disagreement over how to use imperial authority to control the army, and fear of domestic unrest all lay behind the court's appeasement of military expansion. Makino, particularly susceptible to such fear, had abruptly abandoned his support for Japanese-Anglo-American cooperation when he was confronted by the advocates of a Monroe Doctrine for Asia. Rather than clash with the military, he abjured his long-held belief in the Versailles-Washington treaty system. He supported Hirohito's decision to quit the League, which he himself had helped establish. Hirohito and Makino, standing at the top of the polity, became, in a sense, the earliest apostates in a decade of apostasy.⁶⁰

The Emperor was an internationalist to the extent that he had a strong sense that disapproval by the powers and the League would isolate Japan, constrain the legitimate expansion of Japanese power and influence, and even in the long run expose Japan to the risk of war with the powers and the loss of all Japan possessed. But his *modus operandi* was to raise questions and express concern and trust that the parties involved would infer his will, rather than issue direct and incontrovertible commands. The diaries that record his actions are couched in the same oblique language. The court's greatest frustration was that international criticism did not constrain the military party. Joseph G. Grew, who took up the post of U.S. ambassador during the crisis, perceived that world opinion had just the opposite effect:

At present the moral obloquy of the world is a negligible force in Japan. Far from serving to modify the determination of the Japanese, it merely tends to strengthen it. Were the Government to show any inclination to temporize or

compromise with the League of Nations, further assassinations if not internal revolution would almost certainly result.⁶¹

After a private meeting with the lord keeper of the privy seal, Grew wrote that "Count Makino impressed me as a really great gentleman. He is close to the Emperor but he doesn't, alas, carry much weight in these days of military domination." Grew presented an even more pessimistic assessment of the influence of Prince Saionji:

The Genrō himself is practically helpless before the military clique and will presumably be overridden right along. The saner heads in the Government are in just the same position as they were at the time of the organization of the Saitō cabinet; from patriotic motives they give in to the violent elements, always hoping in vain that later they will get control and that in the meantime it is best for the country to avoid further affairs like that of May 15.⁶²

The specter of terrorist violence would continue to plague confidants of the Emperor throughout the decade. For their internationalist reputations, both Saionji and Makino were targets of unsuccessful assassins in the 26 February 1936 Incident.

So, in the heat of the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, Japan's marriage to the League of Nations came to an end. This happened in a broad context of the Depression around the world and revolutionary movements on the continent. It happened in an immediate context of war hysteria and domestic terror. It also occurred some time after League advocates in Japan had begun to explore and vocalize regionally based alternatives to the concept of universal order. Those Japanese who had worked hard and written enthusiastically in support of the League either lapsed into silence or joined the chorus of apologists for an aggressive and autonomous foreign policy. When the dust settled, thoughtful minds in Japan groped for new international structures to alleviate Japan's isolation and restore a modicum of international community.

8

Japan as an Outsider

The basic premise of our foreign policy since leaving the League of Nations continues to be support of world peace.

—Takahashi Korekiyo, 1936

WHEN HE WROTE his memoirs during the grim years of the Pacific War he had sought to avert, Ambassador Joseph C. Grew chose the date of 20 February 1933 as the end of one chapter and the beginning of another, with these words:

Nobody could miss the political significance of Japan's decision to quit the League of Nations. It marked a clear break with the Western powers and prepared the way for Japan's later adherence to the Axis. But the immediate consequence of Japan's departure from the League was not a swing toward extremism either in domestic or foreign affairs. Quite the opposite. Having made their hostile political gesture toward the Western powers, the leaders of Japan took a line that looked almost like appeasement — at any rate as far as the United States was concerned. But in spite of its apparent moderation, Japanese foreign policy remained unyielding on essentials: the Naval Limitation Treaties were not renewed, more Japanese troops poured into China. But events did not move fast enough to suit the militarists. The longer the period of calm, the more intense the storm.¹

Grew's paragraph encapsulates a very important historical debate concerning Japan's foreign policy intentions and behavior in the 1930s. Should we go with the "clear break" thesis or accord substance to the "line that looked almost like appeasement"? Standard accounts, both in Japan and the West, posit the Manchurian Incident as the turning point from a stance of international accommodationism to one of aggressive autonomy. In many quarters, it is cited as the opening volley of a "Fifteen-Year War" that did not end until 1945. Historian Sandra Wilson weighs in with her thorough study of responses among several levels of Japanese society to the events in Manchuria and concludes that most Japanese, even those in govern-

ment, were not conscious of the tidal change that writers commonly assign to attitudes of the time. She notes that Japan remained a participant in the Disarmament Conference of 1932–1934 and joined in the World Economic Conference in 1933. She asserts that, for Japanese, the Manchurian affair had an ending and that after 1933 Japan sought to improve relations and expand economic ties with the powers. In Wilson's words,

the connection between the events of the early 1930s and the development of increasingly authoritarian and militarist social and political structures is more complex than is commonly imagined; . . . the situation was more fluid than is often acknowledged, containing the possibility of outcomes other than those which did in fact occur; and . . . while the Manchurian Incident can be seen as a milestone in Japanese militarism, this is an interpretation which rests heavily on hindsight.²

With regard to Japan's political relationship to the League of Nations, the Manchurian crisis is undeniably consequential. In this study, Manchuria is indeed a turning point. But the end of League membership did not mark the demise of internationalism in Japan. It did not mean that Japan believed it could ignore world opinion or the community of powers as it formulated its policies. True, internationalist thinkers had to move beyond the institution of the League and find new formulas — cited in the following pages — to promote international comity. The inability of the League of Nations to serve as the designated orchestrator of world order was, after all, acknowledged with regret by internationalists in all countries in the mid-1930s. Rather than marking a sharp break with the past, the Manchurian affair gave expression to trends that had long-standing roots and had been building for some time. Among them were the gravitation toward regional understandings for peace and order and the preference to address differences with neighbors on a bilateral basis. Also, in the affair itself and its aftermath Japan demonstrated its compulsion to seek accommodation with the powers and achieve respect as a world citizen. In the wake of 1933, Japanese adherents to internationalism pursued their cause with renewed energy.

Post-1933 Japan and the League of Nations

The government had correctly calculated that the League would stop short of applying economic and military sanctions against Japan. By the time Japan's withdrawal became effective in two years, Rehe (Jehol) had been incorporated into Manchukuo, and Japan had negotiated with the Nationalist government the Tanggu Truce, which provided for a demilitarized zone south of the Great Wall.

Manchukuo under Japanese direction began a huge public works program, which included 105 new public buildings in the extravagant capital of Xinjing, a web of branch lines connecting to the South Manchurian Railway, and town plans for forty-eight Manchurian cities — each fitted with running water and sewer systems, gas and electricity, telephone and telegraph lines, and a road network fanning out from the railway station.³ The “Manchurian boom” helped stimulate economic recovery at home at a time when industrialized nations in Europe and North America wallowed in the torpor of the Depression. Japan’s combined trade with China and Manchukuo surpassed that with the United States. A lessened sense of economic dependence on the West underlay a strident Japanese attitude at the abortive London Naval Conference in 1935. Liberal intellectuals by and large adjusted pragmatically to the new environment and wrote off the League as a valuable experiment relevant to the environment of a decade earlier.

Universalism in the mid-1930s was not working, and the reputation of the League of Nations suffered commensurately. The Nazi regime in Germany took note that Japan withdrew from the League of Nations without penalty. In October 1933, Germany permanently withdrew from the General Disarmament Conference and resigned from the League of Nations. The Five-Power Treaty expired in 1936, and Japan immediately commenced a major naval building program. In December 1937, a month after signing the Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan, Italy also left Geneva, whereupon Germany and Italy granted diplomatic recognition to Manchukuo. The powers abandoned the goal of free trade and erected tariff barriers and bloc economies to insulate themselves from outside competition.

In May 1933 the Japan League of Nations Association board reached agreement on how to adjust to post-League realities. After heated disagreement between those who wanted to retain the philosophy and even the name of the League and those who embraced the new day, the board decided to rename the organization the Japan International Association (*Nihon Kokusai Kyōkai*). Its primary objective was no longer to be “the fulfillment of the spirit of the League of Nations” but “the promotion of friendship and cooperation among nations, the establishment of international justice, and the realization of international peace.” However, it retained ties to the International Federation of League of Nations Societies. Hardly anyone resigned. Foreign Minister Uchida delivered an address to an association gathering marking its new name and purpose. Japan, he proclaimed, would not pursue isolation (*sakoku*) but would endeavor to maintain the peace of East Asia. Moreover, Manchukuo would become a model for Chinese development and evoke the powers’ endorsement of Japan’s position. The activities of the International Association were much the same as those of the League of Nations Association. It continued to make studies of international affairs, sponsor lectures and essay contests, and nurture student branches.⁴ The monthly journal *Kokusai chishiki* remained

in circulation, though it contained less news and analysis of League sessions. The color of its contents also changed, as its predominant writers of the 1920s, Tagawa Daikichirō and Yamakawa Tadao, faded from view. A new set of authors appeared with articles about progress in Manchukuo and such international developments as the Italo-Ethiopian War. After 1933 the government found ways to incorporate “nongovernmental” organizations in the project to disseminate, to the Japanese public and the world, views on international affairs supportive of the enlarged Japanese presence on the continent.

In 1935 the Japan Council of the IPR was absorbed by the International Association, where it became a section within the larger body. The Japan Council had operated since its inception in 1926 as a sort of think tank, preparing scholarly papers for the biennial IPR conferences that addressed international relations in the context of the Pacific Rim. Academic members such as Rōyama Masamichi, Yokota Kisaburō, Yanaihara Tadao, and Takagi Yasaka sought “scientific” solutions to tensions and inequalities in the region. Many were deeply committed to amity with the United States, and leading members were Ichikō graduates mentored in their youth by the late Nitobe Inazō. The association-council merger underscored the regionalist approach to international order that had shown itself among Japan Council internationalists since the late 1920s and reflected national policy and political reality after Mukden. The Foreign Ministry continued to subsidize the expenses of the International Association and the Japan Council. The ministry’s Information Division also played a heavier hand in supervising the publications and research of both. This was evident in ministry’s pressure on council members as they prepared presentations for the IPR’s Yosemite conference in 1936. Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro would draw upon members of the Japan Council, most notably Rōyama, in the formulation of the New Order in East Asia of 1938 and in all his efforts until 1941 to resolve the Second Sino-Japanese War. When in 1937 the parent IPR initiated an “inquiry” project into the China conflict without consulting the Japan Council, relations between the council and the IPR became irreparably strained. Japan declined to send representatives to IPR conferences thereafter.⁵

After March 1933, Japan ceased to participate in the political activities of the League of Nations and sent no representatives to Council and Assembly meetings even during the two-year waiting period. Member dues were last submitted in 1934. Japanese resigned their positions in the Secretariat. But Japan did continue to work within and support such organizations as the International Labor Organization, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, the Opium Committee, and the Health Organization. Japan asserted that its Pacific Island mandate was rooted in the Versailles Treaty and not in the League Covenant, and the League did not challenge Japan’s continuing mandatory status. The Foreign Ministry sent annual reports to the Permanent Mandates Commission through 1938. A Japanese

judge continued to serve on the World Court, though no cases involving Japan were brought before the world bar. The functions of the Tokyo office of the League's Information Section were curtailed in 1935, and the office was shut down in 1938. The ILO branch office in Tokyo closed in 1939.

Blueprints for Regional Order

Amidst the strident rhetoric and disregard for international organization throughout the Manchurian crisis, estrangement from universal order caused palpable anxiety in Japan. From the palace to the law faculty of Tokyo University, warnings were issued about the risks of international isolation. The Triple Intervention was still alive in historical memory, and some members of government had not forgotten that an aggressive continental policy had isolated Japan at the Paris Peace Conference. The present circumstances were even more unsettling due to the absence of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which had not been renewed after 1922. The Four-Power Pact, which had supplanted the British tie, could hardly be depended upon to secure Japanese interests in the new environment of Manchukuo. As Japanese knowledgeable in foreign affairs rebounded from the Manchurian crisis, many applied creative thinking and new dedication to the linking of Japan to the world community.⁶ They groped for a mechanism that would fill the security and confidence gap created by departure from Geneva and, at the same time, be amenable to the reality of Japan's predominance in East Asia. From 1932 to 1938, several models were proposed for peace machinery in the region.

Locarno Pact for the Far East (1932)

Japanese greeted the Locarno Pact favorably when it was signed by European nations in December 1925. Aside from provisions for mutual security, arbitration, and French evacuation of the Rhineland, the accords that constituted the pact paved the way for German entry into the League of Nations. Upon the initialing of the treaties, the Japanese delegate to Geneva, Ishii Kikujirō, acknowledged that the Versailles Treaty alone "could not give the world genuine peace."⁷ Speaking to the Diet, Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō welcomed Germany's return to the family of nations and praised the Locarno signatories for forgetting old scores. He saw a brighter future for the League in the light of the new agreement.⁸ The positive reaction of the Japanese public was evident in the press. The *Hōchi* declared, "The peace of Europe was nominally restored by the Versailles Treaty, and it has now been effectively assured by the Locarno Pact." The pact was more realistic, said the editorial, than the "defect-ridden treaty of peace." The *Kokumin* attributed the pact's potential effectiveness to its local nature.⁹ Locarno was attractive to many Japanese because it seemed to be concrete rather than idealistic, political rather than moralistic, and regional rather than universalistic. Dino Grandi, a diplomat

of another aspiring middle power, Italy, voiced sentiments strikingly akin to those of the Japanese when he described the framing of Locarno:

They corrected, or at least they aimed at correcting, those deviations from reality inherent in the universality of the League and in its abstract and ideological character. They sought to remove the League from the world of prophecy to the world of hard facts, from purely theoretical and universal affirmations to the immediate guarantees necessary to satisfy the craving for safety and protection — those are the very words of the Locarno Treaty — that animate the countries who were victims of the war scourge of 1914–1918.¹⁰

In the mid-1920s the potential benefits of universalism restrained Japanese leaders from plunging headlong down the path of regionalism. But the events after 1931 — coupled with a shift in Japan's trade distribution toward Asia — brought a renewed interest in the model of Locarno as a lodestar of international order. The major sponsor of the Asian Locarno concept in 1932 was Ashida Hitoshi (1887–1959). Ashida was a diplomat-politician who resigned from the Foreign Ministry in 1931 on the basis of his antimilitarist views. In November 1932 when he published an article in *Gaikō jihō* calling for a Locarno Pact for the Far East, he had just been elected to the Lower House of the Diet.

Suspicious of any status-quo order “outside the law of mutation,” Ashida dismissed the Versailles-Washington system as incapable of coping with issues such as the Manchurian Incident that arise with the passing of time. If the powers persisted in refusing to recognize Manchukuo, Manchuria would remain a “chronic disease,” perpetually fouling Japan's relations with other major nations. A solution, wrote Ashida, was a Locarno Pact for the Far East (Kyokutō Rokaruno), an instrument for the pacific solution of disputes just like the system developed in central Europe in 1925. It should comprise Japan, Manchukuo, the Soviet Union, and China. Such a mutual security agreement had already been adopted by Japan and Manchukuo. Though Chinese Nationalist leaders were not likely to go along at first, Ashida saw signs of a more favorable climate among “the Chinese as a whole.” American acquiescence could be expected from “practical statesmen in the United States who are aware of the real situation in Manchuria, Japan's position, and the realities of China.” The support of such Americans for Japan's continental policy, Ashida believed, would grow over time as Japan demonstrated that it harbored no territorial ambitions in China proper.¹¹

Security Pact of the Pacific (1933)

At the fifth conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations at Banff in August 1933, Takagi Yasaka (1889–1984) presented a detailed proposal for a Security Pact of the Pacific, coauthored by Yokota Kisaburō. Takagi had been a pupil of Nitobe's at

First Higher and an intimate associate thereafter. He had accompanied his teacher and mentor to the Kyoto Conference of the IPR and now to Banff, Nitobe's final parley. At the time, Takagi was professor of American institutions at Tokyo University. Yokota was professor of international law at the same institution. Yokota had attended the 1930 London Naval Conference and defended the disarmament agreement against its Japanese critics. He had also publicly criticized Japanese actions in Manchuria after 1931 and warned against withdrawal from the League of Nations. Amō Eiji, director general of the Information Division of the Foreign Ministry, read the paper in draft stage and passed comments on to Nitobe, head of the Japanese delegation to the Banff conference.¹² The subject matter was one in which the ministry took a strong interest and may have had influence.

The Takagi-Yokota report explained that the absence of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Japan from the League of Nations severely handicapped the organization for dealing with Far Eastern questions. Recent events in the area had made the inadequacy of existing peace machinery "particularly conspicuous." Existing international organization had not solved the problem of economic inequality among nations. But the League might still act constructively in Asia. As a starter, it might organize international economic conferences in the Pacific region. These conferences should operate under their own secretariat.

The Tōdai professors called for the conclusion of "Pacific agreements." Contracting parties should include Japan, China, the USSR, the United States, Great Britain, and France—a group more far-ranging than that proposed for Ashida's Locarno pact. But like Ashida, the professors cautioned that the new mechanism, unlike the prevailing world system, must not purpose to perpetuate the status quo but "must now shift its emphasis to that of change and development." Evolution in the Pacific area, they argued, is "inevitable, and indeed desirable."¹³ They insisted that "it is absolutely necessary to devise some procedure to modify peacefully the status quo and to adjust the existing economic inequalities and political injustices."¹⁴ They referred to the provision in Article 19 of the League Covenant concerning "the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world" as a basis for the avoidance of a status-quo order. Would the new Pacific order compete with the League of Nations? On the contrary, it might ultimately be incorporated into the world organization—"possibly after certain modifications in the League."

Takagi and Yokota then proceeded to lay out an actual draft treaty with provisions for security, nonaggression, and arbitration. It was inspired by a draft security treaty presented at the second IPR conference in 1927 by Columbia University professor of international history James T. Shotwell. To encourage international acceptance of their scheme, Takagi and Yokota deliberately borrowed wording from the League's Model Treaties, the Four-Power Treaty, the Locarno Pact, the Kellogg-

Briand Pact, and the Stimson Doctrine. The contracting parties, they said, should find no difficulty ascribing to provisions to which they were already committed in substance.¹⁵ But the proposal appeared to IPR hearers as a politically motivated and government-inspired accommodation to Japan's recent aggression in Manchurian and defiance of international order, and it generated little consonance at the Banff conference. IPR secretary Edward Carter countered that "peace is a world problem" and warned against the decentralization of peace machinery.

The regional emphasis of the Security Pact was clear. It would establish Pacific regional machinery, while preserving a role for the League of Nations. In Akami's words, it was "an attempt by Japanese post-League internationalists to shape the peace machinery of the post-Manchukuo era within the existing framework of international treaties."¹⁶ Nowhere in the proposals of Ashida or Takagi and Yokota are there any references to common culture as a basis for Pacific order. Theirs was not the ideology of Pan-Asianism. In fact, they attributed unrest in the region to circumstances of heterogeneity — divergence of national traditions, national outlook, and pace of development.¹⁷

Greater Asia Federation (1933)

Greater Asianism (*Dai tōa shugi*) was promoted by Pan-Asianists, who based their system on cultural affinity. This tradition in Japan had a long history institutionalized in the Genyōsha (1881), the Kokuryūkai (1901), and the Dōbunkai (Common Culture Association), founded in 1898 by Konoe Atsumaro. Atsumaro's son Fumimaro served as vice president of the Dōbunkai from 1922 and president from 1936. Japanese Pan-Asianists believed that China and Japan should formulate common goals so that Asian civilization could flower in China under Japanese guidance.

On 1 March 1933 a new advocacy group, the Dai Ajia Kyōkai (Greater Asia Association), was formed to promote the ideal of East Asian regional unity. Among the charter members were Konoe Fumimaro and Yano Jin'ichi (1872–1970). Yano was a prominent Sinologist and historian at Kyoto Imperial University and one of the major spokesmen for the concept that China was not a nation but a culture. In 1932 he went to Manchuria as an adviser to the Guandong Army. General Ishiwara Kanji frequently attended the meetings of the Dai Ajia Kyōkai and formed his own Tōa Renmei Kyōkai (East Asia League Association) in 1939 to further the idea of a Japan-China-Manchukuo axis.¹⁸

The Dai Ajia Kyōkai advocated a Greater Asia Federation (*Dai Ajia Rengō*) reflecting the *wangdao* (kingly way). The *wangdao* rubric was a flexible concept that meant little more than benevolent government. The term had often been used by reformers throughout Chinese history, and Sun Yat-sen employed it in Japan in 1924 when on tour to promote regionalism. In a flurry of publications in 1932–

1933 in support of the new order in Manchukuo, Yano described the new polity as the kingly way that would correct the abuses of the warlord Zhang and corrupt Guomindang regimes and improve the livelihood of the people.¹⁹ The Kyōkai viewed the Greater Asia Federation as a defense of East Asia against cultural conquest by Occidentals, represented most threateningly by Soviet communism. The association's charter clearly stated its purposes:

In culture, politics, economics, geography, and race, Asia is a body of common destiny. The true peace, prosperity, and development of Asian peoples are feasible only on the basis of their consciousness of Asia as one entity and an organic union thereof. . . . The heavy responsibility for reconstruction and ordering of Asia rests upon the shoulders of Imperial Japan. . . . Now the Manchurian Incident has provided another opportunity in human history for a great turning point. Imperial Japan has, happily, expanded the world-historical meaning of the Russo-Japanese War, and now is the time for Japan to concentrate all its cultural, political, economic, and organizational power to take one step toward the reconstruction and union of Asia. . . . The formulation of the Greater Asia Federation is the historical mission facing the Japanese people today.²⁰

As the 1930s wore on, Asian culture was accorded unprecedented attention in government. In a deliberate effort to expand cultural relations, the government in 1934 established a semiofficial agency, the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai (Society for International Cultural Relations, KBS). This office encouraged the study and knowledge of Japanese culture and intellectual exchange with other countries. Some KBS members had experience with Nitobe's International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation.²¹ Within the Foreign Ministry, Shigemitsu Mamoru became a spokesman for doctrinaire Pan-Asianism. Vice-minister from 1933 to 1936, he believed in excluding all Western nations from the settlement of Asian problems.²² In 1938 the Shōwa Kenkyūkai (Shōwa Research Association), the unofficial brain trust of Prime Minister Konoe, formed its own Cultural Problems Research Group under philosopher Miki Kiyoshi (1897–1945). In the context of the war in China, Miki believed that military power alone would not defeat the enemy; Japan had to triumph in thought and culture as well to achieve a permanent victory. Japan should create a new ideology that would allow China to transcend "simple nationalism" and join the new order with Japan. Miki's group concluded that intellectuals had to forge principles for a new East Asian culture of international significance, comparable to Hellenistic culture, which had united the Western world. An East Asian bloc established by Japan would be premised upon an ideology of cooperation for the welfare of the whole community, a system that would discard the West's defective notion of individualism. That focus on the self had

produced an Occidental culture marred by the “evils of capitalism” and needless “class struggle.”²³

Far Eastern League of Nations (1933)

When Japan departed Geneva in 1933, internationalist scholars who harbored affection for the ideals of the League of Nations feared the consequences of unrestrained nationalism. Some promoted the reorganization of the League of Nations into regional subunits as a practical, middle course between universalistic internationalism and atavistic autarky.

