

JAPANESE HISTORY - 20th Century

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Overview The first half of the 20th century in Japan was as interesting as it was tumultuous. It was the best of times and the worst of times—a period when the people of Japan experienced the highest emotional highs and the lowest of lows. Japan expanded its territory dramatically and become a world power only to then see it collapse back to its pre-20th century boundaries. The Japanese economy enjoyed unprecedented growth, then depression, more growth and then finally near total destruction. The Japanese people enjoyed a period of great openness in the public sphere only to see an authoritarian government suspend virtually all of the new-found freedoms. Finally, when the Pacific War came to a close, Japan was a vanquished, shattered nation. Millions were dead, millions were stranded in foreign countries and tens of millions were at risk of starvation. Its future was extremely bleak and there was virtually no hope for the future. During the early years of the occupation (1945-1952), it seemed all was lost. The dominant philosophies and ideologies of the previous era had failed and new ones had yet to emerge. But the essential spirit of the Japanese people endured and would emerge out of the ashes of the war.

Events

Russo-Japanese War. There was unfinished business from the settlement over the Sino-Japanese war in 1895. Even though the Japanese had conquered Port Arthur (now the Lushun Port) in southern Manchuria, the Japanese were forced to abandon it because of the threat of force issued by Russia, Germany and France. This is known as the Triple Intervention and infuriated the Japanese leadership, who vowed never to have terms dictated to them again by a foreign country. Soon, the Japanese began to pour prodigious amounts of money into their military in preparation for the coming conflict with Russia over Manchuria. They signed the Anglo-Japanese Treaty in 1902, which stated in Article 3 that the both nations would come to the aid of the other if the other nation were at war with more than one other of the European Powers. (This was the reason the Japanese fought against the Central Powers in the WWI.)

When the opportunity arose in 1904 to pressure Imperial Russia, the Japanese issued an ultimatum which they knew was unacceptable to the Tsar, and war began. The Russo-Japanese War was a surprisingly bloody affair that resulted in almost 200,000 deaths in total for all sides. It was also much more costly and destructive than either side anticipated—a precursor of things to come in WWI. The Japanese seemed to win battle after battle in Manchuria and on the seas, but they could never deliver the final blow which would cause the Russians to sue for peace. Finally after the Battle of Tsushima in May of 1905, which resulted in 27 Russian vessels sunk (6 were battleships) or captured and 6 more Russian vessels interned in neutral ports, the Russians agreed to negotiate. These talks were held at Portsmouth, New Hampshire and were mediated by U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt. The Russians agreed to terms, but Japan was nearly bankrupt and also didn't get all that it wanted. Russia clearly had not won, but the cost to Japan was almost more than it could bear as well. Still, Japan was given a free hand to intervene in Manchuria as they saw fit. For the first time in the modern era, one of the European Powers had lost a war to a nation in East Asia. This war changed the balance of power and made Japan a nation to be reckoned with.

Taishō Democracy (1912-1926). In the late teens and early twenties, Japan experienced a period during which there was a flowering of culture and political openness. This is known as “Taishō Democracy” and describes a time when party politicians exercised more power than had ever been the case. There were several Prime Ministers who were not one of the oligarchs who had ruled Japan since 1868. Indeed, most of the original group of two dozen men who had dominated politics since the Meiji Restoration had died or retired from public life by this time. During this period, Japanese generally felt free to participate in public life, experiment with new expressions of culture and criticize their government as they saw fit. In short, Japanese were optimistic about the future. However, the Peace Preservation Law, which was passed in 1925 and which accompanied the passage of universal male suffrage, was

soon used to crack down on leftists. Later, it became the legal basis for the creation of various government agencies associated with the militarism of the 1930s.

Militarism. The suppression of anarchists, socialists and communists in the late 1920s and early 1930s marked the beginning of the period of militarism. The openness of the Taishō period stood in stark contrast to the reality of the Great Depression and the various states of emergency proclaimed by the government in the 1930s. The Great Depression in Japan, as elsewhere, was unprecedented for the industrial era. The Japanese economy contracted dramatically, workers were unemployed and hardship and hunger were not uncommon. Government policies helped the Japanese economy recover more quickly than most nations, but deficit spending resulted later in government spending cuts. The military, which made up one of the largest parts of the budget, was also cut. This was unacceptable to the military, which, over the course of the early and middle years of the 1930s, made it nearly impossible to form new government cabinets that were not military friendly. Soon thereafter, the military came to dominate public life and created the authoritarian system of the militarist years.

War in China. Over the course of the late 1920s, the Japanese army moved little by little into Manchuria and seized all of it by 1932 in multiple acts of pure aggression. This was in contravention of all international norms of the time and caused considerable diplomatic trouble for Japan. The people in Manchuria—both ethnic Chinese and Manchu—also did not passively accept the situation and began a guerilla war which eventually spilled over into North China proper. In 1936 and 1937, elements of the Japanese Kwangtung Imperial army moved into the Beijing area in force and were faced somewhat unexpectedly by the armies of the Chinese Nationalist government in Nanjing. Large-scale fighting then erupted in the summer of 1937 between Nationalist armies and the armies of Imperial Japan, beginning the worldwide conflict known as WWII.

Pacific War. The Japanese war against China dragged on from 1937 to 1941, with no resolution in sight. More than a hundred thousand Japanese soldiers had already died and millions of Chinese soldiers and civilians had perished. The Japanese military had succeeded in conquering the coastal areas of China and had decimated the capital city of Nanjing. But much to the consternation of the Japanese, however, the Chinese government which had evacuated to Chongqing, still refused to capitulate. By 1941, Japan was faced with a dilemma: withdraw from China without a victory—an unthinkable possibility—or expand the war into Southeast Asia in order to acquire the resources needed to continue the war in China. Japanese strategists believed that the United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands would not allow this. Therefore, Japan formulated a plan to limit U.S. involvement and destroyed most of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. In so doing, however, the U.S. resolved to end Japanese aggression once and for all, no matter how long it took and regardless of the cost. Japan had anticipated a limited conflict with the U.S., not total war.

War with the United States alone was ill-advised. War with the US, Great Britain, China and most of the peoples of Southeast Asia at the same time was folly. Japan was a small nation with very limited natural resources. It had a population of 90 million that had been at war in China for approximately 4 years. Its people and military were already tired. The US had ample natural resources and a population of 134 million. As the most heavily industrialized nation in the world, its production capacity dwarfed Japan's. The Empire of Japan was simply outmatched and outgunned by the U.S. industrial juggernaut. For example, the city of Pittsburgh alone produced more steel than all of the smelters in Japan combined! By the summer of 1942 after the naval Battle of Midway, the best Japan could hope for was a negotiated peace with the U.S.