The idea of a Far Eastern League of Nations was raised in the 1920s, when some Japanese viewed Geneva as distant, preoccupied with European issues, and incapable of guaranteeing Japanese security in the event of threats by the powers. In a 1925 essay, “Kokusai Renmei no hani nai ni okeru Tōa renmei kensetsu no kyūmu” (The urgent need to establish an East Asian League within the framework of the League of Nations), a young diplomat named Kajima Morinosuke (1896–1975) laid out Japan’s security liabilities in the face of the demise of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, U.S. efforts to disarm Japan and control it “under the name of capitalism,” and Russia’s untrustworthy ideology. Only if China and Japan, “already sharing a common religion, writing system, and moral code,” stood together could these threats be blocked. Kajima argued that an aggressive policy toward China would serve only to alienate the Chinese and moreover would invite intervention by the powers. But an East Asian League comprising China and Japan would make possible a peaceful and mutual rather than subordinate relationship. It would create a balance “between independence and interdependence, between autonomy and harmony.” The League could facilitate the strengthening of China’s sovereignty, protect Japanese land rights in China, and broker customs and monetary agreements. Kajima proposed that the League of Nations recognize a series of such regional subunits across the world, including one in the Western Hemisphere based on the Monroe Doctrine. The United States might then be willing to join such a league, and “thus we could at last have a universal League of Nations.”²⁴

Japan’s secession in 1933 renewed interest in the concept of a Far Eastern League within a more loosely organized global association. Kamikawa Hikomatsu (1889–1988) was a Tokyo University diplomatic historian who during the 1920s had been an idealistic supporter of the League of Nations. In a May 1933 lecture at Tokyo University, later published in *Kokka gakkai zasshi*, Kamikawa issued a critique of Greater Asianism, which he identified with Pan-Asianism. Pan-Asianism, he said, was based on shared culture and race and common antagonism toward alien cultures. In the Asian setting it would not flourish, he said, without a sense of confrontation with the West. This spirit was contrary to the principles of the League of Nations — principles that ought to be appropriated in any worthwhile regional

order: "Even though Japan has withdrawn from the League of Nations of Geneva, it must not completely abandon the principles of the League. The very idea of the Far Eastern League is to implement those principles in the region of the Far East." Kamikawa warned that Greater Asianism would eventuate in a disastrous racial war. Moreover, Greater Asianism as espoused by the recently established Dai Ajia Kyōkai was an impractical course in view of the hostility the powers would inevitably show toward such a stance. Kamikawa's admonition is evidence that accommodationism was still lurking in the mind of one regionalist. He pointed to a recent call by the president of Uruguay for an "American League of Nations" — based on equality and not dominated by the United States — as evidence that the time was ripe. The issue of equality of course lay at the heart of Japanese misgivings about the universalistic order ever since the Paris Peace Conference. The Far Eastern unit Kamikawa proposed would comprise Japan, Manchukuo, China, Siam, Siberia, and the Philippines. In order to make the Far Eastern League feasible, it was necessary to heal the Sino-Japanese conflict as soon as possible.²⁵

A similar view of regional organization was held by Matsuoka Yosuke, former special envoy to the League of Nations. During the Tokyo war crimes trials in 1946, he told his American interrogator:

After Geneva I began to think that the League of Nations that tries to gather all the nations in one conference was impossible, and that the world should have leadership in each region and establish a kind of league of nations of that smaller and separate sphere. For instance, America to lead the Western Hemisphere and Great Britain to lead the nations she is closely interwoven with, and then Soviet Russia to lead Soviet Russia and some neighboring countries, and Japan to lead the Far East, etc. And then these regional leagues to be joined roughly, so that from time to time they can exchange their opinions and views. In such a way only in the then prevailing conditions of the world, can we contribute toward world peace.²⁶

In the late 1930s, Kamikawa and Matsuoka would lend their intellectual muscle to the creation of the New Order in East Asia. They rationalized the order as the awaited appearance of the Far Eastern League, designed to unite East Asia against the twin evils of Western imperialism and Chinese nationalism.²⁷

Restoration of Anglo-Japanese Entente (1934)

During the years from 1933 to 1936, Japanese foreign policy strategists groped for a new scheme by which Japan could function constructively among the powers. There were three options: cooperation with the Soviet Union embodied in a Japan-Soviet nonaggression pact, detente with Great Britain and the United States

through a nonaggression pact, or engagement with Germany. The third option was actualized in 1936 in the Anti-Comintern Pact. In the years before that fateful choice, the options were open.²⁸ The sense of diplomatic isolation that pervaded Japan in the wake of its departure from the League of Nations stirred nostalgia for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The alliance had provided security and a power mentor in what seemed from the vantage point of the 1930s to be the happier years of 1901–1922. Nitobe Inazō had written that the termination of the alliance was a mistake. Significantly, in its day the treaty had made Russia a manageable competitor, and Japan's colonial holdings acquired international sanction. Though subdued, Anglophiles of the Ei-Bei Ha remained in the Foreign Ministry, and the throne was occupied by a young Emperor who had traveled to London as crown prince and modeled his concepts of constitutional monarchy after those of the United Kingdom. Though in February 1933 Britain and the dominions had voted against Japan in the League Assembly, Britain had been restrained in its criticism of Japan's action in Manchuria, had not endorsed the Nonrecognition Doctrine, and had tried to broker a compromise in the League Council. Now that Manchukuo was a reality, British business interests wanted to develop ties to the region, and Japan craved a deal that would bring about international recognition of Manchukuo by some amenable, major country. Hirota Kōki (1878–1948), foreign minister from September 1933 to April 1936, sought to expand Japan's political and economic influence in China without resorting to strong military measures, and a formal alliance or nonaggression pact with a powerful country would strengthen Japan's diplomatic hand.

The first move on Britain's part came from a faction of the government centered around Neville Chamberlain, chancellor of the exchequer, and Sir Warren Fisher, permanent undersecretary of the treasury. They suggested an Anglo-Japanese nonaggression pact at a cabinet meeting on March 1934. They believed that such a move would soften the Japanese position at the naval conference a year hence. Hirota responded to the idea with warm words about the old spirit of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, whose termination he called "a disastrous blunder." At the same time, a mission of the Federation of British Industries, led by Lord Barnby, visited Manchukuo and Japan in search of trade development and investment opportunities.

From this encouraging start, the project went nowhere. What Hirota really wanted was not a specific pact but general rapprochement in Anglo-Japanese relations that would remove one power's opposition to the strengthening of the Japanese position on the continent. In London, the Foreign Office rightfully feared that an Anglo-Japanese treaty could sour British relations with the United States and, moreover, might draw the country into conflict with the Soviet Union. By November 1936, Japan's quest for community veered toward the Anti-Comintern

Pact with Germany. Japan also adopted in that year a Plan for Imperial Defense, which for the first time included Britain in the list of Japan's potential enemies.²⁹

New Order in East Asia (1938)

By the time that full-scale Sino-Japanese war erupted in 1937, regionalism had degenerated into a one-sided imposition of the Japanese will upon China. Nonetheless much idealism and intellectual discussion went into the New Order in East Asia (Tōa Shinchitsujo) proclaimed by Prime Minister Konoe on 3 November 1938. The New Order was a program of political, economic, and cultural cooperation among Japan, China, and Manchukuo.

Rōyama Masamichi (1895–1980), scholar of German geopolitics and veteran of IPR conferences, was an important member of the premier's Shōwa Research Association. He saw the New Order as a “new international organization,” a bloc of regional solidarity similar to that being created in Central Europe under German leadership. Japan sought neither territory nor domination of neighboring peoples. The New Order would introduce an epoch of cooperativism to replace the artificial concept of nationalism that had been imposed by the “old imperialists” at Versailles. When war erupted in Europe a year later, Rōyama would urge a more unified domestic political structure at home to enable more efficient effort for building the New Order abroad. Thus he called for the disbanding of political parties that had arisen, he said, in a now outdated context of “cooperative diplomacy” with the Anglo-American powers.³⁰

Matsuoka Yōsuke wrote a justification of the New Order for foreign readers in a Foreign Ministry-sponsored organ, *Contemporary Japan*. The Depression-generated collapse of the international liberal economy had forced Japan to seek protection from the nationalist, closed economies that rejected her exports and denied her needed raw materials. In place of old systems by which Western nations had sought the “enhancement of their own selfish interests” in the Far East, the New Order would be “a covenant of racial accord” for East Asians, a “harmonious adjustment between the legitimate desires of Japan and the legitimate desires of her Far Eastern neighbors.” He also welcomed the concept of an integrated, regional economy as a device to solve Japan's problem of surplus population without having to resort to emigration. Western nations and their commercial interests would by no means be excluded, with the result being “a new order of culture, incorporating the best and highest phases of Eastern and Western civilization.”³¹

The Finale: Withdrawal from League of Nations Humanitarian Organizations

By 1937, two new circumstances dominated Japanese foreign policy. The first was ties with the Axis powers in Europe, initiated with the Anti-Comintern Pact of

1936. This relationship would ripen in the Tripartite Alliance in 1940. The second was the outbreak of full-scale warfare in China in July 1937.

Like the Manchurian Incident, the Second Sino-Japanese War began with a troop skirmish, this time outside Beijing. The conflict spread quickly to central China, where Japanese troops took Shanghai and then moved up the Yangtze Valley. The Nationalist capital of Nanjing fell to a Japanese onslaught by January 1938. After it was dislodged again from Hankou, the government of Chiang Kai-shek took refuge beyond the Yangtze gorges in Chongqing. It was the China War that would break Japan's remaining ties to League of Nations humanitarian organizations. The prime minister at the time was Konoe Fumimaro, who as a young member of the Paris Peace Conference delegation had warned in 1918 that "Japan might someday be compelled like Imperial Germany to break loose from its confinement."³²

As in 1919 and 1931, Wellington Koo on 13 August 1937 brought China's allegation of Japanese misdeeds to the League of Nations. The charges included aerial bombing and use of poison gas. China also requested the appointment of a commission of inquiry. Japan, no longer present in Geneva, denied the charges. Japan was invited to send a representative to Geneva to represent its case before the Council, but it refused. A Far East Committee, a holdover from 1932 when the League wrestled with the Manchurian affair, looked into the case from a distance. It condemned Japanese aerial bombing of cities and rejected the Japanese claim that it was acting out of self-defense. It declared Japan in violation of the Peace Pact and the Nine-Power Treaty. The Assembly endorsed the committee's finding. China got what it wanted, a moral condemnation of Japan.

But the League by that time was but a shell and powerless to impose economic sanctions. Italy had recently withdrawn. The League had failed to intervene against Italy in its war on Abyssinia and would demur again against Germany when it absorbed Austria in 1938 and Czechoslovakia in 1939. Japan wagered correctly that no stern measures would be taken in the Sino-Japanese case. On 6 October 1937 the League Assembly agreed to invite the League members who were also signatories of the Nine-Power Pact to call a meeting of nations with interests in the Far East to address the Sino-Japanese conflict. The result was the Brussels Conference, which convened in November without Japan. This meeting too had little impact, and the United States at that time supported no coercive sanctions against Japan. In the end, the League offered only moral condemnation and invited, but did not require, member nations to apply economic sanctions against Japan to aid the Chinese cause.³³ Historian Frank P. Walters' commentary on the League's action regarding the Sino-Japanese conflict of 1937–1938 serves as an epitaph for the once-heralded League of Nations:

But all this meant nothing real. Most Members had already announced that they no longer considered themselves bound by the strict obligations of the Covenant.

Hypnotized by the crisis which led through Berchtesgaden and Godesberg to Munich, the Council and Assembly went through the motions of international action as a man may go through the motions of a ritual which has lost all meaning for his mind and will. The League powers, yielding to the victorious pressure of the Axis in Spain and in Czechoslovakia, were even less ready to face the risk of opposing Japan.³⁴

On 14 October 1938 the cabinet of Premier Konoe Fumimaro decided Japan should sever what residual ties remained with the League's humanitarian organizations. To preserve any links would invite the scorn of the powers. As in 1933, the Privy Council was summoned to evaluate the question as a prelude to Imperial sanction. When the prime minister presented the cabinet's decision, the Privy Council offered some resistance in the form of the critical question — raised by Councilor Ishii Kikujirō and others — of why Japan should take this step before sanctions were actually applied. Nonetheless, the Privy Council final report affirmed the cabinet's decision.

The report reviewed the history of Japan's involvement since 1933, in which "Japan tried to continue a cooperative relationship with the League of Nations and maintain projects for peace and justice." Now that war with China has erupted, the League Assembly and Council have been swayed by the schemes of the Chinese, ruling that Japan violated the Nine-Power Pact and the Peace Pact. The Assembly and Council gave moral assistance to China and encouraged League members to support China individually. Because of "the indifference of individual nations and the powerlessness of the League," these resolutions have had little effect. But China has used them to provoke "anti-Japanese feeling." Given these acts by the Council, "it has come to the juncture that the Empire and the League of Nations are in all aspects antagonistic to each other. For the sake of the respectability of the nation, continued cooperation with the various organizations of the League is out of the question." The Council recommended that Japan withdraw its official representatives from the organizations, and that non-governmental employees resign their posts.

As in 1933, the Privy Council committee declared the blandishments of Japan's continuing commitment to work for universal peace, and stated that "we will continue to cooperate in peaceful and humanitarian enterprises through diplomatic channels outside the organs of the League of Nations." The Council may have voiced a veiled, Imperial call for moderation when it admonished that "wise men of the Japanese government will keep in mind the words of the Emperor and put them into action."³⁵

On 2 November 1938, Japan notified Secretary-General Joseph Avenol that Japan was withdrawing from the League organizations. A public announcement

was issued in Japan the same day. It is no coincidence that full severance from the League of Nations coincided with the heralding of the New Order in East Asia. When Prime Minister Konoe went on the radio the next day to announce the New Order, he made it clear that the East Asian system he envisioned was designed to supplant the Versailles structure in Asia:

What the world needs today is the establishment of peace, justice, and equality. It cannot be denied that the past various rules have maintained the unbalanced condition. It is well known that international agreements such as the League of Nations Covenant already have lost their dignity, because of irrational principles. There must be brought about a new peace system based on realities, covering trade, immigration, resources, culture, and other fields of human life.³⁶

All ties connecting Japan to universal order were now cut.

Epilogue

Internationalism and International Organization in Interwar Japan

I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world.
—Socrates

IN THE CONTEXT OF the World War I settlement, Japan joined the League of Nations. Japan remained connected until two surges of aggressive war with China, from 1931 and 1937, brought about a phased withdrawal from Geneva.

To enter the League was not an easy decision in view of two general Japanese misgivings. One concerned the hegemonic proclivities of the powers that brought the organization into being. The second was the restraint that a status-quo order would impose on the Empire and what was almost uniformly viewed by Japanese as its natural development. Japan opted to focus on the advantages that accommodation to the world order of the powers would deliver in international status, security, and commercial ties. Japan thus embarked on a thirteen-year, full relationship with the League of Nations and a five-year coda of reduced ties to Geneva. Until 1933, Japan was a conscientious member, sending to Geneva some of its most talented diplomats and bureaucrats — like Ishii Kikujiro and Nitobe Inazō — who strove to make international order efficacious. In the decade of the 1920s, Japan also cooperated with the powers in other multilateral schemes for disarmament, trade, and world peace outside the League, schemes that involved the nonmember United States. During this time, intellectual activity in support of universal order was nurtured through the Japan League of Nations Association and the Japanese Council of the Institute for Pacific Relations. The internationalist movement was well represented in the Foreign Ministry and the Imperial court.

Changed circumstances in Japan's international security and economic environment after the establishment of the Nationalist government in Nanjing and the onset of the World Depression contributed to doubts about the compatibility of League mechanisms with Japan's national interests. The rising influence of militarists over government, the surge of public passion for army exploits in Manchuria, and visions of a Manchukuo utopia fatally undermined the premises of Japan's

commitment to the League. Japan's resignation in 1933 was accepted as an inevitable consequence of the clash between a successful positive policy in Japan's neighborhood and toothless reprimands from distant Geneva. The price paid for Japan's move toward diplomatic autonomy was a painful sense of international isolation, which in the mid-1930s prompted a number of proposals for Asian ententes to fill, on a regional basis, the yawning gap left by withdrawal from the League of Nations. This post-Geneva, regional internationalism absorbed the creative energies of many of Japan's former League advocates. None of the formulae that involved the Western powers or China came to fruition, and Japan eventually fulfilled Hugh R. Wilson's prediction and found global community among the damned. Japan from 1936 joined the company of other "rogue states" unified in their desire to right the inequities of global order, and in 1938, Japan articulated its regional policy in the self-serving terms of the New Order in East Asia.

Japan's deportment on the League question should not be understood merely as a posture toward an organization to promote peace. Rather, it should be viewed as an adjustment to the international power structure that prevailed from World War I until the mid-1930s. The League Covenant gave eloquent expression to a set of diplomatic values. To Japan, more than any other major nation of the time, this was indeed a *New World Order*. It was *new*, first of all, because it embodied the increased power and international assertiveness of the United States, Japan's Pacific neighbor. Japanese generally viewed the League project at its inception with the realism of later historical interpreters of the epoch — as a Wilsonian device to establish a status quo conducive to the interests of America and friendly powers. The new order also deviated from precedent in that it was tempered by the clearly Western democratic ideology espoused by American and British leaders. It was a *world* order in that it gave institutional structure to a multilateral approach to disputes among nations and proposed to make regional powers subject to the restraints of a globally integrated system. Even the United States could not suffer these principles, and American nonparticipation decreased the effectiveness of the organization in relation to Japan. It did not, however, remove the North American power from the influential position in international affairs to which the war had elevated it. The League at the time of its founding represented the *Berusaïyu taisei* (Versailles system) within which Japan was obliged to chart its course for the decade ahead.

The objections of thoughtful Japanese to the League concept at the time of its founding would be downplayed but not extinguished during the decade of Japanese engagement. Government figures and media spokesmen were concerned that Japan's vital interests were being ignored in a League dominated by Great Britain and other European powers. The status quo was seen as perpetually disadvantageous to a nation militarily outranked and possessing insufficient land, resources,

and markets for its expanding population and industries. The Covenant was widely considered to be in conflict with the Meiji Constitution and the principle of Imperial sovereignty. Moreover, the establishment of the League portended the demise of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and other bilateral, regional arrangements upon which Japan's security and diplomatic advantage had depended. The Anglo-Japanese pact indeed did fall prey to multilateralism at the Washington Conference. Pervading every criticism of the League was the suspicion that the Western powers were avaricious and intent upon legitimizing the exercise of Western power in Japan's East Asian sphere of interest. In addition, Japanese decision makers in general were practitioners of *realpolitik*. They were convinced that power, not ideals, was the core element in dealings between nations. On the basis of these misgivings, Japan attempted with some success at the Paris Peace Conference to alter the Covenant to moderate its threat to Japan's regional ascendancy. When League committees in the 1920s explored disarmament schemes and tried to effect a system of binding arbitration, Japan was watchful to protect its prerogatives. But discomfort with the Covenant would not go away and was loudly voiced when Japan came into open conflict with international organization from 1931.

Japan's joining the League and finding a Japanese niche in Geneva were moved by the realization that the alternatives were unacceptable. A secondary power like Japan must avoid the dangers of diplomatic isolation. The *taisei junnō* principle had an impressive roster of politically and economically influential backers, including the dominant Ei-Bei Ha in the Foreign Ministry, the business community, and most of the party politicians who dominated cabinets until 1932. Other factors that cemented Japan to the League were China's presence in the organization and the need to avoid a challenge to the Pacific island mandate. In a positive sense, Japan was attracted by the enhancement of its international image that accompanied permanent representation in the League Council. Hence, Japanese engagement was based upon pragmatic and defensive considerations. As such, it was consistent with Japanese practice since the Meiji Restoration. Japan, like the United States, had the option not to join, and would have exercised that option had it failed to get its way on the Shandong question at the Paris Peace Conference. After throwing in its lot with the organization, Japan sincerely made the League a centerpiece of its world posture in an internationalist decade.

International accommodationism, however, was not accompanied by a reorientation of Japan's diplomatic assumptions with regard to the continent of Asia in general and China in particular. Most Japanese, with notable exceptions like Makino Nobuaki, Yoshino Sakuzō, Ishibashi Tanzan, Yamakawa Tadao, and some Pan-Asianists, ignored or discounted Chinese nationalism. Only under international pressure of the Washington Conference were the reversion of Shandong to China and Japanese troop withdrawal from Siberia carried out. There were dis-

agreements over the use of military force, but the government, the military, and intellectuals alike believed that China—and Manchuria in particular—was a legitimate field for Japanese economic and political expansion. Japan in this instance pursued a double strategy of entente with one group of states in combination with an active hegemonic policy toward another. The double strategy became untenable in the 1930s when Japan's activist deeds in China put the interests of other nations at risk and created irrevocable tensions between the Empire and the powers.

Japan's engagement with the League illustrates the diplomatic conduct of a middle power. Japan's posture during and after the World War I period is best understood when this designation is kept in mind. The label "world power," which evokes images of major Western states with global military, political, and military leverage, is commonly misapplied to Japan after the Russo-Japanese War. Japan's interests and capabilities during its League years—and even after, most historians would agree—were primarily regional. The Empire's search for predominance in a regional order became all the more pronounced in the late 1920s and early 1930s as the League of Nations proved to be incapable of either meeting Japan's security needs or restraining its Imperial ambitions. The prevalence of the self-concept of intermediate powerhood is indicated by document and media references to Japan as a "middle-level nation" (*chūkyū kokka*), as well as statements comparing Japan to Italy and France as a power secondary to Britain and the United States.

The parallels to Italy are striking, and comparisons were frequently drawn by Japanese in the interwar period. Like Japan, Italy was one of the Big Five of the Paris Peace Conference. Italy supported Japan on the principles of racial nondiscrimination and national equality at Paris and Geneva. Orlando, like Makino, threatened to bolt the peace conference over a territorial matter, Fiume. The Japanese public cheered this challenge to the conference power structure. In Geneva, Italy backed the Japanese position to forbid military mobilization during arbitration proceedings. After Japan left the League over Manchuria, the journal of the former Japan League of Nations Association took a strong interest in Italy's standing in Europe and especially in the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. As in Japan's case, imperialistic war separated Italy from the League of Nations. Italy eventually formed an alliance with Japan and granted diplomatic recognition to Manchukuo. Both Japan and Italy were middle powers whose national aspirations could not be achieved in the context of a status-quo order. Both eventually found entente with Nazi Germany. Their cases diverge in that Japan was clearly predominant in its region, at a greater distance from its power competitors. In its regional setting, Japan therefore took on and exhibited traits of a major power.