The war ended badly for the Japanese. US production and firepower simply overwhelmed the Japanese. It should be noted, however, that the Chinese did more than their fair share in the war. It was, after all, about them more than any other nation. Chinese troops, both Nationalist (Guomindang) and the Chinese Communist Party's People's Liberation Army, fought the fearsome Japanese Imperial Army to a standstill. After the Soviet Union declared war and atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan capitulated and was occupied for the first time in its history.

Government

Structure. The Meiji Constitution promulgated in 1889 was functioning quite well as Japan entered the 20th century. The Meiji oligarchs (the approximately two dozen men who had led in the Meiji Restoration and who later governed Japan in the late 19th century) had successfully transformed the government into a well-oiled and high-functioning machine. The Constitution had withstood the challenges of the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, and the internal unrest associated with the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905. Still, the greatest challenge was to

come with the death and retirement of the Meiji oligarchs. By the end of the Meiji period in 1912, very few of the old leaders remained on the public scene and the transition to party rule seemed eminent. In 1918, the first party politician from the Diet (lower house), Hara Takashi, became prime minister. Soon thereafter, a series of military officers, alternating with party politicians, served as prime ministers until 1932, when the military began to supply the greatest number. Given that there were a total of 23 prime ministers from 1918 to 1945, each prime minister served only slightly more than one year on average. This means that real power was exercised elsewhere, behind the scenes with the remaining oligarchs and with the permanent bureaucracy. With the death of Yamagata Aritomo in 1922 and Matsukata Masayoshi in 1924, only Saionji Kinmochi survived among the old oligarchs and he wanted to retire. Stability was greatly desired in the political realm, but no one had the clout of the founding generation. Political cliques formed and were disbanded when a better situation presented itself. Things seemed unpredictable and there was a political power vacuum that left the Japanese government adrift until the early 1930s. The greatest strength of the founding generation, the oligarchs themselves, had been unable to find an effective way to replicate themselves in the Meiji Constitution. The military stepped into the void.

The Military. The Japanese army and navy were considered to be the spiritual inheritors of the samurai traditions. They understood themselves to be the protectors of all that was right, true and patriotic in the country. They did not answer to the civilian leadership and were accountable only to the Emperor. They came to consider it their highest calling to protect the person and prerogatives of the Emperor, who was a living embodiment of the spirit of Japan and a god himself. They took their duties very seriously and seldom compromised with the politicians whom they despised and whom they thought was leading Japan astray in the 1920s and early 1930s. When the civilian leadership of Japan called upon the Japanese army to pull back from various areas of Manchuria in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the military responded that they operated independently. They demanded that the Diet continue to appropriate additional funds for the military on the mainland, which the legislature sometimes did. When they did not, the military often manufactured a crisis in Manchuria and demanded funding because of a new threat. In short, the Japanese army manipulated the civilian leadership. When that didn't work, they brought down a cabinet, creating the very instability they said they despised. In Manchuria, the military operated as a semi-independent arm of the government. And as long as they stayed in Manchuria where they faced an unorganized and poorly funded foe, they could maintain the fiction of independence of command. However, when they blundered into North China proper and encountered a determined, Nationalist army and a Chinese people who understood themselves to be fighting for their very existence, the military and the rest of Japan found themselves in a war that they could not win, but a war that they also could not end. It is the very definition of "mission creep."

The Japanese military was extraordinarily well trained, well equipped and highly motivated. They had some of the best weapons available for the era. In particular, the Japanese navy sailed aboard some of the finest, most capable vessels ever to go to sea. But the Japanese military was thin. When four aircraft carriers were sunk in the Battle of Midway in June of 1942, the Japanese capacity to project power was severely diminished and they were unable to build more. They had great airmen and advanced aircraft, but there were too few of them to fight the Chinese and later to fight the U.S. and other enemies at the same time. As an island nation, they also had a large merchant marine, but when submarine warfare began to take its toll, Japan could not sufficiently supply its military in the field. Its industrial capacity was insufficient and its population too small.

Culture

The Literary Arts. Natsume Sōseki. One of the most beloved of all Japanese modern authors in the early 20th century is Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916). Sōseki graduated from Tokyo Imperial University and then, given his proficiency in English, attended University College in London. He returned to Japan and accepted a post at Tokyo Imperial University as a lecturer in English literature where he taught criticism and theory. Sōseki had the common touch and in this way is comparable to one of his contemporaries in the United States: Mark Twain. However, Sōseki was also financially savvy and willingly gave up a very respected position at Tokyo Imperial University to become a full-time novelist, a profession far below professor in social status. Rather than trying to earn a living selling novels, Sōseki signed on to the *Asahi Shinbun* (newspaper) and had many of his stories released in serial form. This was beneficial for the newspaper and also provided a stable income for Sōseki. Most importantly, it gave him a ready platform for his new works. His novels and essays were so anticipated that customers would queue up outside of newspaper stands in the mornings waiting for them to open so that they could buy the next installment of his stories.

Language. It is during the first two decades of the 20th century that the modern novel reached final maturity in Japan. Sōseki is, in part, credited with bringing this to fruition. He wrote in the colloquial form of Japanese so that his works would be accessible to the largest audience. However, his facility with the Japanese language was so great and his works so brilliantly executed that the critics had little effect on him.

Kokoro. One of his most well-known (and perhaps important) works was published in 1914 and is entitled *Kokoro*. The title “*Kokoro*” (心) is most often not translated, in part because it is difficult to find an English word which conveys the depth of its multiple meanings. “*Kokoro*” in English is literally translated “heart” but can also mean “spirit”—or can be interpreted as the “essence of things.” The title conveys the internal struggles of the protagonist “Sensei” to find the essence of life in the realm of a dying Meiji emperor, where estrangement and indifference seem to define his existence. This work is all the more important for what it tells us about the expression of sensibilities in long form prose as Japan transitioned from a period of tremendous change and upheaval, where modernity swept aside long-held traditions of the earlier age. Sensei can be understood as emblematic of the end of an age, particularly because he committed suicide at roughly the same time as the Meiji emperor died. This, of course, was a perplexing event for other characters in the novel who did not fully understand nor appreciate Sensei’s motives. Nonetheless, Sensei’s decision to end his life was in part atonement for behavior he was ashamed of as a young man. In like fashion, as Japan transitioned into the post-Meiji world, Sōseki seems to suggest that there were Meiji era transgressions that needed absolution before society could move on. Sōseki died from a stomach ulcer only two years after the publication of *Kokoro*. He was only 49 years old. He left at least one novel unfinished.

Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (1886-1965). Tanizaki’s literary career began quite early in his life. His first work appeared in 1903, when he was only 17 years old. He came from a modest background and was effectively a scholarship student even in high school. (The condition of being surrounded by students who came from more affluent families, but who were less capable, may have contributed to the formation of his unique perspective on society.) However, his knowledge of the Chinese classics and of European literature—and his writing ability—set him apart from his peers. He then entered Tokyo Imperial University, where by all accounts he in no way distinguished himself. While there, he continued to sell his stories. Ultimately, he decided to abandon the academy and make a living as a full time author. This was a risky move at the time and frowned upon by his family. But his genius, work ethic and indefatigable spirit provided the motivation necessary to become a successful author.

Unusual Themes. Though he is among Japan’s literary geniuses of the 20th century, Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (1886-1965) is not remembered as a sympathetic person or beloved author. His works are somewhat idiosyncratic and can exhibit a harshness in tone and plot. The narratives found in his novels, essays and plays sometimes pushed the boundaries of acceptable public discourse. Indeed, he ran afoul of the censors on a number of occasions. However, his fiction resonated with a certain segment of the population who found his semi-erotic, sensual themes to reflect the sensibilities of the time. For Tanizaki, few topics were off limits. For example, his characters treated women abominably and were, in turn, treated harshly (or with indifference) by other women. In many of his works, male characters seemed to worship the female form and sometimes went so far as to fantasize about various sexual fetishes. Tanizaki was also not a slave to social convention and was more honest and straightforward in his fiction and in his life than was expected of the time.

Some Prefer Nettles. Tanizaki’s *Some Prefer Nettles* ranks among his masterpieces. This work was serialized in 1929 during a particularly creative period that also saw the publication of some of his other most famous works of fiction. *Some Prefer Nettles* is set in the Kansai area (the Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe area), which facilitated Tanizaki’s use of bunraku (puppetry) imagery, particularly in the depiction of women in the text. It also allowed him to experiment with the Kansai dialect. The story revolves around the unhappy marriage of the characters Kaname and Misako. Kaname’s tone is described as “confessional,” leading many scholars to believe that Kaname is Tanizaki. We believe this to be the case because we now know that Tanizaki divorced his spouse soon after *Some Prefer Nettles* appeared. Tanizaki continued to live in the Kansai area for many years after the publication of *Some Prefer Nettles*. He survived the war and lived to receive numerous honors including the prestigious Japanese government honor, the *Order of Culture*.

Society

Glorification of the Military. In the early 20th century, Japanese society had learned to value the military as an important element of its national identity. The traditions of the samurai were warmly embraced and military

adventurism had largely paid dividends. The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 was a clear success and, though costly in both men and treasure, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 was understood to be a turning point for Japan's expansion into the mainland. Above all, WWI demonstrated just how much could be gained by the careful application of aggressive diplomacy and military power. For Japanese society, there was little opposition to its use and the rush to acquire empire became a national priority. Still, neither Japanese society nor its economy can be described as "militarized" until the 1930s. Indeed, in the period of Taishō openness, the military endured its fair share of criticism. In particular, leftists (anarchists, socialists and communists) were very willing to argue that aggressive military action was not in the interest of the working man.

In the early 1930s, young military officers took the lead in promoting ultra-nationalism. They gave speeches, published pamphlets and journals and created an environment where assassination was not uncommon. These "righteous patriots"—as they called themselves—targeted anyone they perceived threatened the interests of the state or the prerogatives of the Emperor. Politicians (including even Prime Ministers, Finance Ministers and the like), public intellectuals, military officers, leaders of industry were all assassinated or targeted for assassination. Anyone who advocated for more democracy, less authoritarianism and more freedom was also warned. In short, a culture of fear and intimidation was used to silence the opposition. All of this was done by those who claimed to be patriots and the most sincere adherents of the cult of the Emperor. By the middle of the 1930s, the social narrative glorifying the military and military adventurism had become nearly impossible to counter. Society was carefully divided and sub-divided into small accountability groups and enforced by auxiliaries of the justice and interior ministries—and the *kempeitai* (military police). These accountability groups were small enough to ensure that those who espoused heterodox ideas were exposed and dealt with either through judicial or social sanction. Opposition political figures were jailed or effectively silenced, censorship rules strictly enforced and fines and confiscations were regular occurrences. Once in place in the 1930s, the leadership of Japan maintained a firm grip on society and monitored and tightly controlled the public narrative.

By any measure, Japanese society was generally willing to embrace the culture of militarism without much coercion. Propaganda was effective and largely unnecessary in the early years of the Pacific War. The campaign against China was a stalemate but the successes of 1941 and early 1942 provided society hope for a quick and easy conflict. However, the setbacks and failures of 1943 and early 1944 were minimized in the press and Japanese society was not prepared for the sacrifices to come. It was only in late 1944 and 1945 that cracks began to show in the social veneer of wartime Japan. As city after city was decimated by bombing, and word arrived that hundreds of thousands of soldiers had died, it became impossible to hide the truth that Japan was losing the war. Nonetheless, the social narrative was so resilient that Japanese women and school children began to drill for battle to repel the enemy invader in 1945. For Japanese society, it was impossible to consider that its vaunted military was incapable of protecting neither the Emperor nor the nation. When surrender occurred in August of 1945, Japanese society was traumatized in many ways. Its dominant social narrative of ethnic and military superiority was exposed as a lie. The Emperor was even forced to renounce his divinity.

Economy

Industry. As Japan entered the 20th century, its economy was still very much dependent on agriculture. There were continued advances in agriculture, but the easy and quick gains had already been seen in the late 19th century. Japan's agriculture was limited by the amount of land that could be cultivated. In particular, since most of Japan (about 75%) is mountainous, large-scale mechanization (as seen in the flat-lands of the U.S. great plains) was not practical. The vast majority of Japanese farmers still relied extensively on human and animal labor augmented by some mechanization. There was also the persistent problem of absentee landowners who provided little in the way of incentives for those who actually worked the land to increase production. This problem of absentee landownership, a situation that reached nearly 50% of all farm land in Japan, persisted until the end of the war, at which time land was redistributed by occupation officials to those who actually worked it. (This had created a situation in which wealth disparity of that magnitude was understood to be destabilizing factor for society.)