Middle powers that, like interwar Japan, aspire to regional predominance logically have severe misgivings about global systems. They attempt to achieve their destinies in a world dominated by first-class powers through asserting their

strength within their own economic or geographical spheres. Despite their striving, they are not accorded equality, because of inherent weakness in military or economic power, lack of expertise and clout in the diplomatic game, or racial and cultural differences with top-echelon states. Japan perceived itself to be under such limitation at the time it plotted war with the United States in 1941. In his final statement in Washington on 7 December, Special Ambassador Nomura Kichisaburō registered this very complaint:

It is a fact of history that the countries of East Asia for the past hundred years or more have been compelled to observe the status quo under the Anglo-American policy of imperialistic exploitation and to sacrifice themselves to the prosperity of the two nations. The Japanese Government cannot tolerate the perpetuation of such a condition since it directly runs counter to Japan's fundamental policy to enable all nations to enjoy each its proper place in the world.¹

What is particularly irritating to aspiring middle powers is the freezing of the existing world order through the institutionalization of systems that inherently reflect international ranking. Such a development stifles upward mobility and precludes the acquisition of the requisites of leadership status. In its moments of disagreement with the League system — most notably Paris and Mukden — Japan perceived and constructed the League of Nations as a system through which the Euro-American powers were determined to restrain medium-size, up-and-coming powers like itself. Moreover, weak states like China acquired in the League a global podium from which to raise complaints against aggressive neighbors. There they could seek judgment upon their foes and protective sanctions by the powers.

One dilemma of aspiring middle powers is the elusiveness of the diplomatic goals for which they strive. Such states possess the drive to learn from the pacesetting major powers and to capitalize on existing diplomatic practices to the fullest. But once their aims appear to be within reach, the targets are mysteriously replaced by others beyond their grasp. Japan prosecuted World War I and prepared for the peace under the previously sound assumptions that secret treaties would guarantee territorial acquisitions and that the expansion of national power would in turn ensure prestige. Japan discovered at the peace table a new ordering of priorities headed by collective action embodied in the League of Nations. Japan's diplomacy at Paris conveyed the image of an old imperialist, and Japan emerged from the conference mystified and alienated from its neighbors.

Similarly, Japan observed through the 1920s that, in matters of vital interest, the European powers were prone to circumvent the League. The 1923 Corfu Incident was such an instance, when League member Italy refused to accept the League's jurisdiction and the dispute involving an island in the Ionian Sea was re-

solved at a conference of ambassadors. The 1925 Locarno accords are also a case in point. European nations at key junctures did not generate settlements through the mechanisms of the League, but rather presented the League with *faits accomplis*. Christoph Kimmich, historian of Germany's 1926–1935 tenure as a League member, writes that “the Germans had no need to disturb League routine with their demands, for like the other leading powers, they pursued their purposes outside the official machinery of the League.” Diplomats of the Locarno signatory states habitually gathered in Geneva hotel rooms in “Locarno tea parties” that “often assumed greater importance than the public sessions of the council.”² The absence of the United States from the League roster also made it necessary to formulate agreements of a global nature like the Washington treaties and the Peace Pact outside of Geneva. But when Japan asserted its perceived vital interests in Manchuria and shunned League recommendations, it reaped the condemnation of the powers. Matsuoka Yōsuke cynically voiced this frustration after the Pacific War in memorable words: “The Western Powers taught Japan the game of poker but after acquiring most of the chips they pronounced the game immoral and took up contract bridge.”³

The history of Japan's relationship to the League of Nations provides a useful gauge of the state of internationalism in the interwar period. As a diplomatic construct, internationalism is the inclination to participate actively in world affairs and to pursue goals of national interest within the confines of, and subject to the constraints of, a multilateral system governing relations among states. While Japan's behavior at the Paris Peace Conference was rooted in regional considerations, there is much evidence that Japan emerged from Paris and into the League substantially more inclined to internationalism than before. From that time on, Japan's engagement with the League was a paradoxical mix of regionalist proclivities and internationalist ideals. Japan claimed the advantages of an international voice and full equality within the League, while reserving the right to play a lone hand in East Asia when the situation required it. This is conventional diplomatic behavior. A shrewd nation pleads equality where it is weak and asserts superiority where it is strong. At home, the ascendancy of internationalism during the League era was remarkable. The Japan League of Nations Association rose to be one of the most effective organizations of its kind in the world. The League connection generated new internationalist strategies among labor and women's interest groups that previously had few links outside the country. Scientific studies such as ethnology took on new international perspectives. Even when internationalists had to alter their agendas after 1933, ideas central to the League and even precepts from the Covenant showed up in schemes for regional order.

Scrutiny of League affairs in Japan reveals that those who embraced internationalism in the interwar period were a pluralistic bunch. They included mem-

bers of peace societies, diplomats of the Ei-Bei Ha like Makino Nobuaki, courtier Saionji Kinmochi, and Quaker educator Nitobe Inazō. Among them we count capitalist Shibusawa Eiichi, socialists, and laborite Suzuki Bunji. Also represented are “illiberal” internationalists of the ilk of Konoe Fumimaro, Matsuoka Yōsuke, and military figures trained and posted abroad. One can even speak of an “imperialist internationalism” — as does Jessamyn Abel in her study of multilateral thinking in this period.⁴ Each internationalist balanced compelling domestic commitments with cosmopolitan convictions. Like nationalism, internationalism in Japan is a net enclosing a diverse set of creatures. The compulsion to define Japanese internationalism and the tendency to conflate it with pacifism beget an unproductive narrowing of the parameters. We miss its full richness. And we are baffled and offended by its ironies, its ambivalence, and the seemingly contradictory behavior of its adherents.

The cases of Nitobe and Ishii have raised questions about the steadfastness of Japanese internationalists in the face of changed national policy. In them we see public figures, who were closely identified professionally and ideologically with the League of Nations and the Geneva spirit, acquiescing in their nation’s aggression in Manchuria and defiance of the League. Nitobe and Ishii from 1932 acted as international critics of League principles and practices. The withdrawal of Japan from the League in 1933 naturally brought grief and frustration to them and the League of Nations Association. The association took no action to protest Japan’s resignation. President Ishii, board member Nitobe, and other officers of the organization blamed the League and believed Japan had no other option when faced with the rigidity of the Assembly. The question of *tenkō* (about-face) is illuminated by probing the intellectual and professional backgrounds of Nitobe and Ishii. We see that the Nitobe who preached that “the concern of one nation is the concern of the whole world” was little different from the host of his Japanese contemporaries who affirmed moral conservatism and Japanese hegemonism. The former professor of colonial policy genuinely believed that in promoting Japanese ascendancy in East Asia he was a participant in an inevitable evolutionary process of the advancement of civilization. The Ishii who presided over League of Nations peacekeeping endeavors in Europe never forgot his experience of the Boxer Rebellion nor abandoned his construction of China as a historical source of, and corridor for, vital threats to Japan’s existence. As determinants of behavior, these personal imprints in the end proved more consequential than universalist diplomatic principles.

Notions supportive of imperialism infected even Japan’s finest exemplars of international goodwill. When Ishii frequently spoke of international equality, he meant Japanese equality with Western nations, in which China had no rightful place. Nitobe’s congenial private associations with persons of high and low ranking in the League Secretariat do not seem to have included Chinese. Both men asserted

with clear consciences the belief that major nations should enjoy “special privileges” in the territory of their weaker neighbors. They lived out in their professional and personal lives “Orientalist” attitudes toward China and the Chinese. Chinese aspirations for international respect and mutuality were treated as unrealistic or ignored as impediments to Japan’s commercial and political program.

In judging the behavior of Japan’s Geneva community, it is important to keep in mind the geographical context. The realities of East Asian instability were very far removed from the Nitobes and Ishiis when they were posted by Japan to the League of Nations. Lac Léman, Ishii’s “sacred spot,” was a singular environment, a hothouse of international comity. Tokyo, to which Ishii and Nitobe retired in 1927, was a radically different context. For a time genuine “citizens of the world,” they reverted to Japanese citizenship. They responded to the real and perceived threats to Japan with patriotism, regretting only their inability to persuade the broader world they had known and loved of the rightness of Japan’s actions.

The historian must also remember that Nitobe and Ishii spoke their minds in the early 1930s without foreknowledge that the policy trends then under way in Japan would later be judged — with the license of hindsight — as steps toward the Pacific War. Nitobe repeatedly told his American interviewers that Japanese occupation of Manchuria would not be permanent. Nitobe and Ishii wanted the world to believe, as they did, that the establishment of Manchukuo was no more sinister than the Japanese colonization of Taiwan and Korea, the Boxer intervention, or the U.S. machinations in Panama and Mexico — all of which were judged by “enlightened,” progressive Japanese of the time to be steps in the inexorable progress of civilization. Along with Uchida Yasuya, they believed that the projected economic development of Manchukuo would mute foreign critics and that trade between the powers and the new nation-state would eventually give them a vested interest in the enterprise. It is true that the rules of international politics had changed at Paris in 1919, and the new world order had been institutionalized in Geneva. Worldly-wise Japanese comprehended this. The Manchurian crisis gave them deep anxiety precisely because they knew that the League of Nations and the Western powers would object on the basis of the League Covenant, the Nine-Power Treaty, and the Peace Pact. But Japanese internationalists also suspected that the new order was in large part a matter of style and rhetoric and subject to manipulation. The regime of colonialism appeared to be intact the world over; no major powers renounced their regional hegemony. The absence of the United States and the Soviet Union from the League of Nations burdened Japanese internationalists with a handicap that cannot be overstated. And they had seen repeated cases of League-member, European powers sidestepping the organization. By the mid-1930s there were already signs of new regional hegemonies forming in central Europe and the Mediterranean.

Nitobe and Ishii were internationalists in that they were persons of broad

international experience. They knew and valued the world outside of Japan and were held in esteem by that outer world because they could cross bridges between nations and cultures. They understood the benefits that Western learning and diplomacy had to offer Japan; they also understood more accurately than most of their compatriots the real threats that alien nations posed. They were adept at articulating the ideals of universalism embodied in the League of Nations, and in the early 1920s they appear to have voiced them with genuine sincerity. But they were also men purposefully trained by the Meiji state in modern, defensive nationalism. They were incubated in the struggle of nineteenth-century Japan to survive in a predatory world, not in the laboratory of Taishō democracy. The submission of the will to the state was especially deeply inculcated in men in the professional service of the nation. It should be noted, however, that the case of Japanese internationalists is not unique in this regard. In her study of internationalism and the Institute for Pacific Relations, Tomoko Akami asserts that conformity to the will of the state was the pattern for IPR members representing all the countries involved. "What I see as critical," she writes, "is the extent to which members of the IPR and major foundations that funded the IPR were embedded in the framework of the nation-state."⁵ Nitobe resisted drawing a line between nationalism and patriotism on the one hand and internationalism on the other. In his opening address at the Kyoto IPR meeting in 1929 he stated,

An international mind is not the antonym of a national mind. Nor is it a synonym for a cosmopolitan mind, which lacks a national basis. The international mind is the expansion of the national, just as philanthropy or charity . . . should begin at home. A truly international mind should include patriotism and vice versa.⁶

Had the leadership careers of Ishii and Nitobe extended through the 1930s, it is doubtful that they would have raised their voices against the China war or the New Order in East Asia. In the final analysis, the claims of the state weighed more heavily on Nitobe Inazō and Ishii Kikujirō than did the claims of the forty-two nations that cast their votes against Japan in the League Assembly in 1933.

Another story needs to be written about how internationalist principles survived the war, were revitalized during the Allied Occupation, and have deeply colored Japan's role in the world ever since. Personalities with League sympathies — Shidehara, Ashida, Takagi, Yanaihara, among others — played leadership roles in political and intellectual life in the immediate postwar period. In a Japan stripped of its armed forces, colonial possessions, and occupied territories, the Foreign Ministry leadership concluded that Japan could secure the needs of the people only through international cooperation. Joining the United Nations was the way to exemplify that cooperation and restore Japan's credibility among the nations of the

world. But the Occupation disallowed any sovereign initiatives in foreign affairs, and the overt quest for UN membership had to wait until April 1952, when the San Francisco Peace Treaty took effect. Even during the Occupation, Japan took what preliminary steps the Allied Powers allowed and joined such UN special agencies as the International Telecommunications Union, the Universal Postal Union, and UNESCO. By November 1951 the International Labor Organization — which had stayed afloat despite the League's demise — readmitted Japan to membership with the approval of the Japanese cabinet.⁷

In the preamble of the peace treaty, Japan pledged to join the United Nations and the Allied signatories agreed to welcome Japan to the organization.⁸ Just two months after the treaty took effect, Japan formally applied for UN membership. Japanese *entrée* immediately became a pawn of the politics of the cold war. The United States and its allies had blocked Soviet ally China and Soviet satellite states from membership, and the USSR — which was not a party to the peace treaty — in turn used its veto power three times to bar pro-Western countries, including Japan. For four years, Japan employed every tactic in its diplomatic arsenal — including several package formulae — all to no avail. In the mist of setbacks, post-Occupation Japan persisted in demonstrating its serious intentions. It established a UN observer office in New York and quickly elevated the permanent observer to the rank of ambassador. Serving in this position from 1953 was Foreign Vice-Minister Sawada Renzō, who had been a member of the Japanese delegation to the First League Assembly and had served in Paris as chief of the Japan Office of the League of Nations. The International Labor Organization chose Tokyo as the site of the 1953 Third Asian Regional Conference, the first ILO gathering held in Japan. In the following year Japan reclaimed its prewar position as a permanent member of the ILO board of directors. The ILO branch office was reopened in Tokyo in 1955.

A thaw on the UN membership question came when Japan and the Soviet Union reached agreement to establish diplomatic relations in 1956. The nation was admitted to the world body on 18 December of that year by a General Assembly vote of 77–0. Heading Japan's first delegation to the Assembly was none other than Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru, who had served as minister to China at the time of the Manchurian Incident and wartime foreign minister under Tōjō Hideki. As Japan took its seat in the world body, Shigemitsu contrasted the new Japan with the nation's stance of the 1930s. He told reporters that Japanese admission had “put an end to the turmoil in Japan ever since the 1931 Manchurian Incident.” In a somber speech to the Assembly, Shigemitsu intoned the universalist principle uniquely inscribed in Japan's postwar constitution: “We believe that no nation is responsible to itself alone, but that laws of political morality are universal; and that obedience to such laws is incumbent upon all nations who would sustain their own sovereignty and justify their sovereign relationship with other nations.” Through the 1960s, experience with the League of Nations was not uncommon in the resumes

of senior Japanese diplomats in New York. Matsui Akira, ambassador to the UN from 1962 to 1967, had accompanied his father, plenipotentiary Matsui Keishirō, to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Matsui's successor, Ambassador Tsuruoka Senjin, had seen service in Geneva.⁹

Accession to UN membership had the overwhelming support of the Japanese populace, and Japan's diplomatic blue book for 1957 posited a policy of "UN-centered diplomacy" (*Kokuren chūshinshugi*). The initial United Nations euphoria notwithstanding, the U.S.-Japan alliance has proved in subsequent decades to be the centerpiece of Japanese security policy. The 1957 Basic Policy for National Defense, approved by the cabinet of Kishi Nobusuke, posited the security treaty with the United States as the framework for dealing with external aggression but pointedly added, "pending the effective functioning of the United Nations in the future in deterring and repelling such aggression." Even the wording of the treaty takes pains to position the pact within the permissible framework of the United Nations Charter.¹⁰ Since 1957, when Akashi Yasushi became the first Japanese national to join the UN Secretariat, Japanese have held leadership positions in every UN humanitarian organization. Jurist Tanaka Kotarō was elected to the International Court of Justice in 1960. The Assembly has frequently voted Japan to nonpermanent membership in the Security Council, and the nation has used the Council as a forum to protest the missile testing programs of North Korea. Japan is second only to the United States in its contribution to the UN budget. On the basis of global leverage achieved peacefully through industry and market growth, Japan became, for the first time and in a new sense, a world power.¹¹

The nation's relationship to, and status within, international organization is an issue frequently aired in Japan. Bidding for a broader voice in world affairs, Japan has sought a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. This quest was first voiced by Foreign Minister Aichi Kiichi in an address to the General Assembly in 1969. When the cold war subsided, Japanese prime minister Miyazawa Kiichi proposed in the United Nations a reexamination of the function and composition of the Council. Japan continues to press for Security Council reform, seeking not only the expansion of permanent membership of the Council so as to seat itself, but also the revision of rules concerning the use of the veto. Japan moreover proposes that the UN delete the dated "enemy" clauses (Articles 53 and 107) from its charter.¹² In Japanese discussions of UN reform, the League of Nations itself is not forgotten. One is struck by the frequently voiced concern that the world avoid a historical recurrence of the demise of the League.¹³ Ask Japanese today about their country and the League, and the dramatic walkout by Matsuoka and his deputies will most likely be the image that comes to mind. Memory of the long-term dire consequences of that 1933 act of defiance has helped motivate Japanese leaders since 1945 to follow a nearly consistent posture of international accommodationism. For two decades from 1984, the face of Nitobe Inazō graced the 5,000-yen note, helping to

perpetuate in historical memory a symbol of interwar international cooperation. A balanced rendering of Japan's prewar international history that includes Japan's constructive role in the League of Nations could not but help Japan realize its aspirations for an elevated role in the United Nations.

While issues of war memory, textbook renditions of the imperialist past, and island territorial disputes dominate media reportage on Japan's relationships with its neighbors, many of the issues debated in the interwar period of Japan's League relationship lie at the heart of Japanese foreign affairs. Just as the Kakushin Dōshikai called for recruitment and promotion of talented men for diplomatic service in the wake of the Paris Peace Conference, so today, with unpredictable forces at play in East Asia, critics voice the necessity that the diplomatic corps represent the cream of the human resource pool.¹⁴ As in the late 1920s, the regional impulse is strong. In East Asia, vigorous intraregional trade activity has brought about economic integration. On the political front, sixteen Asian heads of state gathered in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005 for the first-ever East Asian Summit. Significantly, the United States was not party to the meeting, nor did it send observers. China in particular envisioned the parley as a step to diminish the overwhelming military and political role played in Asia by the United States since World War II. China has replaced the United States as Japan's largest trading partner. Japanese policy planners understand regionalism as a matter of increasing interdependence not limited to security and economics. They foresee the rapid development of regional cooperation in a wide range of areas, including information technology, the environment, energy, food safety, health care, counterterrorism and counterpiracy, and programs to stem narcotics and human trafficking. These shared interests will transform East Asian community from concept to a reality. They also portend a "second wave of liberal internationalism," focused less on the nation-state and national security and more on human security in an ecologically sustainable world.¹⁵

In the realm of diplomacy of the twenty-first century, the vital questions raised in Japan's League of Nations connection are relevant to the broader world of the powers as well. With the removal of the checks and balances of the cold war, major powers must rethink the question of what constraints international order should impose on the prerogatives and capabilities of powerful states. As state actors pursue their local interests, can they afford to ignore global scripts and world opinion? With the lack of a major ideological and military counterforce, should they adhere to bilateral and multilateral agreements on disarmament and the environment? Can diplomatic isolation have harmful consequences even for a state without peer in its region or beyond? The history of Japan and the League of Nations teaches that powers do act, and sometimes must act, unilaterally in the pursuit of their vital interests. This history also shows that those who do so repeatedly and arrogantly act at peril to themselves and the world.

Notes

Introduction

1. An example of the position that authoritarian institutions and militarization are more important than Taishō democracy and international cooperation in interwar Japan is that of Katō Shūichi's essay, "Taishō Democracy as the Pre-Stage for Japanese Militarism." The literary historian and critic argues that the flurry of liberalism in the post-World War I period did not challenge the traditional aspects of Japanese society but actually encouraged bureaucratization and militarization. The years of the 1920s prepared the Japanese grass roots "to accept the militarization of the whole state, the initiative for which came from the long established authority of the Imperial Army." Katō Shūichi, "Taishō Democracy as the Pre-stage for Japanese Militarism," Bernard S. Silberman and H. D. Harootunian, eds., *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy* (Princeton, 1974), 218, 232.

2. Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, 1997), 57.

3. The standard, Western-language introduction to prewar pacifists is Nobuya Bamba and John F. Howes, eds., *Pacifism in Japan: The Christian and Socialist Tradition* (Kyoto, 1978). The writers in this volume construe pacifism broadly, to include internationalists who championed nonviolent alternatives to war. A more recent work by Mari Yamamoto, *Grass-roots Pacifism in Post-war Japan* (London, 2004), probes the content of Japanese pacifism. Yamamoto addresses the legacy of prewar pacifist movements in the introduction, and deals primarily with their socialist manifestation. She does not treat internationalism as part of the pacifist spectrum. Activities and viewpoints of the Imperial Army in the World War I and interwar periods are treated in Kitaoka Shinichi, *Nihon Rikugun to Tairiku Seisaku, 1906–1918* [The Japanese Army and continental policy, 1906–1918] (Tokyo, 1978); Charles B. Burdick, *The Japanese Siege of Tsingtau: World War I in Asia* (Hamden CT, 1976); Leonard A. Humphreys, *The Way of the Heavenly Sword: The Japanese Army in the 1920's* (Stanford, 1995); James B. Crowley, *Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930–1938* (Princeton, 1966); and Fujiwara Akira, "The Role of the Japanese Army," Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese-American Relations, 1931–1941* (New York, 1973). On naval matters of the period, see Roger Dingman, *Power in the Pacific: The Origins of Naval Arms Limitation, 1914–1922* (Chicago, 1976); Stephen Howarth, *The Fighting Ships of the Rising Sun* (New York, 1983); Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yō: The*

Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885–1945 (Honolulu, 1988); David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887–1941* (Annapolis, 1997); and Asada Sadao, “The Japanese Navy and the United States,” Borg and Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History*, 225–260.

1. The World War I Experience

1. Quoted in Kobayashi Tatsuo, “Pari heiwa kaigi to Nihon no gaikō” [The Paris Peace Conference and Japan’s diplomacy], Ueda Toshio, ed., *Kamikawa sensei kanreki kinen: Kindai Nihon gaikōshi no kenkyū* [Studies in modern Japanese diplomatic history in honor of Professor Kamikawa] (Tokyo, 1956), 368.

2. For a bibliography of Western and Japanese sources on all aspects of Japan’s role in World War I, see Thomas W. Burkman, “Japan,” Robin Higham, ed., *Researching World War I: A Handbook* (Westport CT, 2003), 293–313. The finest comprehensive study in English is Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914–1919* (Cambridge MA, 1999). Attuned to domestic politics, Dickinson focuses on the war as a centerpiece of an internal debate on what the nation should become in the post-Meiji era.

3. Quoted in Wayne C. Thompson, “Chinese and Japanese Nationalism in the Age of Imperialism: The Views of Kurt Riezler,” Virginia Consortium for Asian Studies Occasional Papers 1:1 (Spring 1979), 24–25; see also Thompson, *In the Eye of the Storm: Kurt Riezler and the Crises of Modern Germany* (Iowa City, 1980), 45.

4. Gerd Hardach, *The First World War, 1914–1918* (Berkeley, 1977), 287–289.

5. William W. Lockwood, *Economic Development of Japan: Growth and Structural Change, 1868–1938* (Princeton, 1954), 42; George C. Allen, *A Short Economic History of Modern Japan* (London, 1962), 98.

6. Allen, *Short Economic History*, 99, 100, 112; W. H. Pitkin, “Proposed Occupation by Japanese Troops of Eastern Siberia,” 1 April 1918, 20: Inquiry Document no. 467, Records of the Research and Analysis Reports, National Archives.

7. Ukita Kazutami, “World Organization after the War,” *Heiwa jihō*, 5:10 (October 1917), 3–4; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 8 December 1918: Kobayashi Tatsuo, ed., *Suiusō nikki* [Suiusō diary] (Tokyo, 1966), 335; Konoe Fumimaro, “Ei-Bei hon’i no heiwashugi o hai su” [I reject Anglo-American pacifism], *Nihon oyobi Nihonjin*, 746 (15 December 1918), 25; Itō Miyoji, “Kōwa jōyaku ni kansuru iken” [Opinion on the peace treaty], n.d., *Suiusō nikki*, 793.

8. Satō Seizaburō, “The Foundations of Modern Japanese Foreign Policy,” Robert A. Scalapino, ed., *The Foreign Policy of Modern Japan* (Berkeley, 1977), 379; Paul B. Seguin, “The Deteriorating Strategic Position of Japan, 1853–1945: A Study of the Revolution of Intercontinental Warfare” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1972), 203–205.

9. J. David Singer and Melvin Small, “The Composition and Status Ordering of the International System: 1815–1940,” *World Politics*, 18:2 (January 1966), 272–273. On the importance of international ranking to the Japanese, see Herbert Passin, “Socio-cultural Factors in the Japanese Perception of International Order,” *Japan Institute of International Affairs, Annual Review* 5 (1969–1970), 52–58.

10. Japan’s military participation in World War I is detailed in Charles B. Burdick,

The Japanese Siege of Tsingtao: World War I in Asia (Hamden CT, 1976); Tsing Yuan, "The Japanese Intervention in Shantung during World War I," Alvin D. Coox and Hilary Conroy, eds., *China and Japan: A Search for Balance since World War I* (Santa Barbara, 1978), 19–34; and Peter Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan, 1911–1915: A Study of British Far Eastern Policy* (London, 1969).

11. Henry Rosovsky, "Capital Formation in Pre-war Japan: Current Findings and Future Problems," C. D. Cowan, ed., *The Economic Development of China and Japan: Studies in Economic and Political Economy* (London, 1964), 217; Lockwood, *Economic Development of Japan*, 38–42; Ono Kazuichirō, "Dai ichiji taisen zengo no gaikoku boeki" [Foreign trade before and after World War I], Hazama Genzō et al., eds., *Kōza Nihon shihonshugi hattatsu shiron: Dai ichiji sekai taisen zengo* [Studies in the history of the development of Japanese capitalism, before and after World War I] (Tokyo, 1968), 246; Derek H. Aldcroft, *From Versailles to Wall Street, 1919–1929* (Berkeley, 1977), 37; Yuan, "Japanese Intervention in Shantung," 25–27; Albert Feuerwerker, *The Chinese Economy, 1912–1949* (Ann Arbor, 1969), 74.

12. Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, 182–190; Edward Grey, *Twenty-five Years, 1892–1916* (New York, 1925), II, 104.

13. Peter A. Berton, "The Secret Russo-Japanese Alliance of 1916" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1956), 62–64, 104.

14. Robert Lansing to Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, "Memorandum on Course to Be Pursued to Preserve the Status Quo in China," 7 August 1914: Stanley K. Hornbeck Papers, Hoover Institution, Box 237.

15. Ōkuma Shigenobu, "Ayamaeru minzokuteki henken no matsuro" [The end of erroneous ideas of racial prejudice], *Shin Nippon*, 4:14 (December 1914), 31.

16. Seguin, "Deteriorating Strategic Position of Japan," 221–233; Satō Tetsutarō, "Ōshū taisen no kaigun ni ataetaru kyōkun" [Lessons the European war taught the navy], *Kokka oyobi kokkagaku*, 4:1 (January 1916), 18–19; Malcolm D. Kennedy, *The Estrangement of Great Britain and Japan, 1917–1935* (Berkeley, 1969), 9.

17. Xu Guoqi, *China and the Great War: China's Pursuit of a New National Identity and Internationalization* (Cambridge, 2005), 235–236; Russell H. Fifield, *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East: The Diplomacy of the Shandong Question* (Hamden CT, 1952), 25–26, 109–110; Frank C. Langdon, "Japan's Failure to Establish Friendly Relations with China in 1917–1918," *Pacific Historical Review*, 26:3 (August 1957), 254–256.

18. Hardach, *The First World War*, 255, 258; William Reynolds Braisted, *The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909–1922* (Austin, 1971), 418.

19. Secretary of State Robert Lansing to President Woodrow Wilson, 20 June 1918: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918*, U.S. Department of State, 171; Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People* (New York, 1969), 547, 637.

20. Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 10 September 1918: U.S. Department of State Decimal Files, National Archives, 894.00/144½.

21. Stanley K. Hornbeck, "Concerning Negotiations for Cooperation between United States and Japan," n.d.: Hornbeck Papers, Box 240.

22. Akira Iriye, *After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921–1931* (Cambridge MA, 1965), 9; Walter LaFeber, "Beikoku Kyokutō gaikō no shudai: 'Kyōsō

tai kyochō' ka shinshutsu ka" [The theme of American Far Eastern policy: "Competitive-cooperative" or invasion?], Hosoya Chihiro and Saitō Makoto, eds., *Washinton taisei to Nichi-Bei kankei* [The Washington system and Japanese-American relations] (Tokyo, 1978), 201–203.

23. J. W. Ballantine to Secretary of State Lansing, 16 October 1919: 894.00/155; Imai Seiichi, "Taishōki ni okeru gunbu no seijiteki chi'i" [The political position of the military during the Taishō period], *Shisō*, 399 (September 1957), 16; Iriye, *After Imperialism*, 36–37.

24. Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 28 April 1919: 894.00/151.

25. Foreign Minister Motono Ichirō to Prime Minister Terauchi, 16 December 1917: Terauchi Masatake Papers, National Diet Library, Correspondence no. 178-4; Hara Takashi, "Kōkyū heiwa no senketsu kōan — Washinton kaigi ni saishite Nihon kokumin no sekaikan o nobu" [Prerequisites for permanent peace — the Japanese people's worldview on the occasion of the Washington Conference], *Gaikō jihō*, 33:405 (15 September 1921), 42; memo, "Preliminary Report on Japanese Foreign Policy," 26 January 1918, 55–62: Hornbeck Papers, Box 238.

26. Kawakami Kiyoshi, *Japan and World Peace* (New York, 1919), 48.

27. N. Gordon Levin, *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution* (New York, 1968), vii.

28. Woodrow Wilson, *The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics* (Boston, 1898), 581–582; Fourteen Points address, 8 January 1918, and Five Particulars speech, 27 September 1918: quoted in Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, eds., *War and Peace: Presidential Messages, Addresses, and Public Papers (1917–1924)* (New York, 1927), I, 155–162, 253–261.

29. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918*, Supplement 1, I, 270.

30. Levin, *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics*, 29–31, 46–48.

31. Uchida to Lansing, 1 October 1918: 894.002/46.

32. Akira Iriye, *Nihon no gaikō: Meiji ishin kara gendai made* [Japan's diplomacy: From the Meiji Restoration to the present day] (Tokyo, 1966), 27.

33. Ballantine to Secretary of State Lansing, 31 January 1917: 894.032/20; Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 24 May 1918: 894.00/146; *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, 12 July 1917, 55.

34. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 19 November 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 309; Konoe, "Ei-Bei hon'i no heiwashugi o hai su," 25.

35. Mitani Taichirō, "Tenkanki (1918–1921) no gaikō shidō: Hara Takashi oyobi Tanaka Giichi o chūshin to shite" [Foreign policy in a period of transition (1918–1921): With special attention to Hara Takashi and Tanaka Giichi], Shinohara Hajime and Mitani Taichirō, eds., *Kindai Nihon no seiji shidō* [Political leadership in modern Japan] (Tokyo, 1965), 324.

36. Michael K. Blaker, *Japanese International Negotiating Style* (New York, 1977), 128; Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen* [The centennial history of the Japanese Foreign Ministry] (Tokyo, 1969), I, 653–667; Kobayashi Tatsuo, "Rinji Gaikō Chōsa linkai no setchi" [The establishment of the Temporary Advisory Council for Foreign Affairs], Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai, ed., *Nihon gaikōshi no shomondai*, II [Issues in Japanese diplomatic history, II] (Tokyo, 1964), 53–71.

37. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 13 November and 8 December 1918, 3 and 22 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 288–290, 342, 392–393, 424–425.

38. Hara Takashi, “Reflections on Lasting Peace,” *Living Age*, 312:4044 (7 January 1922), 10–11; Hara, “Kōkyū heiwa no senketsu kōan,” 32–44; Mitani, “Tenkanki no gaikō shidō,” 293–294; Tōyama Shigeki and Adachi Yoshiko, eds., *Kindai Nihon seiji hikkei* [Handbook of modern Japanese political history] (Tokyo, 1961), 124; Rustin Gates, “‘Scorched Earth’ Diplomacy: Uchida Yasuya, Manchukuo, and Japan’s Withdrawal from the League of Nations,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, 31 March–3 April 2005, 13.

39. Hara Keiichirō, ed., *Hara Takashi nikki* [The diary of Hara Takashi] (Tokyo, 1950–1952), 15 and 17 November 1918, VIII, 82, 84–86.

40. Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Cambridge MA, 1954), 165; Leonard A. Humphreys, “The Imperial Japanese Army, 1918–1929: The Disintegration of the Meiji Military System” (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1974), 6–8; Barbara J. Brooks, *Japan’s Imperial Diplomacy: Consuls, Treaty Ports, and War in China, 1895–1938* (Honolulu, 2000), 173–174; Ernest P. Young, “Chinese Leaders and Japanese Aid in the Early Republic,” Akira Iriye, ed., *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays in Political and Cultural Interactions* (Princeton, 1980), 127.

41. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 8 December 1918, 26 January and 22 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 333–340, 379–385, 413–428; Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, I, 496–516; Mitani, “Tenkanki no gaikō shidō,” 302; Imai, “Taishōki ni okeru gunbu.”

42. *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 12 January 1918, 3.

43. Satō, “Foundations of Modern Japanese Foreign Policy,” 387; Blaker, *Japanese International Negotiating Style*, 101–102, 220, 224. Constitutional theorist Minobe Tatsukichi argued that an extraordinary Diet session should debate the Versailles Treaty, but the legislature was not given a role in the ratification process. Minobe, “Kokusai Renmei to Teikoku Kenpō to no kankei” [The League of Nations and the Imperial constitution], *Kokka gakkai zasshi*, 34:1 (January 1920), 82–83. By the terms of the Portsmouth Treaty, which concluded the Russo-Japanese War, Russia was not required to pay an indemnity, and the public was outraged.

44. *Japan Advertiser*, 1 October 1918, 12.

45. Hugh R. Wilson, *Diplomat between Wars* (New York, 1941), 184–185; Asada Sadao, “Nichi-Bei kankei no imēji (senzen)” [Images in Japanese-American relations before the war], Miwa Kimitada, ed., *Sekai no naka no Nihon* [Japan in the world] (Tokyo, 1974), 310. “Kasumigaseki” is the name of the Tokyo district in which the Foreign Ministry is located, and the place-name has come to stand for the ministry, much as “Foggy Bottom” and “Whitehall” are used in the U.S. and British cases, respectively. It also refers to the official, mainstream position in Japanese foreign policy at any given time.

46. Articles 13 and 56 of the Meiji Constitution; Kenneth Colegrave, “The Treaty Making Power in Japan,” *American Journal of International Law*, 25:2 (April 1931), 277.

47. Tokutomi Sohō, “Taishō seinen no ichi dai shimei” [The primary mission of Taishō youth], *Jitsugyō no Nihon*, 21:7 (10 April 1918), 14.

48. Satō Seizaburō, “Japan-U.S. Relations: Yesterday and Tomorrow,” *Japan Interpreter*, 8:4 (Winter 1974), 434; former prime minister Terauchi in Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 8 December 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 341.

49. Hara, “Kōkyū heiwa no senketsu kōan,” 41; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 8 December 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 342, 337, 340; Shumpei Okamoto, “Ishibashi Tanzan and the Twenty-One Demands,” Iriye, ed., *The Chinese and the Japanese*, 184.

50. Charles Seymour, ed., *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House* (Boston and New York, 1926–1928), III, 25; *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Lansing Papers (1914–1920)*, II, 22.

51. Jordan to Foreign Office, Peking, 23 December 1918: John Van Antwerp MacMurray Papers, Princeton University Library, Box 58.

52. Gregory Mason, “Japan and Bolshevism: An Authorized Interview with Baron Shinpei Gotō, Japan’s Minister for Foreign Affairs,” *Outlook*, 119:1 (12 June 1918), 260–261.

53. Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 1 March 1920: 894.00/160; Paul S. Reinsch, *An American Diplomat in China* (New York, 1922), 335.

54. A Japanese political cartoon on this theme is reproduced in *Cartoons Magazine*, 7:5 (May 1915), 711; “Japan Is Aiming at Control of China,” *New York Times*, 22 March 1916, 7.

55. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention*, 86; Jordan to Foreign Office, Peking, 23 December 1918: MacMurray Papers, Box 58.

56. Madeleine Chi, “Ts’ao Ju-lin (1876–1966): His Japanese Connections,” Iriye, ed., *The Chinese and the Japanese*, 144–147.

57. Madeleine Chi, *China Diplomacy, 1914–1918* (Cambridge MA, 1970), 115–128.

58. Motono to Terauchi, 16 December 1917: Terauchi Papers, Correspondence no. 178–4; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 22 December 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 348.

59. Xu, *China and the Great War*, 1, 10, 82–83, 97–98, 130. By 1917, Chinese laborers in France numbered 140,000.

60. James William Morley, *The Japanese Thrust into Siberia, 1918* (New York, 1957), 36 n. 15.

61. Ōyama Azusa, ed., “Yamagata Gensui ikensho” [Memoranda of Field Marshal Yamagata], Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai, ed., *Nihon gaikōshi no shomondai*, I [Issues in Japanese diplomatic history, I] (Tokyo, 1963), 106; Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention*, 179; Sir Cecil Spring Rice to American authorities, Washington, ca. late 1917: Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, III [Documents on Japanese foreign policy, III] (Tokyo, 1918), 481; Matsui Hakken, “Kōwa to Nihon” [The peace and Japan], *Kuroshio*, 3:1 (1 January 1918), 57.

62. Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 8 April 1918: 894.00/142; Morley, *Japanese Thrust into Siberia*, 188–189, 363, 366; Humphreys, “Imperial Japanese Army,” 15–16; Dickinson, *War and Japanese Reinvention*, 183–187.

63. E.g., see Joseph W. Ballantine, “Memoirs,” 45: Ballantine Papers, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Box 1.

64. Lansing to Morris, 16 November 1918: Roland S. Morris Papers, Library of Congress, Box 4.

65. *Japan Weekly Chronicle* editorial, 13 September 1917, 401; see also 30 August 1917, 334, and 11 October 1917, 595; Anesaki Masaharu, quoted in *Literary Digest*, 55:4 (28 July 1917), 25; Xu, *China and the Great War*, 86–87.

66. Japan categorically denied allegations of double diplomacy at the time of the peace

conference, but research in German, Austrian, and Japanese archives confirms that Japan in the early stages of the war played both ends against the middle. See Frank W. Ikle, “Japanese-German Peace Negotiations during World War I,” *American Historical Review*, 71:1 (October 1965), 62–76; Miyake Masaki, “Dai Ichiji Sekai Taisen ni okeru Nichi-Do kankei to Nichi-Ro kankei: Nichi-Do Sutokkuhorumu kōshō to tai Ro buki kyōyo mondai” [Japanese-German and Japanese-Russian relations during World War I: Japanese-German negotiations in Stockholm and the issue of arms to Russia], Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai, ed., *Heiwa to sensō no kenkyū*, II [Studies on peace and war, II] (Tokyo, 1967), 108; Ian H. Nish, *Alliance in Decline: A Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1908–1923* (London, 1972), 178–183; and *New York Times*, 25 April 1919, 3.

67. Jessie C. Lyon, “Diplomatic Relations between the United States, Mexico, and Japan, 1913–1917 (Ph.D. dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1975), i, 154–155; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, 212–213.

68. Gregory Mason, “Japan, Germany, Russia, and the Allies: An Authorized Interview with Count Masatake Terauchi, Premier of Japan,” *Outlook*, 119:1 (1 May 1918), 20; Uchida Ryōhei to Terauchi, 31 January 1918: Terauchi Papers, Correspondence no. 345-2.

69. *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, 26 July 1917, 148–149, and 1 November 1917, 718. Japan later reversed its opposition to Chinese belligerency in exchange for secret pledges by the European Allies to support Japanese territorial claims. *Hōchi shinbun* 30 January 1918, 1; *Yomiuri* editorial of 26 July 1919: cited in *Japan Advertiser*, 27 July 1918, 3.

70. Ishii to Ōkuma, 22 August 1915, *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1915, III, pt. 1, 30–31; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, 257–258, 277, 302; Greene quoted in Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, 261–262.

71. Tomoko Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific: The United States, Japan, and the Institute of Pacific Relations in War and Peace, 1919–45* (London and New York, 2002), 7–8, 78.

72. Mitani Taichirō, “Taishō demokurashii to Amerika” [Taishō democracy and America], Saitō Makoto, ed., *Demokurashii to Nichi-Bei kankei* [Democracy and Japanese-American relations] (Tokyo, 1973), 126–137; Peter Duus, *Party Rivalry and Political Change in Taishō Japan* (Cambridge MA, 1969), 110–118; Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 20 March and 28 April 1919: 894.00/150, 894.00/151; John Dewey, “Japan and America,” *Dial*, 66:790 (17 May 1919), 503; Ozaki Yukio speaking at a Kenseikai Party gathering, 26 January 1919: quoted in *Japan Advertiser*, 28 January 1919.

73. Bernard S. Silberman, “The Political Theory and Program of Yoshino Sakuzō,” *Journal of Modern History*, 31:4 (March 1959), 319–320; Yoshino Sakuzō, “Gurē Kyō no ‘kokusai dōmei ron’ o yomu” [Upon reading Lord Grey’s “international union idea”], *Chūō kōron*, 33:7 (July 1918), 61–62.

74. Hara Takashi, “Through Nationalism to Internationalism,” *Outlook*, 125:7 (16 June 1920), 316.

75. For more extensive historical and theoretical treatments of the concept of diplomatic conformity, see Blaker, *Japanese International Negotiating Style*, 19–21; and Mushakoji Kinhide, “The Cultural Premises of Japanese Diplomacy,” *Japan Interpreter*, 7:3–4 (Summer–Autumn 1972), 282–292.

76. Uchida to Chinda, 26 December 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 667; Makino telegram quoted in *Suiusō nikki*, 387; proceedings of the Privy Council, 27 October 1919: National Archives of Japan, Item no. 2A, 15–9, D431; Yoshino Sakuzō, “Nanzo Kokusai Renmei ni kanyō suru o chūcho” [Why the hesitation to join the League of Nations], *Chūō kōron*, 34:1 (January 1919), 154; Suzuki Bunji, “Rōdō undō to kokusai kankei” [The labor movement and international relations], *Rōdō oyobi sangyō*, 8:1 (1 January 1919), 2–4; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 29 October 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 709; Gunjika [Military Affairs Section], “Kokusai Renmei kaku gundaihyōsha ni ataru kunrei no ken” [Draft of instructions to the several military representatives at the League of Nations], 16 September 1920, and Kaigunshō [Navy Ministry], “Kokusai Renmei kankei jikō kenkyūkai ni okeru gunbi seigen mondai ni kansuru kenkyū narabini ketsugi” [Research and resolutions on the problem of limitation of armaments prepared by the committee for the study of matters related to the League of Nations], 5 August 1920: Japanese Military Documents, National Archives, Microfilm items T1207 and T1208.

77. Katō Takaaki, “Ōshū senran to sekai ni okeru Teikoku no chi’i” [The European hostilities and Japan’s position in the world], *Chūō kōron*, 32: 6 (June 1917): 28–41.

78. Roger F. Hackett, *Yamagata Aritomo in the Rise of Modern Japan, 1838–1922* (Cambridge MA, 1971), 270; Yamagata Aritomo, “Taishi seisaku ikensho” [Memorandum on China policy], 1914, quoted in Ōyama Azusa, ed., *Yamagata Aritomo ikensho* [Memoranda of Yamagata Aritomo] (Tokyo, 1966), 339–345; Tokutomi Sohō, *Kōshaku Yamagata Aritomo den* [Biography of Prince Yamagata Aritomo] (Tokyo, 1933), III, 942–946.

79. Ōyama, ed., “Yamagata Gensui ikensho,” 106–107.

80. *Japan Advertiser*, 14 April 1929; Samuel G. Blythe, “Japanese Who May Be Members of the Peace Commission”: Inquiry Document no. 660, Records of the Research and Analysis Reports, National Archives; Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 10 September 1918: 894.00/144½; Nitobe Inazō to Morris, London, 20 August 1919: Morris Papers, Box 2; Mason, “Japan and Bolshevism,” 260.

81. Gotō Shinpei, “An Outline of My Opinions on the Present Political Situation,” June 1916: Hornbeck Papers, Box 246 (also Morris Papers, Box 6).

82. Gotō Shinpei, “Terauchi shusō ni teishutsu seru Gotō naimudaijin no ikensho” [Home Minister Gotō memorandum presented to Prime Minister Terauchi], n.d., *Suiusō nikki*, 806–811.

2. The Idea of a League

1. C. M. Mason, “British Policy on the Establishment of a League of Nations, 1914–1919” (Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1971), 9, 30–31. Standard sources on popular movements for the League in America and Britain are Ruhl J. Bartlett, *The League to Enforce Peace* (Chapel Hill NC, 1944); Henry R. Winkler, *The League of Nations Movement in Great Britain, 1914–1919* (New Brunswick NJ, 1952); and George W. Egerton, *Great Britain and the Creation of the League of Nations: Strategy, Politics, and International Organization, 1914–1919* (Chapel Hill NC, 1978).

2. John Morton Blum, *Woodrow Wilson and the Politics of Morality* (Boston, 1956), 125; Five Particulars speech, 27 September 1918: Baker and Dodd, eds., *War and Peace*, I, 256.

3. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, 697–700; Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period* (Westport CT, 2002), 18. Nish asserts that through the work of the commission Japan was in a “remarkable state of readiness” for the Paris Peace Conference. This would not apply to Japanese preparation on the issue of the League of Nations.

4. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, 700–703; Motono to Chinda, 17 November 1917: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1917, III, 163.

5. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, I, 932.

6. Henry A. Atkinson, *Theodore Marburg: The Man and His Work* (New York, 1951), 12; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 39–43; Lowell to Marburg, 29 August 1917: John H. Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea: Documents and Correspondence of Theodore Marburg* (New York, 1932), I, 333; Lowell to Short, 19 June 1918: League to Enforce Peace Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Box 7.

7. Marburg to Gulick, 20 June 1916: Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, I, 128; Marburg to Taft, 12 July 1916: William Howard Taft Presidential Papers, Library of Congress, Reel 168; Marburg address to faculty of New York University, 31 October 1920: Latane, II, 760–761. Marburg cited the Monroe Doctrine model in vindication of Japan’s right to Asian predominance. For reasons similar to those for excluding China, Marburg wanted to exclude the Balkan states and most Latin American countries from League membership. Marburg to Grey, 28 August 1916: A. Lawrence Lowell Papers, Harvard University Archives, Box 3.

8. Bullen to Marburg, 16 May 1916: Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, I, 120–121; Marburg to Bullen, 7 June 1916: Latane, I, 123–124; Marburg to Gulick, 20 June 1916: Latane, I, 127–128; Ōkuma to Gulick, 28 January 1915: Sidney L. Gulick Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

9. U.S. Department of State appraisal of Ōkuma, n.d.: Hornbeck Papers, Box 255; Marburg to Ōkuma, 10 July 1916: Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, I, 130–131.

10. Satō to Marburg, 15 January 1917: Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, I, 246–247.

11. Marburg to Satō, 15 January and 16 May 1917: Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, I, 245–246, 300; Satō to Marburg, 18 January 1917: Latane, I, 253.

12. Marburg to Satō, 10 April 1917: Latane, *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, I, 290; Marburg to Frazar, 16 May 1917: Latane, I, 301–302.

13. Dai Nihon Heiwa Kyōkai [Japan Peace Society], ed., *Heiwa Kyōsei Dōmeikai* [The League to Enforce Peace] (Tokyo, 1917). Included in the translation were the proposal for a world organization by the LEP and speeches by Wilson, Taft, Melville E. Stone, and Marburg himself.

14. Taft to Mason, 30 November 1917, and Ishii to Taft, 3 May 1918: League to Enforce Peace Collection, Boxes 14, 17.

15. Tsurumi Yūsuke, “Uiuson ron” [On Wilson], *Chūō kōron*, 32:3 (March 1917), 92–93. A graphic, first-person account by Tsurumi of an audience with President and Mrs. Wilson, 14 November 1918, is published as “Howaito Hausu no ocha” [Tea at the White House], Tsurumi, *Tsurumi Yūsuke jinbutsuron senshū* [Anthology of character sketches by Tsurumi

Yūsuke] (Tokyo, 1968). Tsurumi was apparently more heavily influenced by his teacher Nitobe Inazō than by his father-in-law, Gotō Shinpei. The biographer of and frequent interpreter for Gotō, Tsurumi was active in the peace movement in the 1920s.

16. Tsurumi to Wilson, 15 November 1918, and Wilson to Tsurumi, 18 November 1918: Woodrow Wilson Presidential Papers, Library of Congress, Reel 249.

17. Obata Kyūgorō, *An Interpretation of the Life of Viscount Shibusawa* (Tokyo, 1937), 207; Shibusawa interview, *Yomiuri shinbun*, 24 October 1918, 3; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 69, 188.

18. Mitani, “Taishō demokurashii to Amerika,” 141–148.

19. *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 12 January 1918, 3; *Yamato shinbun* editorial: cited in *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, 24 January 1918, 123.

20. *Tokyo asahi*, 11 January 1918, 2; *Tokyo nichi nichi*, 10 January 1918, 2; *Japan Times and Mail*, 10 January 1918, 1, and 11 January 1918, 1; *Tokyo asahi*, 28 September 1918, 2.

21. Yoshino Sakuzō, “Beikoku daitōryō oyobi Eikoku shushō no sengen o yomu” [Upon reading the proclamations of the American president and the British prime minister], *Chūō kōron*, 33:2 (February 1918), 16, 20.

22. Gaikō Chōsakai agenda: Makino Nobuaki Papers, National Diet Library, File 277; translation of Motono speech to Fortieth Session of the Diet: Inquiry Document 239, Records of the Research and Analysis Reports, National Archives.

23. *Chūgai shōgyō* editorial, 9 October 1918: cited in *Japan Advertiser*, 10 October 1918, 3.

24. Edward Grey, *The League of Nations* (pamphlet) (New York, 1918), 9, 15; *Kokumin* editorial, 25 June 1918, and *Hōchi* editorial, 26 June 1918: cited in *Japan Advertiser*, 26 and 27 June 1918, 3; *Yamato* editorial, 26 June 1918, 1; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 25 June 1918, 3; Yoshino, “Gurē Kyō no ‘kokusai dōmei ron’ o yomu,” 61–62.

25. Tachi Sakutarō, “Kokusai Renmei” [League of Nations], *Gaikō jihō*, 28:239 (15 July 1918), 3–4.

26. Interview with retired diplomat Horinouchi Kensuke, 18 May 1978.

27. Tachi, “Kokusai Renmei,” 13–14.

28. Alston to Curzon, 19 March 1920, Public Record Office, London, FO 371/5362 [F566/382/23].

29. Kawakami Isamu, “The Work of the Correspondence and Publicity Bureau,” *Heiwa jihō*, 6:9–10 (October 1918), 4; Kaneko to Marburg, 17 November 1918: Latane, ed., *Development of the League of Nations Idea*, II, 549; Marburg to Kaneko, 31 December 1918: Latane, II, 585–587.

30. *Tokyo nichi nichi*, 26 October 1918. On Wells’ worldwide campaign on behalf of the League, see Edward Mead Earle, “H. G. Wells, British Patriot in Search of a World State,” Earle, ed., *Nationalism and Internationalism: Essays Inscribed to Carlton J. H. Hayes* (New York, 1950), 79–121.

31. *Tokyo asahi*, 31 October 1918, 4; 2 November 1918, 4; and 4 November 1918, 4. *Kokumin* editorials, 17 October 1918, 2; 28 October 1918, 2; 29 October 1918, 2; and 7 November 1918, 2.

32. Matsui to Gotō, 8 July 1918: Foreign Ministry Archives, 2.4.2.1, *Kokusai Renmei*,

I; Chinda to Uchida, 16 October 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 680; Chargé William Spencer to Secretary of State Lansing, 3 October 1918: 894.021/2.

33. *Japan Advertiser*, 8 October 1918, 1.

34. Chinda to Uchida, 26 October and 9 November 1918, and Uchida to Chinda, 29 October 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 682–683; Makino Nobuaki, *Kaikōroku* [Kaikō memoirs] (Tokyo, 1978 [1949]), II, 173–174.

35. Chinda to Uchida, 16 October 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 680; *Osaka mainichi* editorial, 7 October 1918.

36. Ishii to Uchida, 26 November 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 684. Senator Owen's 15 November speech is recorded in *Congressional Record*, 56:2, 11570. Itō Miyoji, arguing against Japanese participation in the League, cited this speech in the Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 19 November: *Suiusō nikki*, 300.

37. Chinda to Uchida, 12 November 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 683–684.

38. Ōishi quoted in *Millard's Review* (Shanghai), 7:5 (4 January 1919), 186; *Kokumin* editorials of 17 and 29 October and 7 November 1918.

39. Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 2 November 1918: 894.00/147.

40. Chinda to Uchida, 16 October 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 680; Chinda to Uchida, 10 November 1918: quoted in Ikei Masaru, "Pari Kōwa Kaigi to jinshu sabetsu teppai mondai" [The Paris Peace Conference and the problem of the abolition of racial discrimination], *Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai*, ed., *Nihon gaikōshi kenkyū: Dai ichiji sekai taisen* [Studies in the diplomatic history of Japan: The First World War] (Tokyo, 1962), 45.

41. Alston to Curzon, 19 March 1920: Public Record Office, FO 371/5362 [F566/382/23].

3. The Great Debate

1. Recollections of Mushakōji Kimitomo and Tamura Kōsaku, quoted in Shidehara heiwa zaidan, ed., *Shidehara Kijūrō* [A biography of Shidehara Kijūrō] (Tokyo, 1955), 136.

2. *Ibid.*, 136–137; Greene to Uchida, 12 December 1918: Foreign Ministry Archives 2.1.2.1, I.

3. Shidehara heiwa zaidan, ed., *Shidehara Kijūrō*, 136–137.

4. Gaimushō, seimukyoku, "Sankō shorui 6: Kokusai Renmei" [Reference materials no. 6: League of Nations], 11 November 1918: Makino Nobuaki Papers, National Diet Library, File 312.

5. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 13 November 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 284–287; Takeuchi Tatsuji, *War and Diplomacy in the Japanese Empire* (Chicago, 1935), 220.

6. Hara Keiichirō, ed., *Hara Takashi nikki*, 8 and 17 November 1918: III, 78, 86.

7. Makino Nobuaki has no biographer. His memoirs, which cover to 1919, have been reprinted as *Kaikōroku* (Tokyo, 1978), and a diary, *Makino Nobuaki nikki* (Tokyo, 1990), sporadically covering 1920–1937, has been published. His given name is sometimes read as "Shinken." The life of Itō Miyoji is recounted in an "authorized" biography: Kurihara Kōta, *Hakushaku Itō Miyoji* (Tokyo, 1938). The private and official papers of both men are preserved in the Kensei Shiryōshitsu of the National Diet Library.

8. The *Japan Times* referred to Makino as “an office-less member of the [Hara] Cabinet.” *Japan Times*, 19 October 1918, 5.

9. Yoshida Ken’ichi, *Kōiūroku* [Kōiū memoirs] (Tokyo, 1974), 13–15; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, I, 75–94. Itō Hirobumi and Itō Miyoji were not related.

10. *Japan Times*, 17 March 1916, 1.

11. Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 202, 224, 225.

12. Satō Akizuki, “Go kara mita Makino Haku” [Count Makino as seen in his go], in Shimozone Sakichi, *Makino Nobuaki Haku* [Count Makino Nobuaki] (Tokyo, 1940), 7–11; Hosoya Chihiro, “Makino Nobuaki to Berusaiyu Kaigi” [Makino Nobuaki and the Versailles Conference], Ōkochi Kazuo and Ōya Sōichi, eds., *Kindai Nihon o tsukutta hyakunin* [One hundred builders of modern Japan] (Tokyo, 1965), 251; interview with Takemi Tarō, Makino’s former personal physician, 24 October 1974.

13. H. D. Harootunian, “Introduction: A Sense of an Ending and the Problem of Taishō,” Bernard S. Silberman and H. D. Harootunian, eds., *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy* (Princeton, 1974), 23; Hosoya, “Makino Nobuaki to Berusaiyu Kaigi,” 250; Makino Nobuaki, “Sengo no shōsen ni taisuru shisetsu ni tsuite” [Preparations for postwar commercial war], *Taiyō*, 23:7 (15 June 1917), 209, 212; *Japan Advertiser*, 19 October 1918, 5.

14. Makino Nobuaki, “Kokusai Renmei to Nihon no taido” [The League of Nations and Japan’s attitude], *Taiyō*, 26:7 (15 June 1920), 48; Makino, “Sengo no shōsen,” 205.

15. George Akita, “The Other Itō: A Political Failure,” Albert M. Craig and Donald H. Shively, eds., *Personality in Japanese History* (Berkeley 1970), 338–347, 354–355, 368–372.

16. Baba Tsunego, “Itō Miyoji ron” [On Itō Miyoji], *Chūō kōron*, 45:7 (July 1930), 202.

17. Hara Keiichirō, ed., *Hara Takashi nikki*, VII, 188.

18. *Ibid.*, 295; Morley, *Japanese Thrust into Siberia*, 58–59.

19. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 13 November 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 284–290.

20. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 19 November 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 294–304, 309–310.

21. Komura Kin’ichi, “Kōwa kaigi no taisei ka Nihon no shōrai ni oyobosu eikyō oyobi kore ni shosuru hōsaku” [A policy to deal with trends of the peace conference and their effect on Japan’s future], 30 November 1918: Makino Papers, File 322; Makino to Uchida, 14 December 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 691; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 173.

22. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 2 December 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 323–328.

23. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 8 December 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 334–336.

24. *Ibid.*, 337–344; Hara Keiichirō, ed., *Hara Takashi nikki*, VIII, 107.

25. Makino to Uchida, 14 December 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 691.

26. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 26 January and 3 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 382, 394–398. Gaikō Chōsakai deliberations during the Paris Peace Conference are discussed in Blaker, *Japanese International Negotiating Style*, 108–113.

27. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 3, 19, and 22 February, 30 March, and 21 April 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 395, 404, 417–419, 435–440, 458–463; Hara Keiichirō, ed., *Hara Takashi nikki*, VIII, 163.

28. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 19 and 22 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 407, 417.

29. Yoshino, “Nanzo Kokusai Renmei ni kanyō suru o chūcho,” 154.

30. *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 10 December 1918, 3, and 9 January 1919, 3.

31. *Osaka asahi* editorial, 24 December 1918; *Jiji* editorial, 2 January 1919: cited in *Heiwa jihō*, 7:1 (January 1919), 3–4; Katō Takaaki in *Tokyo asahi*, 3 January 1919: quoted in *Heiwa jihō*, 7:1 (January 1919), 3.

32. *Jiji* editorial, 22 January 1919: cited in *Japan Advertiser*, 23 January 1919, 3.

33. Morris to Secretary of State, 15 November 1918: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918*, I, 490; *Hōchi* editorial, 1 December 1918, 1; *Tokyo asahi* editorials, 10 December 1918, 3, and 14 January 1919, 3.

34. *Kokumin* editorial, 11 January 1919: cited in *Japan Times and Mail*, January 1919, 2.

35. Marius B. Jansen, “Konoe Atsumaro,” Iriye, *The Chinese and the Japanese*, 122–123.

36. Konoe, “‘Ei-Bei hon’i no heiwashugi o hai su,” 23–26.

37. Tokyo Embassy to Polk, 7 January 1919: Hornbeck Papers, Box 329; Baldwin to U.S. Military Attaché, Paris, 19 January 1919: Hornbeck Papers, Box 245; *Millard’s Review*, 7:6 (11 January 1919), 193–194.

38. Yabe Teiji, *Konoe Fumimaro* [A biography of Konoe Fumimaro] (Tokyo, 1952), I, 83; Itō Takeshi, comp., *Konoekō seidanroku* [Discourses of Prince Konoe] (Tokyo, 1937), 101; Gordon Berger, “Japan’s Young Prince: Konoe Fumimaro’s Early Political Career, 1916–31,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, 29:4 (Winter 1974), 458. Akami offers a more positive perspective on the Konoe piece, saying that it can be seen as an expression of Konoe’s reformism and an affirmation of Wilsonian principles—principles that he expected to be dashed in the forthcoming conference. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 62–63.

39. Lesley Connors, “Saionji Kinmochi and the Paris Peace Conference,” *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies*, 1:2 (1976), 28–35; Chinda to Uchida, 21 November 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 634–635; Morris to Secretary of State, 29 November 1918, Hornbeck Papers, Box 245.

40. Baldwin to U.S. Military Attaché, Paris, 19 January 1919: Hornbeck Papers, Box 245. The total Japanese mission numbered 64; cf. the British delegation of 184, the French of 136, and the American of 108. Shidehara heiwa zaidan, ed., *Shidehara Kijūrō*, 128; NHK dokyumento Shōwa shuzaihan, ed., *Berusaiyu no Nisshōki: Ittōkoku no Nippon* [Versailles’ Rising Sun Flag: First-class power Japan] (Tokyo, 1986), 30–33. A confidential U.S. State Department document titled “Japanese who may be members of the Peace Commission” was correct in only one of its guesses—Chinda: Inquiry Document no. 660, National Archives.

41. S. Akimoto, “With the Peace Mission: Life On Board the Tenyō Maru,” *Japan Advertiser*, 8 January 1919, 5.

42. Memo of conversation between Debuchi Katsuji and Stanley K. Hornbeck, 21 April 1933: Hornbeck Papers, Box 257; Shidehara heiwa zaidan, ed., *Shidehara Kijūrō*, 137; Uchida to Makino, 9 December 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 649; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 173–176; *Japan Advertiser*, 3 January 1919, 1, and 6 January 1919, 1; Miller to Morris, 5 January 1919: Morris Papers, Box 1; U.S. Embassy, Tokyo, “Daily Report on Morale,” 3 January 1919: 894.00/172.

43. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 22 December 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 347–357; Uchida to Chinda, 26 December 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 665–678.

4. Making the Covenant Palatable at Paris

1. Sawada Renzō, *Gaisenmon Hiroba* (Tokyo, 1950).
2. Shidehara heiwa zaidan, ed., *Shidehara Kijūrō*, 136; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 187.
3. [Stanley K. Hornbeck?], Memorandum of 23 June 1944: Hornbeck Papers, Box 274.
4. Harry L. Harvin Jr., “The Far East in the Peace Conference of 1919 (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1956), 72–79, 98–99.
5. Fifield, *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East*, 114; Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative* (Boston, 1921), 246; Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, I, 713; Horinouchi Kensuke interview, 18 May 1978.
6. Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 177.
7. Blaker, *Japanese International Negotiating Style*, 9–21, 43–46, chap. 3 passim.
8. Imai Seiichi, *Taishō demokurashii* [Taishō democracy] (Tokyo, 1966), 196.
9. Horinouchi Kensuke, “Dai Ichiji Sekai Taisen, Berusaiyu Kōwa Kaigi no kaisō” [Reminiscences of the First World War and the Versailles Peace Conference], *Kingu*, 27:1 (1 January 1951), 90.
10. Uchida to Chinda, 26 December 1918: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1918, III, 667, 668.
11. Council of Ten, 13 January: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 541.
12. Mason, “British Policy on the Establishment of a League of Nations,” 261.
13. Council of Ten, 22 January: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 677–679.
14. Plenary session, 25 January: *ibid.*, 177–195; Xu, *China and the Great War*, 246, 247, 253.
15. Council of Ten, 30 January: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 792, 793. No such telegram for 29 January can be located. A cable of 4 February, however, stated the delegation’s decision to cooperate in the League’s establishment and requested the government’s instructions regarding this course: Matsui to Uchida, 4 February 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 26. No specific reply from Tokyo to this communication can be located.
16. Makino Nobuaki, “Teikoku zenken iin hōkoku no ni,” October 1919, 3–8: Foreign Ministry Archives 2.3.1.155.
17. David Hunter Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant* (New York, 1928), I, 106. In 1924, when Germany negotiated with the European powers over German entry into the League, that nation too insisted that it be eligible for a colonial mandate. The Locarno Pact of 1925, which paved the way for German entry, recognized in principle Germany’s eligibility to be a mandatory power. Christoph M. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations* (Chicago, 1976), 59, 73.
18. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 22 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 417, 424, 425.
19. Ishibashi Tanzan, “Kokusai Renmei no chūshin jigyo” [The central task of the League of Nations], editorial in *Tōyō keizai shinpō*, 5 February 1919: reprinted in Ishibashi Tanzan zenshū hensan iinkai, ed., *Ishibashi Tanzan zenshū* [The collected works of Ishibashi Tanzan] (Tokyo 1971), II, 126–128; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 19 February 1919, 3.

20. Makino Nobuaki, *Shōtōkandan* [The quiet conversation of the pines and the waves] (Tokyo, 1940), 243.

21. Jan Christiaan Smuts, “The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion” (New York, 1919); James T. Shotwell, *At the Paris Peace Conference* (New York, 1937), 77; David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference* (New Haven CT, 1939), I, 118.

22. Kawakami, *Japan and World Peace*, 65–70; Navy Minister Katō Tomosaburō in Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 3 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 399; David Purcell, “Japanese Expansion in the South Pacific, 1895–1935” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1967), 93; Mark R. Peattie, “The Nan’yō: Japan in the South Pacific, 1885–1945,” Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945* (Princeton, 1984), 184, 185.

23. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Affairs Bureau, Second Section, “Sankō shorui I: Seito oyobi nanyōshotō shobun ni kansuru kōshō” [Reference materials I: Negotiations on the disposal of Qingdao and the South Sea Islands], 3: Makino Papers, File 311; Council of Ten, 27 January: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 738–740; Makino Nobuaki, “The Case for Japan in Brief” (Paris, February 1919); Hornbeck Papers, Box 242.

24. Council of Ten, 27 January: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 737.

25. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 3 and 22 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 386–391, 394–399, 417; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 6 February 1919, 3.

26. Australian prime minister William M. Hughes, “Memorandum Regarding the Pacific Islands” (Paris, 8 February 1919): Makino Papers, File “Tai Doku kankei 2-I”; Harvin, “Far East in the Peace Conference,” 126; Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, I, 118.

27. Memorandum by Breckinridge Long, 14 December 1918: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, II, 512–513; meetings of the Council of Ten, 6 March to 2 May: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 228–449 passim; Colby to Wallace, 21 February 1921: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1921*, I, 90–91.

28. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 3 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 400.

29. Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 227.

30. League of Nations Commission, 8 February 1919: Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 186, 190; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 211.

31. Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, 268–269.

32. F. S. Northedge, *The League of Nations: Its Life and Times, 1920–1946* (Leicester, 1986), 113–114.

33. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 13 November 1918: *Suiusō nikki*, 286.

34. Kawakami Kiyoshi, “Japan and the World Peace” (n.p., n.d.).

35. Roger F. Hackett, “The Meiji Leaders and Modernization: The Case of Yamagata Aritōmo,” Marius B. Jansen, ed., *Changing Japanese Attitudes toward Modernization* (Princeton, 1965), 253–265; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 26 January 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 379–381.

36. Nara to Tanaka, 14 and 28 February 1919, and Tanaka to Nara, 7 March 1919: *Nihon*

gaikō bunsho, 1919, III, 44, 45, 51–53; military attaché reports quoted in Yamanashi to Mushakoji, 3 February 1919: *ibid.*, 548, 549.

37. League of Nations Commission, 6 February 1919: Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 65, 171, 172, and II, 264; Matsui to Uchida, 11 February 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 30; Uchida to plenipotentiaries, 15 March 1919: cited in Unno Yoshirō, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon* [The League of Nations and Japan] (Tokyo, 1972), 14.

38. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 292, 294, 319.

39. League of Nations Commission, 6 February and 22 March 1919: Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 264, 265, 342; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 214. Makino probably made the proposal for periodic revision of the entire covenant when the amendment process was deliberated in the League of Nations Commission on 11 February.

40. Matsui to Uchida, 20 March 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 56, 57.

41. Ugaki Kazushige, *Ugaki Kazushige nikki* [Diary of Ugaki Kazushige], Tsunoda Jun, ed. (Tokyo, 1968), I, 194, 197.

42. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 22 February and 30 March 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 413–415, 419–422, 437, 438, 447.