In industry, however, the potential for growth was unlimited but largely dependent on the demand for exports and a ready supply of raw materials. Economic and industrial growth continued in fits and starts until 1930. Before 1930, Japanese industrial growth was spurred on by the Russo-Japanese War and WWI, periods in which the government prioritized the production of armaments, heavy industry and transportation. These increases were punctuated by dramatic downturns as factories retooled and refitted for consumer markets after the wars ended. Nonetheless, some periods saw tremendous growth. Japanese manufacturers became major exporters of finished silk and other textiles, pharmaceuticals, cement, paper, glass and the like.

Great Depression. Like all other nations, Japan suffered from the effects of the Great Depression. The eminent historian of Japan, Kenneth Pyle, argues that nationwide wealth was reduced by one-third from 1925-1931. He also asserts that exports fell fifty percent between 1929 and 1931. This was felt immediately by factory workers and soon thereafter by all other sectors of the economy. This created an environment in which various states of emergency could be implemented and others extended by the government. It should be noted that the Japanese government intervened extensively in the economy and helped spur recovery from the Depression sooner than most other nations. This just also happened to coincide with Japan's final annexation of Manchuria, which reinforced the false narrative that aggressive military action could spur economic growth.

The War Ends. As the war came to a close, greater and greater percentages of industrial capacity was devoted to the war. At one point in 1944, it is estimated that thirty-five to forty percent of all industrial output in Japan was spent on munitions and other items essential to the war effort. This meant that the civilian sector was neglected and food shortages and shortages of other consumer goods had become a major problem even before the war ended. At the end of the war, Japan was bankrupt and its economy lay in ruins. The bombings had destroyed a large percentage of Japan's industrial capacity. It was estimated by occupation officials that industrial production stood at ten percent of its prewar capacity. Homelessness and starvation were realities for large segments of the population in 1946 and 1947, and many succumbed. Even a year after the war, industrial production remained well below prewar levels. Japan's dream of economic and industrial independence was shattered along with everything else because of the war.

Readings

- 1) James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), pp. 283-555.
- 2) Frederick R. Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914-1919*, (Cambridge: Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2001).
- 3) Richard J. Smethurst, *From Foot Soldier to Finance Minister: Takahashi Korekiyo, Japan's Keynes*, (Cambridge: Harvard East Asian Monographs, 2007).
- 4) John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*, (New York: Pantheon Press, 1987).
- 5) Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History*, (New York: New Press, 1993).
- 6) Natsume Soseki, *Kokoro*, translated by Meredith McKinney, (New York: Penguin Classics, 2010).

Questions for Discussion

- 1) The Japanese government seemed to have a policy of near continuous warfare in the first half of the 20th century. The Russo-Japanese War, WWI, the Japanese intervention in Siberia, the Japanese conquest of Manchuria, the war against China and finally the wider war in the Pacific and Southeast Asia—all were fought within a 40 year period. For Japan, was military conflict the last resort of a cornered nation, or might it best be described as one of the most important arrows in the foreign policy quiver? What would lead Japanese policy makers and military leaders to believe that war could have a positive outcome? Did Japan suffer from poor leadership, a lack of leadership or leadership that was strong and capable but mistaken? How could Japan's leaders have been correct and astute in the foreign policy realm for so long and then seem to fundamentally misapprehend the international situation in the late 1930s? What had changed to make Japan vulnerable in the late 1930s?
- 2) The Great Depression was one of the most important events in the world during the early part of the 20th century. Japan suffered along with all other industrialized nations. However, the Japanese government responded effectively and minimized the effects of the economic collapse. What policies did the Japanese government implement that seemed to have the greatest effect on the economy? Where did things go wrong as Japan's government sought to respond to the effects of the Great Depression? Finally, the social consequences were severe for most of the nations affected by the Great Depression. Did the social fabric of Japan show the same level of stress that other nations endured? How did Japanese authorities respond to unrest and incivility in the early 1930s?

3) The phrase historians often use to describe the period of authoritarianism in the 1930s is “militarism.” It applies to Japan and Japan alone during this period. How is it understood today? How was it understood in the 1930s? To what extent can it be compared, if at all, to Fascism? How are they different? How are they the same? Did the goals of the militarists and Fascists coincide? If so, where? Were their respective ideologies too divergent to ever coexist in the long run, or were they co-sympathetic?

Texts

1) The Treaty of Portsmouth, Signed on September 5, 1905. In the public domain.

The Emperor of Japan on the one part, and the Emperor of all the Russias, on the other part, animated by a desire to restore the blessings of peace, have resolved to conclude a treaty of peace, and have for this purpose named their plenipotentiaries, that is to say, for his Majesty the Emperor of Japan, Baron Komura Jutaro, Jusami, Grand Cordon of the Imperial Order of the Rising Sun, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, and his Excellency Takahira Kogoro, Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure, his Minister to the United States, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, his Excellency Sergius Witte, his Secretary of State and President of the Committee of Ministers of the Empire of Russia, and his Excellency Baron Roman Rosen, Master of the Imperial Court of Russia, his Majesty's Ambassador to the United States, who, after having exchanged their full powers, which were found to be in good and due form, and concluded the following articles:

ARTICLE I. There shall henceforth be peace and amity between their Majesties the Emperor of Japan and the Emperor of all the Russias, and between their respective States and subjects.

ARTICLE II. The Imperial Russian Government, acknowledging that Japan possesses in Korea paramount political, military and economical interests engages neither to obstruct nor interfere with measures for guidance, protection and control which the Imperial Government of Japan may find necessary to take in Korea. It is understood that Russian subjects in Korea shall be treated in exactly the same manner as the subjects and citizens of other foreign Powers; that is to say, they shall be placed on the same footing as the subjects and citizens of the most favored nation. It is also agreed that, in order to avoid causes of misunderstanding, the two high contracting parties will abstain on the Russian-Korean frontier from taking any military measure which may menace the security of Russian or Korean territory.

ARTICLE III. Japan and Russia mutually engage:

First.--To evacuate completely and simultaneously Manchuria, except the territory affected by the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula, in conformity with the provisions of the additional article I annexed to this treaty, and,

Second.--To restore entirely and completely to the exclusive administration of China all portions of Manchuria now in occupation, or under the control of the Japanese or Russian troops, with the exception of the territory above mentioned.

The Imperial Government of Russia declares that it has not in Manchuria any territorial advantages or preferential or exclusive concessions in the impairment of Chinese sovereignty, or inconsistent with the principle of equal opportunity.

ARTICLE IV. Japan and Russia reciprocally engage not to obstruct any general measures common to all countries which China may take for the development of the commerce or industry of Manchuria.