43. Anonymous note, n.d.: Makino Papers, File “Kokusai Renmei 4-2”; Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 392–395; Matsushita Masatoshi, *Japan in the League of Nations* (New York, 1929), 20–24.

44. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 375–378; James T. Watkins, “China’s Role in the League of Nations, 1920–1935” (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1941), 30–32.

45. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 19 and 22 February and 30 March 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 409, 415, 416, 422, 448; Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 24–25.

46. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 19 and 22 February and 30 March 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 409, 415, 416, 422, 448; Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 298–299, and II, 379–380; Makino, “Teikoku zenken iin hōkoku no ni,” 5; Stephen Bonsal, *Unfinished Business* (Garden City, 1944), 29–30.

47. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 176, 180.

48. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 19 February: *Suiusō nikki*, 410.

49. Makino Papers, File “Kokusai Renmei (5)-1-6, Kiyaku shusei ni kansuru oboegaki.” Germany had similar concerns when it entered the League. The Locarno Pact, which laid the diplomatic framework for German accession in 1926, stated that a League member would support League resistance to an act of aggression “to an extent which is compatible with its military situation and takes its geographical position in account.” Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations*, 74.

50. Makino, “Teikoku zenken iin hōkoku no ni,” 5; Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ed., *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, I, 716, 717.

51. Makino Papers, File “Kokusai Renmei (5)-1-2.”

52. Bonsal, *Unfinished Business*, 178–183; Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 442–461; Watkins, “China’s Role in the League of Nations,” 26–30.

53. The following are concise and reliable published accounts of Japan’s diplomacy on the race equality issue at Paris: Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, 269–271; Blaker, *Japan’s International Negotiating Style*, 106–113; Ikei, “Pari Kōwa Kaigi to jinshu sabetsu teppai mondai,” 44–58; Fifield, *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East*, 158–169. Naoko Shimazu’s important

monograph is the first published outside of Japan, and the only one to present the diverse motives of Japan, Great Britain, Australia, and the United States: Shimazu, *Japan, Race, and Equality: The Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London, 1998).

54. Katō Takaaki, “Ōshū senran to sekai ni okeru Teikoku no chi’i,” 40, 41.

55. [Stanley K. Hornbeck?], “Preliminary Report on Japanese Foreign Policy,” 26 January 1918, 69; Hornbeck Papers, Box 238.

56. Quoted in David C. S. Sissons, “The Immigration Question in Australian Diplomatic Relations with Japan, 1875–1919,” paper presented at the 43rd Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, 1971, 36, 37.

57. Ishii to Nagai, 14 January 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, pt. 1, 436–437; Seymour, ed., *Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, IV, 309.

58. Yoshida Shigeru credits his father-in-law Makino: Yoshida, *Kaisō jūnen* [Reminiscences of ten years] (Tokyo, 1958), IV, 97; Ambassador Matsui Akira reports that the unpublished diary of his father (plenipotentiary Matsui Keishirō) states that Makino and Chinda were responsible: Matsui Akira to author, 8 April 1978; Horinouchi Kensuke recalled that the delegation decided the wording of the amendment drafts and that the delegation was affected by the pressure of the Japanese press: Horinouchi Kensuke interview, 18 May 1978; Shimazu, *Japan, Race, and Equality*, 17; Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period*, 20.

59. Yoshida Shigeru, *Kaisō jūnen*, 97.

60. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 30 March 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 445.

61. Alan Stone, “Racial Equality at the Paris Peace Conference” (unpublished paper, 1969), 30, 31; Shimazu argues strongly against the “bargaining chip” theory: Shimazu, *Japan, Race, and Equality*, 143–148.

62. Office of the Japanese Peace Plenipotentiaries, “Jinshuteki sabetsu taigū teppai mondai sokatsu hōkoku” [Summary report on the abolition of racial discriminatory treatment], 10 October 1919, 26; Makino Papers, File 345.

63. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 324; Matsui to Uchida, 15 February 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 444, 445.

64. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 323–325; Xu, *China and the Great War*, 257; F. P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations* (London, 1952), 64.

65. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 389; Matsui to Uchida, 30 March 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 488.

66. Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 15 November 1918: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918*, I, 490; *Hōchi* editorial, 1 December 1918, 1; *Tokyo asahi* editorials, 10 December 1919, 3, and 14 January 1919, 3.

67. *Tokyo nichi nichi* editorial, 18 February 1919: cited in Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 14; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 19 February 1919, 3; *Tokyo nichi nichi* editorial, 18 February 1919; *Ugaki Kazushige nikki*, I, 221.

68. Satō Seizaburō, “Foundations of Modern Japanese Foreign Policy,” Robert A. Scalapino, ed., *The Foreign Policy of Modern Japan* (Berkeley, 1977), 388; Katō speaking at a meeting of Kenseikai Dietmen, 27 February 1919: cited in *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, 3 April 1919, 506.

69. *Suiusō nikki*, 785–791; Fifield, *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East*, 158, 159; Shidehara

heiwa zaidan, ed., *Shidehara Kijūrō*, 143; Uchida to Matsui, 24 March 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 482, 483; Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, II, 390; *New York Times*, 15 March 1919, 8, and 16 March 1919, 3.

70. Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 461–466, and II, 246.

71. Ikei, “Pari Kōwa Kaigi to jinshu sabetsu teppai mondai,” 56, 57; Uchida to Matsui, 30 March 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 487; *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 289–291.

72. *Japan Times and Mail* editorial, 19 April 1919; *Kokumin* editorial, 19 April 1919; *Tokyo asahi* editorials, 17 April and 15 May 1919.

73. *Hōchi* editorials, 29 and 30 April 1919; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 29 April 1919, 3; *Tokyo nichichi* editorial, 16 April 1919; *Osaka mainichi* editorial, 25 April 1919; Morris to Secretary of State Lansing, 28 April 1919: 894.00/151.

74. Shimada Saburō, *Welcome to the League of Nations*, pamphlet cited in *Heiwa jihō*, 7:6 (June 1919), 5, 6; Ishibashi Tanzan, “Jinshuteki sabetsu teppai yōkyū no mae ni” [Before demanding the abolition of racial discrimination], editorial in *Tōyō keizai shinpō*, 15 February 1919: *Ishibashi Tanzan zenshū*, III, 68–70; Yoshino Sakuzō, “Jinshuteki sabetsu teppai mondai ni tsuite” [Concerning the problem of the abolition of racial discrimination], *Chūō kōron*, 34:5 (May 1919), 96, 97; Yoshino, “Santō mondai kaiketsu no sekaiteki haikai” [The international setting for solution of the Shandong problem], *Chūō kōron*, 34:6 (June 1919), 91; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 25 May 1919, 3.

75. Gaikō Chōsakai meetings of 30 March and 21 April 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 435, 458–460; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 209–210.

76. Kagawa Toyohiko, “Sekai no kaizō to rōdōsha” [World reconstruction and labor], in *Rōdō oyobi sangyō*, 8:2 (February 1919), 27.

77. Plenary session, 11 April: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 241–260.

78. Kagawa Toyohiko, “Labor Movements in 1919,” *The Christian Movement in the Japanese Empire, 1920* (Tokyo, 1920), 172, 173; Iwao F. Ayusawa, *A History of Labor in Modern Japan* (Honolulu, 1966), 105–111; Sheldon Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley, 1987), 39–43.

79. James T. Shotwell, ed., *The Origins of the International Labor Organization* (New York, 1934), I, 185; II, 156, 157; *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, I, 728.

80. Suzuki, “Rōdō undō to kokusai kankei,” 2, 4; Ayusawa, *History of Labor in Modern Japan*, 115–116.

81. Stephen S. Large, *The Yūaikai, 1912–1919: The Rise of Labor in Japan* (Tokyo, 1972), 167–169. Oka Minoru was former director of Commercial and Industrial Affairs in the management-oriented Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. Although not appreciated by Japanese labor because he occupied a place on the Labor Commission intended, as labor saw it, for a genuine labor representative, Oka impressed Dr. Shotwell, who recalled, “The only one of the Japanese Delegation whom I got to know at all intimately was Dr. Oka, and a more competent, straight-thinking and liberal-minded economist it would be hard to find.” Shotwell, *At the Paris Peace Conference*, 251–252. Oka was the father of historian Oka Yoshitake.

82. Mikiso Hane, *Peasants, Rebels, and Outcasts: The Underside of Modern Japan* (New York, 1982), 181–184.

83. Commission on International Labor Legislation, 7 February: Shotwell, *Origins of the ILO*, I, 140, and II, 158, 159, 175–177; *Gaimushō no hyakunen*, I, 728; M. Ray Atherton to Secretary of State Lansing, 15 August 1919: 894.00/154.

84. Commission on International Labor Legislation, 19 February: Shotwell, *Origins of the ILO*, II, 180, 181.

85. *Chūgai shōgyō* editorial, cited in *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, 6 March 1919, 361; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 19 February 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 410, 411; Nihon Kōgyō Kurabu to Makino, 20 February 1919: Nakamura Motosuke, ed., *Nihon Kōgyō Kurabu nijūgonenshi* [The twenty-five-year history of the Japan Industrialists' Club] (Tokyo, 1943), I, 102–104; see also Foreign Ministry Archives, File “Pari heiwa jōyaku kokusai rōdō hōsei iinkai,” 2.3.1.21 no. 4; Uchida to Matsui, 6 March 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, 1390, 1391.

86. Makino Papers, File “Rōdō mondai.”

87. *Ibid.*, File “Kokusai Renmei (5)-2-1.”

88. Shotwell, *Origins of the ILO*, I, 202, 203.

89. Council of Foreign Ministers, 1 April: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, IV, 538; Shotwell, *At the Paris Peace Conference*, 57.

90. Shotwell, *Origins of the ILO*, I, 200–204, 212, 213.

91. *Ibid.*, 204, 216; Matsui to Uchida, 8 April 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, 1426; plenary session, 11 April: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, III, 256. This statement became Article 405, Paragraph 3, of the Treaty of Versailles.

92. *Suiusō nikki*, 348.

93. Telegram dated 1 March 1918: Hornbeck Papers, Box 329; W. C. Dennis to Theodore Marburg, 28 February 1919: League to Enforce Peace Collection, Box 8; MacMurray to Morris, 6 October 1918: Morris Papers, Box 4; League of Nations Commission, 4 February: Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 151; Xu, *China and the Great War*, 252–258; Chinese Delegation, *Questions for Readjustment Submitted by China to the Peace Conference* (pamphlet, Paris, April 1919), 31; Wilson quoted in Thomas E. LaFargue, *China and the World War* (Stanford, 1937), 259.

94. League of Nations Commission, 24 March 1919: Miller, *Drafting of the Covenant*, I, 331, 332; Watkins, “China’s Role in the League of Nations,” 12–17; Carl W. Ackerman, “China and the League of Nations,” *New York Times*, 2 March 1919, sec. 10, 4. Korean nationalists as well attempted to utilize the ideals of the peace conference in their struggle against Japanese colonialism. A group of Korean nationalists at Paris appealed to the Fourteen Points in the interest of Korean independence but failed to gain conference recognition. Korean petition, “The Claim of the Korean People and Nation for Liberation from Japan and for the Restoration of Korea as an Independent State,” Paris, April 1919: Foreign Ministry Archives, “Pari heiwa kaigi zakken,” I; Stephen Bonsal, *Suitors and Supplicants: The Little Nations at Versailles* (New York, 1946), 225.

95. Uchida to Matsui, 21 April 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 242; Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 30 April 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 482, 483; Lesley Connors, *The Emperor’s Adviser: Saionji Kinmochi and Pre-war Japanese Politics* (London, 1987), 234 n. 60; Inoki Masamichi,

Hyōden Yoshida Shigeru [Critical biography of Yoshida Shigeru] (Tokyo, 1980), I, 198; Bonsal quoted in Charles L. Mee, *The End of Order: Versailles, 1919* (New York, 1919), 189. On the Shandong issue, see Russell H. Fifield, “Japanese Policy toward the Shandong Question at the Paris Peace Conference,” *Journal of Modern History*, 23 (September 1951), 265–272; Ikei Masaru, “Santō mondai, Goshi Undō o meguru Nitchū kankei” [Sino-Japanese relations concerning the Shandong question and the May Fourth Movement], *Hōgaku kenkyū*, 43:1 (January 1970), 215–234; E. T. Williams, “Japan’s Mandate in the Pacific,” *American Journal of International Law*, 27 (1933): 437. Some refinements in the story are yet to be made. There is evidence, for example, that the Japanese delegation might have acquiesced in the stipulation of a two-year limit for the reversion of the leasehold to China: Makino Papers, File “Tai-Doku kankei 2-2.”

96. Council of Four, 30 April: *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, V, 363, 364.

97. *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, 28 August 1919, 332; *New York Times*, 15 September 1919, 15.

98. Saionji report to Hara, 29 August 1919: National Archives of Japan, Item 2A 14 1449; Lesley Connors, “Saionji Kinmochi and the Paris Peace Conference,” *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies*, 1:2 (1976), 43.

99. Makino, “Teikoku zenken iin hōkoku no ni,” 1; Ishii Kikujirō, *Gaikō zuisō* [Random thoughts on diplomacy] (Tokyo, 1967), 340; Yoshida Shigeru, *Kaisō jūnen*, IV, 98–99.

100. Konoe quoted in Miwa Kimitada, “Crossroads of Patriotism in Imperial Japan: Shiga Shigetaka (1863–1927), Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930), and Nitobe Inazō (1862–1933)” (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1967), 377.

101. Kodama Hideo to Terauchi Masatake: Terauchi Papers, Correspondence no. 123-23; *Tokyo asahi* editorial, 1 July 1919, 3; Melvin Small addresses the unstable nature of public opinion in “How We Learned to Love the Russians: American Media and the Soviet Union during World War II,” *Historian*, 36:3 (May 1974), 455–478; *Taiyō* henshūbu [Editorial staff of *Taiyō*], ed., “Kokusai Renmei kanyū no kahi” [Pros and cons of joining the League of Nations], *Taiyō*, 25:7 (June 1919), 87–93; Miyake Setsurei, “Yo no kōwa kaigi kan [My view of the peace conference], *Chūō kōron*, 34:6 (June 1919), 80.

102. *Tokyo nichichi* editorial, 30 June 1919, cited in *Japan Times and Mail*, 1 July 1919, 2; *Tokyo asahi* editorials, 1 and 3 July and 19 November 1919, 3; *Kokumin* editorial, 1 July 1919: cited in Roger Dingman, “Nihon to Uirusonteki sekai chitsujo” [Japan and the Wilsonian world order], Satō Seizaburō and Roger Dingman, eds., *Kindai Nihon no taigai taido* [The attitude of modern Japan toward the outside world] (Tokyo, 1974), 112.

103. Thomas W. Burkman, “Japanese Christians and the Wilsonian World Order,” *Japan Christian Quarterly*, 49:1 (Winter 1983), 38–46; “General Review of the Year,” *The Christian Movement in the Japanese Empire, 1919* (Tokyo, 1920), 13, 14; Uemura Masahisa, “Kokusai Renmei to Kirisutokyō” [The League of Nations and Christianity], *Fukuin shinpō* (18 November 1920), 559. The project to commemorate the armistice was also taken up from 1921 by the Japan League of Nations Association. Throughout the 1920s, 11 November was celebrated with peace posters and commemorative ceremonies in schools and cultural organizations. Frederick R. Dickinson, “Commemorating the War in Post-Versailles Japan,”

John W. Steinberg et al., eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, 2005), 530.

104. Dohi Akio, “Christianity and Politics in the Taishō Period of Democracy,” I, *Japanese Religions*, 5:4 (April 1969), 9; Ebina Danjō, “Pari yori” [From Paris], *Shinjin*, 229 (August 1919), 79–80.

105. Uemura, “Kokusai Renmei to Kirisutokyō,” 559; Dohi, “Christianity and Politics,” 20–21.

106. Tagawa Daikichirō, “Kokusai Renmei to Kirisutokyō” [The League of Nations and Christianity], *Fukuin shinpō*, 1257 (31 July 1919), 365.

107. Miwa, “Crossroads,” 356–358; Mitani, “Taishō demokurashii to Amerika,” 154; Uchimura Kanzō, “Seisho to gensei” [The Bible and this world], *Seisho no kenkyū*, 224 (March 1919), 3–4; John F. Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet: Uchimura Kanzō, 1861–1930* (Vancouver, 2005), 268. Howes treats the Second Coming movement in Uchimura’s career in chapter II.

108. Ienaga Toyokichi, “A League of Nations from a Japanese View-point,” *Outlook*, 121:3 (15 January 1919), 105–106.

109. Kita quoted in Ryūsaku Tsunoda et al., comp., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York, 1958), II, 266–269; Tanaka Sōgorō, *Kita Ikki: Nihonteki fuashisuto no shōchō* [Kita Ikki: Japanese fascist symbol] (Tokyo, 1959), 226.

110. Proceedings of the Privy Council, 12 September 1919: National Archives of Japan, Item 2A 15-9 D435; Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 21.

111. Proceedings of the Privy Council, 27 October 1919: National Archives of Japan, Item 2A 15-9 D431.

112. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 29 October 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 704–716; Uchida to Matsui, 30 October 1919: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1919, III, 738.

113. Gaikō Chōsakai meeting of 26 June 1919: *Suiusō nikki*, 527; Itō to Oka Minoru, October[?] 1919: Itō Miyoji Papers, National Diet Library, 655-5, 101–103; Ōkuma interview in *Jiji*, cited in *Japan Times and Mail*, 19 November 1919, 1; Chinda to Makino, 21 June 1919: Makino Papers, Correspondence no. 573-1; Matsuoka to Uchida, 14 September 1919: Makino Papers, Box 289; *Kokumin* editorial, 4 September 1919, 3.

114. *Tokyo nichichi* editorial, 25 November 1919: cited in *Japan Times and Mail*, 26 November 1919, 2; *Yomiuri* editorial, 21 November 1919: cited in *Japan Times and Mail*, 22 November 1919, 2; Makino, *Kaikōroku*, II, 182, 212, 213; Makino Nobuaki, “Kokusai Renmei to Nihon no taido” [The League of Nations and Japan’s attitude], *Taiyō*, 26:7 (15 June 1920), 51.

115. *Japan Advertiser*, 14 January 1920, 1.

116. Ōkuma in *Taikan*, August 1919: quoted in Alston to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 26 September 1919: Public Record Office, 371/3816 [23/151268/951]; Kawakami Kiyoshi, *Japan and World Peace*, 61.

5. The Geneva Years

1. *Kokumin* and *Chūgai shōgyō* editorials of 16 April 1921, cited in U.S. Department of State Decimal File 711.94/393; *Yamato* and *Nichi nichichi* editorials of 16 April 1921, quoted in *Japan Advertiser*, 17 April 1921, 3.

2. Nitobe, 3 May 1932, quoted in Ian Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism: Japan, China, and the League of Nations, 1931–3* (London, 1993), 10.

3. F. P. Walters, "The League of Nations," Evan Luard, ed., *The Evolution of International Organizations* (New York, 1966), 31; Usui Katsumi, "Berusaiyu-Washinton taisei to Nihon no shihaisō [The Versailles-Washington system and Japan's leaders], Hashikawa Bunzō and Matsumoto Sannosuke, eds., *Kindai Nihon seiji shisōshi* [A history of political thought in modern Japan] (Tokyo, 1970), 117.

4. Alston to Curzon, Tokyo, 19 March 1920, 27: Public Record Office, FO 371/5362 [F566/382/23].

5. Hugh T. Patrick, "The Economic Muddle of the 1920s," James W. Morley, ed., *Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, 1971), 214–215, 263; Akira Iriye, "The Failure of Economic Expansion: 1918–1931," Silberman and Harootunian, eds., *Japan in Crisis*, 239–246; Iriye, *After Imperialism*, 26; Allen, *Short Economic History*, 119; Miles Fletcher, "The Japanese Business Community, Imperialism, and Militarism from 1920 to 1940," paper presented at the Washington and Southeast Regional Seminar on Japan, 17 October 1987; Burkman, "Comment: With Special Reference to the World Sunday School Convention of 1920," *Fides et Historia*, 24:1 (Winter/Spring 1992), 34.

6. Iriye, "Failure of Economic Expansion," 246–247; Asada Sadao, "Nihon kaigun to gunshuku: Tai Bei seisaku o meguru seiji katei" [The Japanese navy and disarmament: The political process surrounding policy toward the United States], Hosoya and Saitō, eds., *Washinton taisei to Nichi-Bei kankei* (Tokyo, 1978), 358.

7. Unno Yoshirō, "Pari Kōwa Kaigi to Gaimushō" [The Paris Peace Conference and the Foreign Ministry], *Rekishi kyōiku*, 15:1 (January 1967), 50–51; Horinouchi Kensuke interview, 18 May 1978; Sharon Minichiello, *Retreat from Reform: Patterns of Political Behavior in Interwar Japan* (Honolulu, 1984), 1–3, 50; Ballantine to Secretary of State, 16 October 1919, 6: 894.00/155; Usui Katsumi, "The Role of the Foreign Ministry," Borg and Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History*, 130–132.

8. Nobuya Bamba, *Japanese Diplomacy in a Dilemma: New Light on Japan's China Policy, 1924–1929* (Vancouver, 1972), 162; Edward Price Bell interview, June 1925, 8: 711.94/559.

9. Shidehara speech to the Diet, 22 January 1925: League of Nations Archives, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Box R620; Iriye, *After Imperialism*, 117.

10. Iriye, "Failure of Economic Expansionism," 250–261; House cited in Levin, *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics*, 113–114.

11. Ishii Kikujirō, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, ed. and trans. William R. Langdon (Baltimore, 1936), 253; Morris to Secretary of State, 14 May 1920: 894.00/166; Bell to Secretary of State, 26 March 1921: 894.00/176; Shibusawa to Hughes, 5 June 1923: 711.94/456.

12. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 270.

13. Iriye, "Failure of Economic Expansionism," 240.

14. Drummond memo, 28 April 1920: League of Nations Archives, Box 572.

15. Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 64–65; Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism*, 58–59. Akira Iriye reads the membership numbers as an indication that the age of European dominance was over.

16. Uchida, 14 September 1920: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1920, II, 266; *Japan Advertiser*, 18 August 1920, 1; *New York Times*, 1 December 1920, 1.

17. Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 27–28; “Kokusai Renmei sōkai dai ikkai kaigi Nihon daihyō ni tai suru kunrei no ken” [Instructions to the Japanese representatives to the first League of Nations Assembly], 9 November 1920: *Nihon gaikō bunsho*, 1920, III, 273–280.

18. Chung Sik Lee, “Japan’s Security Policy and the League of Nations” (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1973), 32–38.

19. *New York Times*, 12 December 1920, 1; Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 36–37; Ishii quoted in *New York Times*, 1 December 1920, 1; *Ugaki Kazushige nikki*, I, 256–257.

20. Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 56–60.

21. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 144–145; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 98.

22. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 171, 172, 223.

23. Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 496.

24. Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace: International Relations in Europe, 1918–1933* (New York, 1976), 36, 81; Edward Hallett Carr, *International Relations between the Two World Wars (1919–1939)* (New York, 1963), 98; Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 50.

25. Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 49–51.

26. *Ibid.*, 37, 115–117; Martin David Dubin, “The League of Nations Secretariat — A Preliminary Excursion,” paper presented at the International Studies Association, Cincinnati, 1982, 21; Dubin, “Transgovernment Processes in the League of Nations,” *International Organization*, 37:3 (Summer 1983), 476–479. When Germany entered the League in 1926, it, like Japan, was intent on demonstrating its international stature by filling ranking positions in the Secretariat. Germany argued for representation on par with that of France. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations*, 92–93.

27. Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 119; *New York Times*, 16 April 1933, E3; Matsui Akira interview, 7 June 1978; Nitobe to Secretariat, 31 January 1924: League of Nations Archives, Box 574; Sugimura Yōtarō, *Jidai no shinun to Kokusai Renmei* [The march of time and the League of Nations] (Tokyo, 1930), 6; Ian Nish, “A Japanese Diplomat Looks at Europe, 1920–39,” Ian Nish and Charles Dunn, eds., *European Studies of Japan* (Tenterden, 1979), 137; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 419. In contrast to the paucity of Japanese in Geneva, the Mission of Japan to the United Nations in New York has 3 ambassadors and 52 other diplomats. Kitaoka Shin’ichi, “United Nations at a Crossroads,” *JAPANinfo*, 7 (Summer 2006), 1.

28. Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 120; Ayusawa Iwao, “Nitobe sensei no kokusaiteki kōken” [Professor Nitobe’s international contribution], Tokyo Joshi Daigaku Nitobe Inazō kenkyūkai, ed., *Nitobe Inazō kenkyū* [Studies on Nitobe Inazō] (Tokyo, 1969), 329; Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon* [Japan in the League of Nations] (Tokyo, 1972), 441–442; Furukaki Tetsurō interview, 26 May 1978. In his thesis Furukaki argued that nonmembers of the League should be eligible to appointment as mandatories. The Furukaki books cited are *Les mandats internationaux de la Société des Nations* (Lyon, 1923) and *Kokusai Renmei to sekai no heiwa* [The League of Nations and world peace] (Tokyo, 1925).

29. William E. Rappard, *International Relations as Viewed from Geneva* (New Haven CT, 1925), 202–203; Nitobe, quoted in *International Gleanings from Japan*, 3:10–11 (October–November 1927), 1, 7.

30. Northedge, *League of Nations*, 90–92; Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 63.

31. Elmer Bendiner, *A Time for Angels: The Tragicomic History of the League of Nations* (London, 1975), 206; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 273.

32. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 145–150; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 274; Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 71.

33. Northedge, *League of Nations*, 92–94; Bendiner, *Time for Angels*, 211–212; Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 54–55.

34. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 150.

35. *League of Nations Official Journal*, 6th year: quoted in Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 64.

36. Frederick Thayer Merrill, “The Opium Menace in the Far East,” *Foreign Policy Reports*, 12:24 (1 March 1937), 295, 299; Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 96, 97.

37. Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 254–256; Merrill, “Opium Menace,” 304.

38. Walters, *History of the League*, 184–186; Commission of Enquiry into the Control of Opium-Smoking in the Far East, *Report to the Council*, November 1930 (Geneva, 1930), I, 9–24, and II, 364, 455, 466.

39. Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 96–102; Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, *Report to the Council on the Proceedings of the Committee at Its Second Session Held at Geneva, April 19–29, 1922*, 7, 8; *Minutes of the Seventh Session, August 24–31, 1925*, 12–14: C.605.M.192.1925.XI, University Publications, *League of Nations Documents, 1919–1946*, reel 295.

40. Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 256; Eliot quoted in Tilley to Chamberlain, 16 March 1926, 20: Public Record Office, FO 371/11707 [F1678/949/23].

41. William O. Walker, *Opium and Foreign Policy: The Anglo-American Search for Order in Asia, 1912–1954* (Chapel Hill NC, 1991), 71–72.

42. “Position in North China in Regard to the Illicit Traffic in Opium and Other Narcotics,” annex to Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, *Report to the Council on the Nineteenth Session, November 15–28, 1934* (4 December 1934), C.530.M241.1934.XI, 30–32.

43. John Mark Jennings, *The Opium Empire: Japanese Imperialism and Drug Trafficking in Asia, 1895–1945* (Westport CT, 1997), 108–109.

44. Merrill, “Opium Menace,” 304.

45. Northedge, *League of Nations*, 198–202, 291, 220; Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 133.

46. Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 134–135; Ronald A. Morse, “The Search for Japan’s National Character and Distinctiveness: Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962) and the Folklore Movement” (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1975), 70–72; Mark R. Peattie, *Nan’yō: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885–1945* (Honolulu, 1988), 79–80; Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC), minutes of 22nd session November–December 1932 (Geneva, 1932), 107–119.

47. Miwa Kimitada, “Colonial Theories and Practices in Prewar Japan,” John F. Howes, ed., *Nitobe Inazō: Japan’s Bridge across the Pacific* (Boulder CO, 1995), 169; Morse, “Search

for Japan's National Character," 70, 71; PMC, minutes of 3rd session, July–August 1923 (Geneva, 1923), 280–285, and 4th session, June–July 1924 (Geneva, 1924), 239–256, 284.

48. Northedge, *League of Nations*, 194–198; E. T. Williams, "Japan's Mandate in the Pacific," *American Journal of International Law*, 27 (July 1933), 428.

49. Williams, "Japan's Mandate in the Pacific," 436–437; Harold William Vazeille Temperley, ed., *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris* (London, 1920–1924), VI, 516; Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 60.

50. Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 110, 111; *Times* (London), 20 January 1920; *League of Nations Official Journal* (January–February 1921), 95; *Tokyo nichu nichu* editorial, 21 December 1920.

51. Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 58, 60, 82–86; Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 220; Peattie, "The Nan'yō: Japan in the South Pacific," 186; "Legal Problems re: Japanese Mandated Islands": Records of the Research and Analysis Reports, National Archives, document no. 1830. The mandate charter is reproduced in *League of Nations Official Journal*, January–February 1921, 87, 88, and Quincy Wright, *Mandates under the League of Nations* (Chicago, 1930), 618–621.

52. Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 79; Japanese government, "Annual Report to the League of Nations on Administration of the South Sea Islands under Japanese Mandate," 1923 and 1926: League of Nations Archives, Boxes R13 and R14. In September 1925 the Council requested that mandatory powers submit their annual reports to the Secretariat before 20 May of each year in order to facilitate the work of the PMC. Ambassador Ishii protested, saying that because of its geographical situation, Japan would not be able to comply. After the Australian and New Zealand representatives voiced similar objections, the president of the Council allowed that the application of the resolution would have to be modified by "geographical necessities." *League of Nations Official Journal*, 6:10 (October 1925), 1364–1366.

53. Japanese government, "Annual Report . . . South Sea Islands," 1923 and 1926, with appended "General and Special Observations" by PMC: League of Nations Archives, Boxes R13 and R14.

54. Peattie, "The Nan'yō," 186–190; Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 82–86, 92; Williams, "Japan's Mandate in the Pacific," 437–438; translated excerpts from the journal *Wirtschaftsdienst*, 1 January 1924: League of Nations Archives, Box R13.

55. Wright, *Mandates*, 530; Furukaki in *Les mandats internationaux*, 385, quoted in Wright, *Mandates*, 536–537; Peattie, *Nan'yō*, 92–95.

56. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 173–174; Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 413–414; Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 69–71; Manley O. Hudson, *The Permanent Court of International Justice, 1920–1942* (New York, 1943), 252, 258–262. In the 1930 election in which Adachi received 49 Assembly votes, Sir Cecil Hurst received 40, and Frank Kellogg 35.

57. Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 125, 126, 351–354, 564, 565; Manley O. Hudson, ed., *World Court Reports*, IV, 1936–1942 (Washington, 1943), 45–47; Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 236, 237. By 1939, forty-eight nations had signed and (if required) ratified the "Optional Clause."

58. Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 428, 430; Ayusawa, *History of Labor in Modern Japan*, 175–177; Kitaoka Juitsu interview, 13 June 1978.

59. Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 81–85; Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 430.

60. Ayusawa, *History of Labor in Modern Japan*, 122–133; Kagawa, “Labor Movements in 1919,” 173, 174; Horikiri Zenjirō, ed., *Maeda Tamon: Sono bun, sono hito* [Maeda Tamon: The man and his letters] (Tokyo, 1963), 36–38; Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 428–430; Garon, *State and Labor*, 101–108; Stephen S. Large, *Organized Workers and Socialist Politics in Interwar Japan* (London, 1981), 55, 56, 273.

61. Ayusawa, *History of Labor in Modern Japan*, 223–225; Nakamura, *Nihon Kōgyō Kurabu nijūgonenshi* [The twenty-five-year history of the Japan Industrialists' Club] (Tokyo, 1943), I, 634–639; Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 429; Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 54; interview with Maeda Yōichi, son of Maeda Tamon, 21 June 1978; Kitaoka Juitsu interview, 13 June 1978.

62. Atsuko Hirai, *Individualism and Socialism: The Life and Thought of Kawai Eijirō* (Cambridge MA, 1986), 51–53. Kawai had encountered Nitobe Inazō at First Higher School and, according to Hirai, “accepted without reservation the person and philosophy of Master Nitobe” (27).

63. Sheldon Garon posits a desire to streamline policies toward the ILO as one motivation for the creation of the Social Bureau in the Home Ministry. The bureau, in turn, was responsible for moderation of government views toward unionization. Garon, *State and Labor*, 95, 101–103.

64. Satō Naotake, *Kokusai Renmei ni okeru Nihon*, 430.

65. Ayusawa, *History of Labor in Modern Japan*, 157; Stephen S. Large to author, 17 April 1978.

66. *Kokusai Renmei*, 1:1 (November 1920), 1–8.

67. Ogata Sadako, “The Role of Liberal Nongovernment Organizations in Japan,” Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese-American Relations, 1931–1941* (New York, 1973), 460, 466; Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 206.

68. Ogata, “Role of Liberal Nongovernment Organizations,” 462, 463. At the time, 100,000 yen was equal to about US\$50,000.

69. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 2, 3, 80.

70. ILO Chūnichai Jimusho, “Ryākushi — ILO to Nihon” [Concise history of the ILO and Japan]: <http://www.ilo.org/public/japanese/region/asro/tokyo/japan.htm>; Ayusawa, *History of Labor in Modern Japan*, 177–178. On the Kyōchōkai, see W. Dean Kinzley, *Industrial Harmony in Modern Japan: The Invention of a Tradition* (London, 1991), 39–47.

71. *International Gleanings from Japan*, 2:5–6 (May–June 1926), 1, 2, 8; “Report on the Activities of the Tokyo Office during the Year 1933,” and Tsuchida to Azcarte, 27 June 1935: League of Nations Archives, Box R5383.

72. Aoki Setsuichi, “The First Year of the Tokyo Office of the League of Nations,” 18 January 1927, Drummond to Okayama, 24 June 1927, and Sugimura to Drummond, 27 June 1927: League of Nations Archives, Box R1342; Tsuchida to McKinnon, 29 May 1933, League of Nations Archives, Box R5383.

73. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 140–141; League of Nations Archives, Boxes R1519, R1520, and R5311.

6. The Japanese Face at Geneva

Portions of this chapter and chapter 7 appeared in an earlier form in Thomas W. Burkman, “The Geneva Spirit,” John F. Howes, ed., *Nitobe Inazō: Japan’s Bridge across the Pacific* (Boulder CO, 1995), 177–214; and Burkman, “Nationalist Actors in the Internationalist Theatre: Nitobe Inazō and Ishii Kikujirō and the League of Nations,” Dick Stegewerns, ed., *Nationalism and Internationalism in Imperial Japan: Autonomy, Asian Brotherhood, or World Citizenship?* (London, 2003), 89–113.

1. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 136.

2. Nitobe Inazō, “What the League of Nations Has Done and Is Doing,” Takagi Yasaka, ed., *The Works of Inazō Nitobe* (Tokyo, 1972), IV, 375–382, 393.

3. Nitobe Inazō, “Opening Address at the Kyoto Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations,” 28 October 1919: Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 359.

4. Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 78, 98, 419, 496.

5. Japanese international historian Akira Iriye labels Nitobe “the foremost Japanese internationalist.” Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism*, 44.

6. On Nitobe, see John F. Howes, ed., *Nitobe Inazō: Japan’s Bridge across the Pacific* (Boulder CO, 1995), which includes a chapter by the author on Nitobe and the Geneva spirit; George Oshiro, *Nitobe Inazō: Kokusai shugi no kaitakusha* [Nitobe Inazō: Pioneer of internationalism] (Tokyo, 1992); a critical work is Ōta Yūzō, “*Taiheiyō no hashi*” to *shite no Nitobe Inazō* [Nitobe Inazō as a “bridge across the Pacific”] (Tokyo, 1986). Nitobe’s writings are collected in Takagi Yasaka, ed., *Nitobe Inazō zenshū* [The collected works of Nitobe Inazō] (Tokyo, 1983–1986, 23 vols.). For English writings, see Nitobe, *The Works of Inazō Nitobe*, Takagi Yasaka, ed. (Tokyo, 1972, 5 vols.). A collection of Nitobe manuscripts is housed in the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

7. *Baltimore Evening Sun*, 13 January 1912, 2. The Sapporo Band was a group of students at the Sapporo Agricultural College in Hokkaido who were converted to Christianity in the 1870s under the influence of American lay teacher William S. Clark. The band included Nitobe and Uchimura Kanzō. While lecturing in Baltimore, Nitobe was introduced to Theodore Marburg, soon to be a founder of the League to Enforce Peace. Nitobe, *Bushidō: The Soul of Japan* (Rutland VT, 1974).

8. Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: A Brief Biography* (Cleveland, 1963), 22; Miwa, “Crossroads,” 361; William Robert Carter, “With the Nitobes in America, 1911–12,” chapter of dissertation draft, 45.

9. John Higham, *History* (Englewood Cliffs NJ, 1965), 174; Richard T. Ely, “Economic Internationalism,” *Chautauquan*, 10 (February 1980), 538–542; Miwa, “Crossroads,” 86–87; Nitobe quoted from Yanaihara Tadao, ed., *Nitobe hakushi shokumin seisaku kōgi oyobi ronbunshū* [Lectures and writings of Dr. Nitobe on colonial policy] (Tokyo, 1943), 66, in Miwa, “Crossroads,” 345. In the classic Momotarō story, a small boy conquers the Island of Ogres, bringing security and wealth to his family at home. Matsuoka Yōsuke, a generation

younger than Nitobe, was influenced by Turner's ideas while a student on the American frontier at the University of Oregon. While Nitobe applied the thesis to Taiwan, Matsuoka applied it to Manchuria, where securing the frontier would restore "Imperial Japan's true polity." David J. Lu, *Agony of Choice: Matsuoka Yōsuke and the Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire, 1880–1946* (Lanham MD, 2002), 14.

10. *Baltimore Sun*, 12 January 1912, 8; Miwa, "Crossroads," 276, 345, quoting from Yanaihara Tadao, ed., *Nitobe hakushi bunshū* [Writings of Dr. Nitobe] (Tokyo, 1936), 408–409; Alexis Dudden, *Japan's Colonization of Korea: Discourse and Power* (Honolulu, 2005), 134; Nitobe, "Japan, the League of Nations, and the Peace Pact," radio broadcast, 8 May 1932: Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 247.

11. Nitobe interview in *Baltimore Evening Sun*, 13 January 1912, 2; Miwa, "Colonial Theories and Practices," 164; Dick Stegewerns, "Yoshino Sakuzō: The Isolated Figurehead of the Taishō Generation," Dick Stegewerns, ed., *Nationalism and Internationalism in Imperial Japan* (London, 2003), 118, 125; Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 12.

12. Miwa Kimitada, "Japanese Policies and Concepts for a Regional Order in Asia, 1938–1940," James W. White, Michio Umegaki, and Thomas R. H. Havens, eds., *The Ambivalence of Nationalism: Modern Japan between East and West* (New York, 1990), 137.

13. Nitobe quoted in *Baltimore Evening Sun*, 12 January 1912, 8; Carter, "With the Nitobes," 22, 26.

14. Nitobe, "Japan, the League of Nations, and the Peace Pact," 235; "Retrospect and Prospect," *Osaka mainichi*, 16 November 1929; Nitobe, "What the League of Nations Has Done," 375, 376.

15. Mary E. Nitobe to Joseph Elkinton, 6 January 1904: Nitobe Papers, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, RG 5, ser. 2; Nitobe, *Japan: Some Phases of Her Problems and Development* (New York, 1931), 131.

16. Ishii Kikujirō authored two memoirs: *Gaikō yoroku* [Diplomatic commentaries] (Tokyo, 1930), and *Gaikō zuisō* [Random thoughts on diplomacy] (Tokyo, 1967). *Diplomatic Commentaries* (Baltimore, 1936) is a partial translation of *Gaikō yoroku*. An incomplete diary covering the years 1930–1938 was edited by his son-in-law Kubata Kan'ichirō and published in the journal *Kokusai mondai*, 63–77 (1965–1966). There is no Ishii manuscript collection. Columbia University granted him an honorary Doctor of Civil Laws degree in 1918.

17. Ian Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869–1942: Kasumigaseki to Miyakezaka* (London, 1977), 70–71. The group met at a dining club, the Kogetsukai.

18. Ishii, *Gaikō zuisō*, 329–335.

19. *Ibid.*, 329–331.

20. Roland S. Morris, "The Memoirs of Viscount Ishii," *Foreign Affairs*, 10 (1932), 677.

21. Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869–1942*, 105; Thomas W. Burkman, "Ishii Kikujirō," Warren F. Kuehl, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Internationalists* (Westport CT, 1983), 380–381; on the Hara government's refusal to appoint Ishii to the Paris peace delegation, see Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869–1942*, 120–121.

22. Morris, "Memoirs of Viscount Ishii," 678. This statement says as much about Morris' own "orientalism" as it does about Ishii.

23. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 80, 85–92.

24. Ibid., 95, 135.

25. Kitasawa Sukeo, *The Life of Dr. Nitobe* (Tokyo, 1953), 64; J. Passmore Elkinton to Catherine Bruning, 3 January 1941: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, ser. 2. Nitobe confided by letter to his friend Roland S. Morris, U.S. ambassador to Tokyo, that “one of the chief reason[s] why I consented to accompany our mutual friend [Gotō] was the expansion of his views on some points. I have reasons to believe that the object is largely, at least partly attained. If you meet him on his return you will notice some changes.” Nitobe to Morris, 20 August 1919: Morris Papers, Box 2. Nitobe was fluent in English and skilled in German, but his French was poor.

26. Nitobe to Anna H. Chace, 12 August 1919: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, ser. 2; *Tokyo nichinichi*, 2 April 1929, 2; Miwa, “Crossroads,” 378.

27. Dubin, “The League of Nations Secretariat,” 21; Nitobe to J. Passmore Elkinton, 2 June 1922, Nitobe Papers, RG 5, ser. 2.

28. On the ICIC, see Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 190–194; Charles Hodges, “The World Union of Intellectual Forces,” *Current History*, 24:3 (June 1926), 411–415; and Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 107–113. Takagi Yasaka, “Introduction,” Nitobe, *Works*, I, xviii; Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, 2002), 21–22, 34.

29. Bourgeois quoted in Hodges, “World Union,” 412; Nitobe to Elkinton, 2 June 1922.

30. Ayusawa, “Nitobe sensei no kokusaiteki kōken,” 331; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 191, 193; Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism*, 63–66.

31. Nitobe, *Use and Study of Foreign Languages in Japan*: Swarthmore Peace Collection, Swarthmore College, CDG-B, Box 146.

32. Drummond quoted in Kitasawa, *Life of Dr. Nitobe*, 66; Ishii, *Gaikō zuisō*, 182–183.

33. Nitobe, “What the League of Nations Has Done,” 375–382, 399, 400.

34. Nitobe, “The League of Nations Movement in Japan (A Report on the Trip to Japan),” 9 April 1925, with attached Drummond comment: League of Nations Archives, Box RI573.

35. Greg Gubler, “The Diplomatic Career of Satō Naotake (1882–1971): A Samurai in Western Clothing” (Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1975), 90.

36. Newman to Elkinton, 7 September 1939: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, ser. 2; Ayusawa, “Nitobe sensei no kokusaiteki kōken,” 329–331.

37. Takagi, “Introduction,” xix.

38. Morris, “Memoirs of Viscount Ishii,” 678.

39. Matsushita Masatoshi, *Japan in the League of Nations* (New York, 1929), 99–104; “Report by Viscount Ishii,” 29 August 1921: League of Nations Archives, 11A/15257/14724, R632; Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 156. The Council’s dealing with Upper Silesia in 1921 is distinguished from the 1925–1926 PCIJ case involving the interests of Germans in the region, noted in chapter 5.

40. F. P. Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 98, 496.

41. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 147–151.

42. Ishii Kikujirō, “Nihon to Kokusai Renmei” [Japan and the League of Nations] (1930?), *Gaikō zuisō*, 335–336; Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 192–193.

43. Marc Alan Epstein, “Naval Disarmament and the Japanese: Geneva 1927” (Ph.D.

dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1995), 318–320. See also Epstein, “The Historians and the Geneva Naval Conference,” B. J. C. McKercher, ed., *Arms Limitation and Disarmament: Restraints on War, 1899–1939* (Westport CT, 1992), 129–148. Ishii’s analysis of the deadlock is found in *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 192–197.

44. Ishii, *Gaikō zuisō*, 340.

45. Ishii, “Nihon to Kokusai Renmei,” 340–341.

46. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 170–171.

47. Ibid., 171–172. Indeed, the face-to-face encounters of hotel diplomacy were a significant part of Geneva diplomacy. For the “Locarnites”—Briand, Chamberlain, and Stresemann—private conversations were sometimes more important than meetings of the Assembly and Council. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations*, 95–100. Sadly for Japan, no such informal diplomacy involving Japan and China is recorded, the United States was never a League member, and the USSR’s tenure came after Japan’s resignation.

48. Nitobe to Richard R. Wood, 10 July 1926: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, ser. 2; Nitobe in *Japan Times*, quoted in *International Gleanings from Japan*, 3:10–11 (October–November 1927), 8.

49. *League of Nations Official Journal*, 6th year, 1715–1716: quoted in Matsushita, *Japan in the League of Nations*, 64.

50. Ishii, *Diplomatic Commentaries*, 138–139.

51. Ogata, “Role of Liberal Nongovernment Organizations,” 462–463; Nish, *Japan’s Struggle with Internationalism*, 108.

52. J. Passmore Elkinton to Catherine Bruning, 3 January 1941: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, ser. 2; *Tokyo nichì nichì*, 31 March 1929, 1; Nitobe, “Japan in International Cooperation,” *Osaka mainichi*, 30 August 1929; “Are We Ready?” *Osaka mainichi*, 21 April 1929; Takagi, “Introduction,” xix.