ARTICLE V. The Imperial Russian Government transfers and assigns to the Imperial Government of Japan, with the consent of the Government of China, the lease of Port Arthur, Talien and the adjacent territorial waters, and all rights, privileges and concessions connected with or forming part of such lease,

and it also transfers and assigns to the Imperial government of Japan all public works and properties in the territory affected by the above-mentioned lease.

The two contracting parties mutually engage to obtain the consent of the Chinese Government mentioned in the foregoing stipulation.

The Imperial Government of Japan, on its part, undertakes that the proprietary rights of Russian subjects in the territory above referred to shall be perfectly respected.

ARTICLE VI. The Imperial Russian Government engages to transfer and assign to the Imperial Government of Japan, without compensation and with the consent of the Chinese Government, the railway between Chang-chunfu and Kuanchangtsu and Port Arthur, and all the branches, together with all the rights, privileges and properties appertaining thereto in that region, as well as all the coal mines in said region belonging to or worked for the benefit of the railway. The two high contracting parties mutually engage to obtain the consent of the Government of China mentioned in the foregoing stipulation.

ARTICLE VII. Japan and Russia engage to exploit their respective railways in Manchuria exclusively for commercial and industrial purposes and nowise for strategic purposes. It is understood that this restriction does not apply to the railway in the territory affected by the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula.

ARTICLE VIII. The imperial Governments of Japan and Russia with the view to promote and facilitate intercourse and traffic will as soon as possible conclude a separate convention for the regulation of their connecting railway services in Manchuria.

ARTICLE IX. The Imperial Russian Government cedes to the Imperial Government of Japan in perpetuity and full sovereignty the southern portion of the Island of Sakhalin and all the islands adjacent thereto and the public works and properties thereon. The fiftieth degree of north latitude is adopted as the northern boundary of the ceded territory. The exact alignment of such territory shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the additional article II annexed to this treaty. Japan and Russia mutually agree not to construct in their respective possessions on the Island of Sakhalin or the adjacent islands any fortification or other similar military works. They also respectively engage not to take any military measures which may impede the free navigation of the Strait of La Perouse and the Strait of Tartary.

ARTICLE X. It is reserved to Russian subjects, inhabitants of the territory ceded to Japan, to sell their real property and retire to their country, but if they prefer to remain in the ceded territory they will be maintained protected in the full exercise of their industries and rights of property on condition of submitting to the Japanese laws and jurisdiction. Japan shall have full liberty to withdraw the right of residence in or to deport from such territory of any inhabitants who labor under political or administrative disability. She engages, however, that the proprietary rights of such inhabitants shall be fully respected.

ARTICLE XI. Russia engages to arrange with Japan for granting to Japanese subjects rights of fishery along the coasts of the Russian possession in the Japan, Okhotsk and Bering Seas.

It is agreed that the foregoing engagement shall not affect rights already belonging to Russian or foreign subjects in those regions.

ARTICLE XII. The treaty of commerce and navigation between Japan and Russia having been annulled by the war the Imperial Governments of Japan and Russia engage to adopt as a basis for their commercial relations pending the conclusion of a new treaty of commerce and navigation the basis of the treaty which was in force previous to the present war, the system of reciprocal treatment on the footing of the most favored nation, in which are included import and export duties, customs formalities, transit and tonnage

dues and the admission and treatment of agents, subjects and vessels of one country in the territories of the other.

ARTICLE XIII. As soon as possible after the present treaty comes in force all prisoners of war shall be reciprocally restored. The Imperial Governments of Japan and Russia shall each appoint a special commissioner to take charge of the prisoners. All prisoners in the hands of one Government shall be delivered to and be received by the commissioner of the other Government or by his duly authorized representative in such convenient numbers and at such convenient ports of the delivering State as such delivering State shall notify in advance to the commissioner of the receiving State.

The Governments of Japan and Russia shall present each other as soon as possible after the delivery of the prisoners is completed with a statement of the direct expenditures respectively incurred by them for the care and maintenance of the prisoner from the date of capture or surrender and up to the time of death or delivery. Russia engages to repay as soon as possible after the exchange of statement as above provided the difference between the actual amount so expended by Japan and the actual amount similarly disbursed by Russia.

ARTICLE XIV. The present treaty shall be ratified by their Majesties the Emperor of Japan and the Emperor of all the Russias. Such ratification shall be with as little delay as possible, and in any case no later than fifty days from the date of the signature of the treaty, to be announced to the Imperial Governments of Japan and Russia respectively through the French Minister at Tokyo and the Ambassador of the United States at St. Petersburg, and from the date of the latter of such announcements shall in all its parts come into full force. The formal exchange of ratifications shall take place at Washington as soon as possible.

The present treaty shall be signed in duplicate in both the English and French languages. The texts are in absolute conformity, but in case of a discrepancy in the interpretation the French text shall prevail.

SUB-ARTICLES. In conformity with the provisions of articles 3 and 9 of the treaty of the peace between Japan and Russia of this date the undersigned plenipotentiaries have concluded the following additional articles:

SUB-ARTICLE TO ARTICLE III. The Imperial Governments of Japan and Russia mutually engage to commence the withdrawal of their military forces from the territory of Manchuria simultaneously and immediately after the treaty of peace comes into operation, and within a period of eighteen months after that date the armies of the two countries shall be completely withdrawn from Manchuria, except from the leased territory of the Liaotung Peninsula. The forces of the two countries occupying the front positions shall first be withdrawn.

The high contracting parties reserve to themselves the right to maintain guards to protect their respective railway lines in Manchuria. The number of such guards shall not exceed fifteen per kilometer and within that maximum number the commanders of the Japanese and Russian armies shall by common accord fix the number of such guards to be employed as small as possible while having in view the actual requirements.

The commanders of the Japanese and Russian forces in Manchuria shall agree upon the details of the evacuation in conformity with the above principles and shall take by common accord the measures necessary to carry out the evacuation as soon as possible, and in any case not later than the period of eighteen months.

SUB-ARTICLE TO ARTICLE IX. As soon as possible after the present treaty comes into force a committee of delimitation composed of an equal number of members is to be appointed by the two high contracting parties which shall on the spot mark in a permanent manner the exact boundary between the Japanese and Russian possessions on the Island of Sakhalin. The commission shall be bound so far as topographical considerations permit to follow the fiftieth parallel of north latitude as the boundary line, and in case any deflections from that line at any points are found to be necessary compensation will be made by

correlative deflections at other points. It shall also be the duty of the said commission to prepare a list and a description of the adjacent islands included in the cession, and finally the commission shall prepare and sign maps showing the boundaries of the ceded territory. The work of the commission shall be subject to the approval of the high contracting parties.