53. Nakami Mari, “Taiheiyō Mondai Chōsakai to Nihon no chishikijin” [The Institute of Pacific Relations and Japan’s intellectuals], *Shisō*, no. 728 (February 1985), 106; Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 71.

54. Nitobe, “Opening Address at the Kyoto Conference,” 355, 356.

55. John Bell Condliffe, ed., *Problems of the Pacific, 1929* (Chicago, 1930), 227, 241; Rōyama Masamichi, “Japan’s Position in Manchuria,” Condliffe, ed., *Problems of the Pacific*, 536; Lu, *Agony of Choice*, 63, 64.

56. Nitobe, *Japan*, 160.

7. Crisis over Manchuria

1. Fascist spokesmen like Mori Kaku and Hayashi Kimio openly urged departure from the League after the Manchurian Incident. Christopher W. A. Szpilman, “Fascist and Quasi-Fascist Ideas in Interwar Japan, 1918–1941,” E. Bruce Reynolds, ed., *Japan in the Fascist Era* (New York, 2004), 92–95; Gordon Berger, *Parties out of Power in Japan, 1931–1941* (Princeton, 1977), 44.

2. Ogata Sadako, *Defiance in Manchuria: The Making of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1931–1932* (Berkeley, 1964), 163.

3. The first work was done by mainstream Japanese scholars following the Pacific War and was published in 1962–1963 under the title *Taiheiyō sensō e no michi: Kaisen gaikō shi* [The road to the Pacific War: A diplomatic history of the origins of the War]. Relevant chapters from this work were translated into English and published in James William Morley, ed., *Japan Erupts: The London Naval Conference and the Manchurian Incident, 1928–1932* (New York, 1984). The seminal work by Ogata Sadako, based on her doctoral dissertation at Berkeley, is *Defiance in Manchuria: The Making of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1931–1932* (Berkeley, 1964). Dr. Ogata focuses on radicalism in the Guandong Army and how the civilian government responded to it. Later in her distinguished career, Ogata served as Japanese minister to the United Nations from 1976 to 1978 and then in Geneva as UN high commissioner for refugees from 1991 to 2000. The most detailed and extensive account, but one based entirely on Western sources, is Christopher Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy: The West, the League, and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931–1933* (New York, 1972). In 1993 Ian Nish, dean of British diplomatic historians of Japan, published his *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism: Japan, China, and the League of Nations, 1931–3* (London, 1993). Nish's study relies heavily on Japanese and British diplomatic documents and focuses throughout on the League's involvement and particularly the work of the Lytton Commission. He also is concerned with those internationalist elements in Japan who were favorably disposed to the League, and the effect of the episode on them and their voice in policy. Louise Young's 1998 work is the best on the Japanese context of ideals, projects, and war fever surrounding Manchuria and Manchukuo: *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley, 1998). Sandra Wilson, in *The Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society, 1931–33* (London, 2002), probes consciousness of and response to the incident in a variety of segments of Japanese society and concludes that the meaning of the 1931–1933 period lies in changing perceptions of Japanese nationalism and identity, and not in a turning point in national policy. The historical background of Japan's pre-Mukden involvement in Manchuria is covered in Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (Cambridge MA, 2001). The Chinese setting and politics of Manchuria during the time of Japanese aggression and occupation are amply studied in Rana Mitter, *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance, and Collaboration in Modern China* (Berkeley, 2000).

4. Thorne, *Limits of Foreign Policy*, 131.

5. Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, 71.

6. Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 67.

7. Ibid., 67, 90–106; Sandra Wilson, *Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society*, 23; Sandra Wilson, "Containing the Crisis: Japan's Diplomatic Offensive in the West, 1931–33," *Modern Asian Studies*, 29:2 (1995), 366.

8. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 158; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 492; Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 122.

9. Lu, *Agony of Choice*, 80; Gates, "'Scorched Earth' Diplomacy," 13–23.

10. Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 173–175; Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 158–166.

11. Matsusaka, *Making of Japanese Manchuria*, 281–288; Lu, *Agony of Choice*, 80–82.

12. Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 193.
13. Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, 173.
14. Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 213–214.
15. Hugh R. Wilson, *Diplomat between Wars*, 279–281. Hugh R. Wilson had served as counselor of embassy in Tokyo (1921–1923), minister to Bern (1927–1937), and adviser to the American delegation to the London Naval Conference of 1930. In the years intervening Japan's walkout and Pearl Harbor, he, along with William R. Castle, Joseph C. Grew, and Joseph W. Ballantine, constituted the "Japan Connection," which pressed for detente with Japan in contrast to the hard-liner "China Hands." Barney J. Rickman III, "Trying to Avoid a Japanese-American War: America's 'Japan Connection' in 1937 and 1941," *Southeast Review of Asian Studies*, 26 (2004), 7, 8. In this recollection of Matsuoka's rhetoric, Wilson combines more than one speech by the Japanese delegate. Matsuoka compared Japan to an unjustly condemned Christ in a speech to the Council on 8 December 1932. Lu, *Agony of Choice*, 85.
16. Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 223–227.
17. Ogata, *Defiance in Manchuria*, 174; Lu, *Agony of Choice*, 92, 93.
18. "Kokusai Renmei dattai ni kansuru sochian shinsa hōkoku" [Report on examination of draft measures related to withdrawal from the League of Nations], 22 March 1933: National Archives of Japan, Item 2A 15-7 C36.
19. Stephen S. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Showa Japan: A Political Biography* (London, 1992), 53.
20. "Notification by the Japanese Government of Its Intention to Withdraw from the League of Nations," Tokyo, 27 March 1933: John M. Maki, comp., *Conflict and Tension in the Far East: Key Documents, 1894–1960* (Seattle, 1961), 72–74.
21. Quoted in Ernst L. Presseisen, *Germany and Japan: A Study in Totalitarian Diplomacy, 1933–1941* (The Hague, 1958), 32.
22. Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism*, 231, 232; Barbara Teters, "Matsuoka Yōsuke: The Diplomacy of Bluff and Gesture," Richard Dean Burns and Edward M. Bennett, eds., *Diplomats in Crisis: United States–Chinese–Japanese Relations, 1919–1941* (Santa Barbara CA, 1974), 284; Lu, *Agony of Choice*, 96.
23. "Oregon Honors Noted Alumnus," *Old Oregon*, 14 (April 1933), 4, 5.
24. Matsuoka Yōsuke, "Japan Puts Her Cards on the Table," radio transcript, n.d.: Hornbeck Papers, Box 258.
25. Ogata, "Role of Liberal Nongovernment Organizations," 473.
26. Yamakawa Tadao, "Should Japan Leave the League?" *Contemporary Japan*, 1:2 (September 1932), 220–228.
27. Stegewerns, "Yoshino Sakuzō," 125–126; Mitani Taichirō, "Changes in Japan's International Position and the Response of Japanese Intellectuals: Trends in Japanese Studies of Japan's Foreign Relations, 1931–1941," Borg and Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History*, 579.
28. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 161–162; Mitani, "Changes in Japan's International Position," 577–578.
29. Yokota Kisaburō, "Renmei dattai no ato ni kuru mono" [What to expect after withdrawal from the League], *Fujin no Tomo*, 27 (April 1933), 62–64.

30. Nish, "A Japanese Diplomat Looks at Europe," 136–138; Sugimura Yōtarō, *Kokusai gaikōroku* [Reflections on international diplomacy] (Tokyo, 1933), 1–2, 82; *New York Times*, 16 April 1933, E3; Matsushita Masatoshi interview, 23 May 1978.

31. Ogata, "Role of Liberal Nongovernment Organizations," 470–475.

32. Kubata, "Ishii Shishaku Kandanroku," 6 March 1933: *Kokusai mondai*, 71 (February 1966), 80.

33. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 193–195.

34. Joseph M. Henning, *Outposts of Civilization: Race, Religion, and the Formative Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York, 2000), 143–144.

35. S. Wilson, "Containing the Crisis," 341–350; Jessamyn R. Abel, "Warring Internationalisms: Multilateral Thinking in Japan, 1933–1964" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 2004), 95; Kawakami Kiyoshi, *Manchoukuo: Child of Conflict* (New York, 1933), vi. In 1938, the year Japan cut all remaining ties to League of Nations subunits, Japan canceled the 1940 Tokyo Olympic games and substituted the Tokyo Asian Games. This shift from global to regional mirrored the nation's diplomatic posture in the 1930s. Abel, "Warring Internationalisms," 98, 124.

36. Takayanagi Kenzō, "The Application of Existing Instruments of Policy," Bruce Lasker, ed., *Problems of the Pacific, 1931* (Chicago, 1932), 233–236. "MacMurray" refers to the standard compilation of China treaties, published in 1921.

37. Mary E. Nitobe to J. Passmore and Anna Elkinton, 22 October 1931: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, Ser. 2.

38. *Osaka mainichi*, 19 February 1932: Nitobe, *Works*, V, 318.

39. Gilbert Bowles, "The Peace Movement in Japan," pamphlet reprinted in *The Friend*, 23 November and 7 and 21 December 1944, 21; Sharlie C. Ushioda, "Man of Two Worlds: An Inquiry into the Value System of Inazō Nitobe (1862–1933)," Hilary Conroy and T. Scott Miyakawa, eds., *East across the Pacific: Historical and Sociological Studies of Japanese Immigration and Assimilation* (Santa Barbara CA, 1972), 199–200; J. Passmore Elkinton to Dorothy Gilbert, 15 December 1948: Nitobe Papers, RG 5, Ser. 2.

40. "Dr. Nitobe Arrives: Pleads for Japan," *New York Times*, 7 May 1932, 4.

41. Nitobe, "Japan, the League of Nations, and the Peace Pact," 234–239.

42. H. L. Stimson, "Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary Stimson and Dr. Inazō Nitobe," 1 June 1932: Hornbeck Papers, Box 258; Nitobe Inazō, "Japan and the Peace Pact," radio broadcast, 20 August 1932: Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 240–250. Nitobe alleged Soviet aid in birthing the Nanjing government.

43. Nitobe Inazō, "The Manchurian Question and Sino-American Relations," 21 November 1932: Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 232; *New York Times*, 14 August 1932, sec. 8, 2, and 29 July 1932, 11; Nitobe, "Japan and the United States," 28 November 1932: Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 256.

44. Nitobe, "Japan, the League of Nations, and the Peace Pact," 239; Nitobe, "Manchurian Question," 221–233; H. R. Wilson, *Diplomat between Wars*, 279; "Nitobe Blames Missionaries for Political Unrest in China," *New York Times*, 7 September 1932, 11.

45. On his Shikoku speaking tour in February 1932, Nitobe supported the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. Miwa, "Crossroads," 414.

46. J. Passmore Elkinton to Dorothy Gilbert, 15 December 1948: Nitobe Papers, RG 5,

Ser. 2; “How Geneva Erred,” *Tokyo nichii nichii*, 12 April 1933, 7; Nitobe, “Text of the Address . . . at the Banff Conference, August 14, 1933”: Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 301–303.

47. Kubata, “Ishii Shishaku Kandanroku,” 10 November 1932: *Kokusai mondai*, 70 (January 1966), 62; Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy, 1869–1942*, 191, 200.

48. Sakamoto Kenzō, “Manshū Jihenki ni okeru kokusai kyōchō gaikō no moyō: Ishii Kikujirō o chūshin ni” [The state of cooperative diplomacy at the time of the Manchurian Incident: The case of Ishii Kikujirō], Nakamura Katsunori, ed., *Manshū Jihen no shōgeki* [Impact of the Manchurian Incident] (Tokyo, 1996), 131–134.

49. Letter to the *Times* (London), 27 February 1932, 11e.

50. “Address to the League Commission by Viscount Ishii: The League of Nations and the Chinese Problem”: Foreign Ministry Archives, SI.1.1.0-33-774; Nish, *Japan’s Struggle with Internationalism*, 58, 238; Ishii Kikujirō, “The League and the Chinese Problem,” *Contemporary Japan*, 1 (1932), 7–15.

51. Ishii Kikujirō, “Manchukuo and the Manchurian Question” (Tokyo: League of Nations Association of Japan, 20 October 1932), 6–18.

52. Kubata, “Ishii Shishaku Kandanroku,” 6 and 27 March and 11 April 1933: *Kokusai mondai*, 71 (1966), 80–83.

53. *Ibid.*, 19, 26, and 30 April and 1 May 1933: *Kokusai mondai*, 72 (1966), 60–62.

54. Ishii Kikujirō, “America and Japan” (speech at luncheon at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, 18 May 1933), “On the League Covenant” (remarks at luncheon at the National Press Club, Washington DC, 27 May 1933), and “The Sanctity of Treaties” (remarks at luncheon at the Lawyers Club of New York, 31 May 1933): *Viscount Ishii’s Addresses Delivered in America, May 1933* (n.p., n.d.), 16, 32, 33, 39. *New York Times*, 24 May 1933, 6; 25 May, 11; 26 May, 3; and 28 May, 3.

55. Nish, *Japan’s Struggle with Internationalism*, 184.

56. Large, *Emperor Hirohito and Shōwa Japan*, 47–49.

57. *Ibid.*, 50–52.

58. *Ibid.*, 53; Makino, *Makino Nobuaki nikki*, 20 February 1933, 546.

59. Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York, 2000), 236, 239–240.

60. *Ibid.*, 262, 263.

61. Joseph C. Grew, *Ten Years in Japan* (New York, 1944), 76.

62. *Ibid.*, 33, 75. 15 May 1933 denotes the assassination of Premier Inukai Tsuyoshi, who was succeeded by Saitō Makoto.

8. Japan as an Outsider

Portions of this chapter appeared in an earlier form in Thomas W. Burkman, “Nitobe Inazō: From World Order to Regional Order,” J. Thomas Rimer, ed., *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals during the Interwar Years* (Princeton, 1990), 191–216.

1. Grew, *Ten Years in Japan*, 75.

2. Sandra Wilson, *Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society*, 1–5; Sandra Wilson, “Containing the Crisis: Japan’s Diplomatic Offensive in the West, 1931–33,” *Modern Asian Studies*

29:2 (1995), 370–371. See the introduction of Wilson’s monograph for the outlines of the debate and specific citations of the standard view.

3. Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 244–245.

4. Ogata, “Role of Liberal Nongovernmental Organizations in Japan,” 475–476, 486; Gates, “‘Scorched Earth’ Diplomacy,” 34.

5. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 191, 202–205, 215, 219–227.

6. Tomoko Akami notes a similar phenomenon among members of the Japan Council of the IPR after the council stopped participating in IPR conferences in 1939. Contrary to what one might predict, many became “more active as international publicists.” Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 14.

7. Ishii, quoted in Société des Nations, *Journal officiel*, 6:2 (November 1925), 1715–1716.

8. *International Gleanings from Japan*, 3:1 (31 January 1927), 1, 5.

9. *Hōchi* editorial, 4 December 1925; *Kokumin* editorial, 17 October 1925.

10. Dino Grandi, “Italy,” Council on Foreign Relations, ed., *The Foreign Policy of the Powers* (New York, 1935), 88–89.

11. Ashida Hitoshi, “Kyokutō Rokaruno no teishō” [Advocacy of a Far Eastern Locarno], *Gaikō jihō*, 671 (15 November 1932), 27–33. After World War II, Ashida would serve briefly as foreign minister and prime minister.

12. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 194.

13. Takagi Yasaka, “Some Considerations on the Future Reconstruction of Peace Machinery in the Pacific,” Takagi, *Toward International Understanding* (Tokyo, 1954), 22–23, 27, 31; Nakami Mari, “Taiheiyō Mondai Chōsakai to Nihon no chishikijin [The Institute of Pacific Relations and Japan’s intellectuals],” *Shisō*, no. 728 (February 1985), 112.

14. Takagi Yasaka and Yokota Kisaburō, “A Security Pact for the Pacific Area,” Bruno Lasker and W. L. Holland, eds., *Problems of the Pacific*, 1933 (Chicago, 1933), 442.

15. Ibid., 442–450; Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 112–114, 194–195; Katagiri Nobuo, *Taiheiyō Mondai Chōsakai no kenkyū: Senkanki Nihon IPR no katsudō o chūshin to shite* [Research on the Institute for Pacific Relations: Focus on the activities of the IPR] (Tokyo, 2003), 257; Klaus Schlichtmann, “A Far-East Locarno? Japanese Proposals for a Regional Security Pact in the 1930s,” unpublished paper, 2003.

16. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 198–199.

17. Takagi, “Some Considerations,” 23.

18. Mark R. Peattie, *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan’s Confrontation with the West* (Princeton, 1975), 281–282, 322.

19. Mitter, *Manchurian Myth*, 93–100; Joshua A. Fogel, *Politics and Sinology: The Case of Naitō Kōnan (1866–1934)* (Cambridge MA, 1984), 254–255.

20. Shimonaka Yazaburō den kankōkai, ed., *Shimonaka Yazaburō jiten* [Encyclopedia of Shimonaka Yazaburō] (Tokyo, 1965), 242–243; see also Miwa, “Japanese Policies and Concepts,” 3–7.

21. Robert S. Schwantes, “Japan’s Cultural Foreign Policies,” James W. Morley, ed., *Japan’s Foreign Policy, 1868–1941: A Research Guide* (New York, 1974), 179–180.

22. Akira Iriye, “The Role of the United States Embassy in Tokyo,” Borg and Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History*, 112.

23. Miles Fletcher, *The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan* (Chapel Hill NC, 1982), 62, 110–113.

24. Kajima Morinosuke, “Kokusai Renmei no hani nai ni okeru Tōa renmei kensetsu no kyūmu” [The urgent need to establish an East Asian League within the framework of the League of Nations] (October 1925), reprinted in Kajima Morinosuke, *Kajima Morinosuke gaikōron senshū* [Anthology of the writings of Kajima Morinosuke on foreign policy] (Tokyo, 1972), 24–45.

25. Kamikawa Hikomatsu, “Ajia rengō ka Kyōkutō renmei ka?” [Asian federation or Far Eastern league?], *Kokka gakkai zasshi*, 47:7 (July 1933), 90–100.

26. Interrogation of Matsuoka Yōsuke, 29 March 1946: National Archives, IPS Records, Entry 319, Case No. 118 (Courtesy Prof. Awaya Kentarō of Rikkyō University).

27. Mitani Taichirō, “Changes in Japan’s International Position,” 580–589.

28. Hosoya Chihiro, “1934 no Nichi-Ei fukashin kyōtei mondai” [The 1934 Anglo-Japanese nonaggression pact], *Kokusai seiji*, 58:2 (1977), 69–74.

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30. Rōyama Masamichi, *The Foreign Policy of Japan, 1914–1939* (Tokyo, 1941), 169; Fletcher, *Search for a New Order*, 81, 138–139, 145; Miwa, “Japanese Policies and Concepts,” 142.

31. Matsuoka Yōsuke, “The New Order in East Asia,” *Contemporary Japan*, 8:1 (March 1939), 1–9.

32. Konoe, “Ei-Bei hon’i no heiwashugi o hai su,” 26.

33. Norman Graebner, “Hoover, Roosevelt, and the Japanese,” Borg and Okamoto, eds., *Pearl Harbor as History*, 38–41; Crowley, *Japan’s Quest for Autonomy*, 303–306; Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 731–735.

34. Walters, *History of the League of Nations*, 738.

35. “Teikoku to Kokusai Renmei shokikan to no kyōryoku kankei shūshi no ken shinsa hōkoku” [Report of the matters of the investigation of the final severance of cooperative relations between the Empire and the various organizations of the League of Nations], 29 October 1938: National Archives of Japan, Item 2A 15-7 C48; Unno, *Kokusai Renmei to Nihon*, 306–310.

36. Konoe, translated in *Japan Times and Mail*, 4 November 1938, 1.

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1. U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931–1941*, II, 791.

2. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations*, 94–98.

3. Matsuoka quoted in Daniel M. Smith, *The American Diplomatic Experience* (New York, 1972), 343.

4. Abel, “Warring Internationalisms,” 3, 9, 95, 106. Abel probes the justification of imperialist actions in the 1930s through the rhetoric of internationalism.

5. Akami, *Internationalizing the Pacific*, 13.

6. Nitobe, *Works*, IV, 358.

7. Liang Pan, *The United Nations in Japan's Foreign and Security Policymaking, 1945–1992* (Cambridge MA, 2005), 255–258.

8. Treaty text, 1951. Maki, *Conflict and Tension in the Far East*, 132.

9. Pan, *United Nations*, 254–259, 288–290, 307; Akashi Yasushi, “Japan’s Path toward a Permanent Seat on the UN Security Council,” *Gaiko Forum*, 5:3 (2005), 37; ILO Chūnichi Jimusho, “Yakushi—ILO to Nihon” [Concise history of the ILO and Japan], <http://www.ilo.org/public/japanese/region/asro/tokyo/japan.htm>; United Nations General Assembly Eleventh Session Official Records, 623rd Plenary Meeting, 18 December 1956, 723–728; Constitution of Japan, Preamble.

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11. Kitaoka Shin’ichi, “The United Nations in Postwar Japanese Diplomacy,” *Gaiko Forum*, 5:2 (2005), 6, 7; Akashi, “Japan’s Path,” 37, 40; Kenneth B. Pyle, “Abe Shinzō and Japan’s Change of Course,” *NBR Analysis*, 17:4 (October 2006), 27. As of this writing, Japan has served nine terms on the Security Council as a nonpermanent member, a frequency matched only by Brazil. Japan contributes 19.5 percent of the UN budget; the U.S. figure is 22 percent.

12. Shin’yō Takahiro, “The United Nations at a Crossroads: Security Council Reform and Japan,” *Gaiko Forum*, 3:4 (Winter 2004), 10–18; Satō Yukio, “Keep Pushing for Reform of the UN Security Council,” *Japan Echo*, 30:6 (December 2003), 35–39; Akashi, “Japan’s Path,” 42. A thorough account of Japan’s efforts to secure a permanent seat in the Security Council is found in Reinhard Drifte, *Japan’s Quest for a Permanent Security Council Seat: A Matter of Pride or Justice?* (London, 2000). Articles 53 and 107 of the UN Charter give the victors of the Second World War the right to carry out enforcement actions consequent to that war, without the authorization of the Security Council. Pan, *United Nations*, 16.

13. E.g., the article by Shin’yō Takahiro, “The United Nations at a Crossroads,” refers back to the League of Nations three times.

14. Kitaoka Shin’ichi, “Reform in Japanese Foreign Affairs: Policy Review Long Overdue,” *Gaiko Forum*, 2:3 (Fall 2002), 12.

15. Washington Post Foreign Service, 14 December 2005, A26; Yamada Takio, “Toward a Principled Integration of East Asia: Concept for an East Asian Community,” *Gaiko Forum*, 5:3 (Fall 2005), 24–28; Stanley Michalak, “Post-Democratic Cosmopolitans: The Second Wave of Liberal Internationalism,” *Orbis*, 48:4 (Fall 2004), 593.

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