The foregoing additional articles are to be considered ratified with the ratification of the treaty of peace to which they are annexed.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed and affixed seals to the present treaty of peace.

Done at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, this fifth day of the ninth month of the thirty-eighth year of the Meiji, corresponding to the twenty-third day of August, one thousand nine hundred and five, (September 5, 1905.)

2) Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro, September 6, 1941, Liaison Council of Japan. Found in Nobutake Ike's *Japan's Decision for War: Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1967), 138.

May I call the conference to order. With your permission, I will take the chair in order that we may proceed.

As you all know, the international situation in which we are involved has become increasingly strained; and in particular, the United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands have come to oppose our Empire with all available means. There has also emerged the prospect that the United States and the Soviet Union will form a united front against Japan as the war between Germany and the Soviet Union becomes prolonged.

If we allow this situation to continue, it is inevitable that our Empire will gradually lose the ability to maintain its national power, and that our national power will lag behind that of the United States, Great Britain, and others. Under these circumstances our Empire must, of course, quickly prepare to meet any situation that may occur, and at the same time it must try to prevent the disaster of war by resorting to all possible diplomatic measures. If the diplomatic measures should fail to bring about favorable results within a certain period, I believe we cannot help but take the ultimate step in order to defend ourselves.

The government and the Army and Navy sections of Imperial Headquarters have discussed this matter on numerous occasions. They have now reached an agreement, and have drafted "The Essentials for Carrying Out the Empire's Policies," which is on today's agenda. I would like you to consider this proposal carefully.

3) Emperor Hirohito's Surrender Speech to the Japanese Nation, Broadcast to all of Japan on August 14, 1945. In the public domain.

To our good and loyal subjects: After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions obtaining in our empire today, we have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure.

We have ordered our Government to communicate to the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union that our empire accepts the provisions of their joint declaration.

To strive for the common prosperity and happiness of all nations as well as the security and well-being of our subjects is the solemn obligation which has been handed down by our imperial ancestors and which we lay close to the heart.

Indeed, we declared war on America and Britain out of our sincere desire to insure Japan's self-preservation and the stabilization of East Asia, it being far from our thought either to infringe upon the sovereignty of other nations or to embark upon territorial aggrandizement.

But now the war has lasted for nearly four years. Despite the best that has been done by everyone--the gallant fighting of our military and naval forces, the diligence and assiduity of our servants of the State and the devoted service of our 100,000,000 people--the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage, while the general trends of the world have all turned against her interest.

Moreover, the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is, indeed, incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives. Should we continue to fight, it would not only result in an ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also it would lead to the total extinction of human civilization.

Such being the case, how are we to save the millions of our subjects, nor to atone ourselves before the hallowed spirits of our imperial ancestors? This is the reason why we have ordered the acceptance of the provisions of the joint declaration of the powers.

We cannot but express the deepest sense of regret to our allied nations of East Asia, who have consistently cooperated with the Empire toward the emancipation of East Asia.

The thought of those officers and men as well as others who have fallen in the fields of battle, those who died at their posts of duty, or those who met death [otherwise] and all their bereaved families, pains our heart night and day.

The welfare of the wounded and the war sufferers and of those who lost their homes and livelihood is the object of our profound solicitude. The hardships and sufferings to which our nation is to be subjected hereafter will be certainly great.

We are keenly aware of the inmost feelings of all of you, our subjects. However, it is according to the dictates of time and fate that we have resolved to pave the way for a grand peace for all the generations to come by enduring the [unavoidable] and suffering what is unsufferable. Having been able to save [inaudible] and maintain the structure of the Imperial State, we are always with you, our good and loyal subjects, relying upon your sincerity and integrity.

Beware most strictly of any outbursts of emotion that may engender needless complications, of any fraternal contention and strife that may create confusion, lead you astray and cause you to lose the confidence of the world.

Let the entire nation continue as one family from generation to generation, ever firm in its faith of the imperishableness of its divine land, and mindful of its heavy burden of responsibilities, and the long road before it. Unite your total strength to be devoted to the construction for the future. Cultivate the ways of rectitude, nobility of spirit, and work with resolution so that you may enhance the innate glory of the Imperial State and keep pace with the progress of the world.

Part II : Middle and Late 20th Century

Overview Recovery from the war continued in the first decades after the occupation ended in 1952. The new political system provided for universal suffrage and open, fair elections. Citizens were to enjoy a number of freedoms—including freedom of the press, freedom of expression, religion, speech and assembly—and guaranteed due process under the law. There was to be a parliamentary-style legislature with a Prime Minister as head of government and a largely independent judiciary. Economic recovery and expansion became the priority in the post-war period, and Japan was very successful in this endeavor. Indeed, the economic miracle made Japan the envy of all developing nations—and the 3rd largest economy in the world. However, there was a great deal of sacrifice required of individual Japanese in the post-war economic recovery and for most of that period, social and cultural development and quality of life issues were secondary considerations to economic growth. The dynamic of the post-war era has given way to the economic malaise of the past two decades. Disillusionment and frustration at the lack of progress in the economic and social realms have led contemporary Japanese to question their institutions, leadership and cultural expectations. Whereas there was a clear blueprint for recovery and economic growth in the post-war era, there doesn't seem to be consensus on the best way forward for the current generation. This condition has been exacerbated by the triple disaster of March 11, 2011, an event which resulted in nearly 20,000 deaths.

Events

Devastation. As the war came to an end, Japan was devastated. Though the government still functioned (in contrast to Nazi Germany), Japan had waited too long to surrender. Tokyo and Osaka had lost 57% and 60% of its dwellings respectively. 8 million people nationwide were homeless. Japanese industry functioned at less than 10% of its prewar capacity. 80% of Japanese shipping (merchant marine) was destroyed. Approximately 3million Japanese had been killed and an additional three million soldiers had to be repatriated. In addition, 3.2 million Japanese civilians had to find their way home as well. The agricultural and transportation sectors collapsed and hunger was an ever-present specter. Occupation officials had to import hundreds of thousands of tons of food, but thousands of Japanese died of starvation anyway in the first 18 months after the war ended.

The Occupation. The nations that had fought the Japanese created the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) to administer the occupation. The FEC in turn created SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) which was headed by General Douglas MacArthur. It was MacArthur's job to demobilize and demilitarize Japan. All weapons were seized, many government officials were purged (about 220,000) and a number of government and military leaders were placed on trial at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal. Large corporations (*zaibatsu*) were split up in what was called “*zaibatsu* busting.” Agricultural land was redistributed. A new constitution was implemented in 1947 which included as its most famous article the total renunciation of war as a tool of government. By 1948, the Communist Revolution in China had caused US and FEC policy makers to soften several of their most punitive occupation measures. When the Korean War began in 1950, the FEC and SCAP reversed course. The allies began to see a strong, self-sufficient Japan as a strategic partner in the Cold War and implemented policies that would lead to economic growth and a strong, stable, democratic government.

Peace Treaty. The Occupation ended in 1952 when the Treaty of San Francisco was signed. At the same time, Japan signed a Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States. This allowed Japan to live under the umbrella of US military protection. As long as Japan has been willing to remain a junior partner, this has worked well and the treaty is still renegotiated every decade. Japan was also allowed access to the US market to trade, more or less, freely. This meant that Japan spent very, very little on its own defense and poured those resources into the continued rebuilding of the country and the growth of the economy.

Protests. Japan continued to grow economically in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Indeed, Japan became one of the wealthiest nations in the world. Its drive in the modern era to become a world power had succeeded, just not as had been planned for in the pre-war period. Nonetheless, there have been serious social and cultural crises. For example, labor actions and social protests rocked Japan in the 1960s during what has been known as the Anpo Protests. This series of events associated with the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty called into question how democracy worked in the post war era. Other problems such as the shrinking population, the role of guest workers in Japan, very high government debt (one of the highest per capita in the world) remain intractable. Protests over the US military presence in Okinawa periodically make it into the public sphere.

Disaster. The triple disasters of March 11, 2011—the massive 8.9 Tōhoku earthquake, followed by the tsunami, followed by the nuclear meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear power plant, have been a body blow to a Japan. Approximately 20,000 people died and tens of thousands were left homeless. There are several areas around Fukushima that have been lost to humanity and will never again be inhabited by humans. The situation was so dire for a few days that if the wind had been blowing from a northeasterly direction, the city of Tokyo would have been contaminated and 35 million people would have been affected. Given that the government had no real plan for what to do with 35 million refugees (many of whom would have been dealing with radiation sickness), it lied to the public and said that there was never any threat to public safety. When this was discovered, the government of Prime Minister Naoto Kan fell. Japan’s economy took a significant hit during this period and has not yet recovered. Japan will be dealing with the March 11 disasters for several decades to come.

Government

Structure. The Japanese government was not systematically dismantled during the occupation (1945-1952). Rather, occupation officials decided to purge militarists (about 220,000) from public life and government positions and work with the remaining permanent bureaucracy in an effort to maintain stability in the country. The highest official remaining in the country was, of course, Emperor Hirohito. He was forced to renounce his divinity and made a figurehead. But he was not tried as a war criminal. However, as Japan began to make some strides toward recovery, SCAP officials determined that Japan needed a new constitution to replace the old Meiji-era foundational documents. A new Diet was elected and given the task of preparing a document. After the first two attempts were deemed unacceptable by General Douglas MacArthur, SCAP officials themselves wrote a document that was ratified by the Diet. It is still the constitution used in Japan today.

The 1947 constitution created a bicameral legislature with a Prime Minister as the head of government. The party that holds the majority of seats (or works in coalition when in the plurality) in the lower house forms a government and administers the country. Since the new constitution has been in effect, there have been 24 different Prime Ministers. The Liberal Democratic Party governed Japan for all but a few years between 1955 and 1993. Since 1993, the Democratic Party, the Japan New Party, the Japan Renewal Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Japan and the Liberal Democratic Party have all formed cabinets. Most of the Prime Ministers of Japan in the post-war era have governed from the center-right, center or center-left. There have been very few post-occupation Prime Ministers who could be described as radical or reactionary.

Given the high number of Prime Ministers in the post-war era, most government administration has taken place within the permanent bureaucracy. The bureaucracy in Japan is staffed by highly educated, motivated university graduates. Until quite recently, these have been some of the most highly sought-after positions for university graduates from some of Japan’s finest universities. The Japanese government functions efficiently and is understood to carry out essential state functions. Those who enter government service are highly respected members of society.

The Military. The 1947 Constitution is distinguished by its so-called “Peace Clause,” which is Article 9. This article goes so far as to “forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation.” However, by 1954, the Japanese government decided that it, in fact, needed a small military and came to call it the Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF). This force is divided into the Ground Self-Defense Forces (Army), the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (Navy) and the Air Self-Defense Forces (Air Force). In its early form, the JSDF was quite small, seriously underfunded and not very capable. Most of the weapons they had at their disposal were US surplus items from the Korean War and even WWII. More recently, the JSDF has enjoyed a very large budget, one of the largest in the world, and now has an extremely capable but still small force. Though they do not yet have a large blue-water navy, recent Chinese actions have caused the Japanese to begin the process of creating a navy capable of projecting power abroad. Unlike the situation before the Pacific War, the current Japanese military is answerable to the civilian leadership. With the exception of a few deployments, most of which were UN peacekeeping missions, Japan has managed to avoid using its military abroad since the end of the Pacific War.

Over the course of the last two decades, calls in Japan have grown louder for the abandonment or modification of Article 9, and policy makers appear to be more receptive than in the past. There is a growing perception in Japan that the US government might not be as reliable a military partner as had been the case. In addition, Japan increasingly wants to set its own foreign policy agenda and to feel free to protect its own international interests.

Culture

The Literary Arts.

Mishima Yukio (1925-1970) is most often known as just “Mishima.” Even then, this is a *nom de plume* which he took as a teenager with the publication of one his first works in 1944. His given name was Hiraoka Kimitake. Mishima was something of a prodigy. He wrote short stories and essays as a boy, even though his father was not particularly pleased with him for doing so. Mishima’s first love was poetry, particularly the form known as *waka*, and infused his novels, short stories, plays and essays with poetic symbolism. For Mishima, writing poetry was a lifelong pleasure. Mishima was a world-famous author and his body of work so impressive that he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature. He was considered by many scholars to be Japan’s greatest living post-war author before he took his own life.

Political Leaning. It is difficult to consider Mishima’s life and Mishima’s works apart from the events of November 25, 1970. On this day, Mishima entered the office of the Commander of the Japan Self-Defense Forces, gave a speech on his desire that the emperor be restored to power and then committed ritual suicide (*seppuku*). Though it was clear that he had planned his demise well in advance, his suicide shocked the nation. But there was no *coup d’état*. Scholars and literary specialists then set about reevaluating his writing and examining the body of his work through a different lens. Despite numerous attempts to do so, there is scant evidence that Mishima had devoted his life and writings to the ultra-nationalist cause, though it is clear that he had drifted very far to the right at the end. Indeed, Mishima was very cosmopolitan, traveled abroad extensively, and had many, many foreign friends. Perhaps his suicide was simply the most dramatic, last act of the performance art which was his life. And he even got to write the final script, down to the death poem found after his suicide.

Themes. In many, many of Mishima’s narratives, death seemed to be a constant theme, none more so than his short story *Death in Midsummer*. In this work which was set at a resort on Izu Peninsula (a popular vacation area near Tokyo), a family went swimming at a beach with a strong current. Soon thereafter, two young children were swept away and their aunt simultaneously died from a heart attack. Mishima then moved to depict the reaction of the survivors—blame, grief, guilt and the many banal details of the funeral. The characters were deeply hurt, shocked and angry at each other and even at the dead. Tomoko (the mother/spouse) became angry with her husband (Masaru) because he appeared to be grieving more over his sister (Yasue) than his own children. Somehow, Tomoko and Masaru got through it, survived to have another child and finally made a pilgrimage back to the beach two years later. Masaru complained to his wife, “Why the devil did we come here? We only remember things we don’t want to. Things we had finally forgotten.” For Mishima, death was not to be forgotten. It was an ever present companion, a part of life—to be faced with grace and dignity. Death was for him often the final act of either a tragic life cut short or of a life well lived. Nonetheless, in Mishima’s works, death was never far away.

Death and Grief. Mishima’s stories on death and dealing with grief were, in many ways, brutally honest. *Death in Midsummer* is representative of the way Mishima portrayed the final act. But Mishima didn’t shirk from the topic. Indeed, it is likely because there were so many social taboos and cultural conventions about death that Mishima chose to write about it so often. For him, literature was art, and art can be uncomfortable. For the living, there is nothing more universally uncomfortable, nothing that more clearly reveals character, nothing that makes us react in a more visceral way than death.

Enchi Fumiko (1905-1986). Another of Japan’s great novelists is Enchi Fumiko. Like most of her colleagues, she was the child of privilege. Her father was Ueda Kazutoshi, the most influential pure linguist/literature specialist of his generation. He is considered the “father of the modern Japanese language.” Even though they were reportedly not especially close, it is natural that she would develop an interest in the history of Japanese literature.

Works. In addition to her works of fiction in long-form prose, Enchi is also known for her modern translation of *The Tale of Genji*. Unlike many of her post-war colleagues, not many of her works have been translated and she remains less well-known outside of Japan. But this does not diminish the quality of her work. Enchi gained attention with her first play in 1926. In the years after, she expanded her repertoire with the publication of many novels and short stories.

Masks. One of Enchi’s few novels known widely in the English-speaking world is *Masks* (1958). It is also one of her finest. The central metaphor is, of course, a mask. The protagonist in *Masks* is a woman who, in order to

interact with society, must put on a false face. This allows her to deceive the other characters into doing her bidding in a most unpleasant and unscrupulous series of events. The main character is thoroughly unlikable and unsympathetic. Nonetheless, *Masks* resonated with a certain segment of the population in Japan. In a number of Enchi's works, the characters also interact with the supernatural. *Masks* is no exception. In this way, Enchi pays homage to one of the themes found in literature of the Heian period, *The Tale of Genji*. Despite the subject matter and harshness of tone in Enchi's works, and her one-dimensional depiction of men, *Masks* has stood the test of time as one of Japan's finest post-war novels.

Endō Shūsaku (1923-1996). With the possible exception of Nobel Laureate Ōe Kenzaburō and Mishima, few post-war authors in Japan are as well-known in the English-speaking world as Endō Shūsaku. Endō was born in Tokyo, spent much of his childhood in Manchuria and attended Keio University during the war. Indeed, he had to abandon his studies for a time after being drafted to work for the war effort. Like many of his colleagues, he wrote in several formats. Endō was, of course, an award-winning novelist. But he was also an accomplished short story author and essayist. He regularly wrote for the *Yomiuri Shinbun* (Newspaper) until very late in his life. Endō was awarded the Japanese government's *Order of Culture* in 1995.

Themes. Endō is beloved in both Japan and the West, in part, because of the themes he most often chose to write about. As a Roman Catholic, Endo struggled with how to reconcile his faith and his national identity at a time when very few Japanese were Christians. As a result, he often wrote about Christians in Japan, sometimes setting them in the Tokugawa period when Christianity was banned, and sometimes setting them in more contemporary times. Given his status as a best-selling author (millions of copies of his novels were sold in Japan alone), it is clear that his works resonated with very large segments of the reading population. The success of his works reveal a Japan that was struggling to understand how it had been/was affected and/or transformed in the aftermath of the war and occupation by the "Christian" West.

Works. In Japan, Endō's 1966 masterpiece entitled *Silence* sold over two million copies in a very brief period of time. Though his early works had found a following in the 1950s, Endō rocketed to literary stardom worldwide after its publication. *Silence* is set in the Tokugawa era, during the period of time when Christianity was illegal and its adherents executed if they did not apostatize. The protagonist is named Rodrigues, a Portuguese, Jesuit missionary who, in contravention of Japanese law, secretly entered Japan after the "Christian" Shimabara Rebellion. Rodrigues sought out Ferreira, a Jesuit missionary (and his former teacher) who had renounced his faith not because he broke under torture, but because he perceived that God did nothing to alleviate the suffering and torture of other Japanese Christians. Rodrigues was incredulous that his former teacher, whom he respected greatly, had become an apostate and wanted to find out why. Endō's narrative follows Rodrigues' psychological (and physical) struggles as he too faced the same dilemma. The basic theme, whether one has the courage of their convictions, is universal for any religion (or none at all) anywhere in the world. This novel was made into a feature film in 2017 by the celebrated director Martin Scorsese.

Society

New Freedoms. The militarism of the war-time years gave way to occupation and then to a fully-functioning open, democratic society as Japan moved into the 1950s. During the occupation, Japanese still did not enjoy most of the freedoms they now take for granted. Occupation officials placed restrictions on freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, freedom to live where one pleases, freedom to travel; implemented price controls, rationing of food and all consumer goods, and the like. This means that Japanese society had endured some form of authoritarian control from the early 1930s until the early 1950s. As a result, in the last 24 months of the occupation, social unrest became a real concern for SCAP officials. It appeared that Japanese had begun to internalize the teachings of SCAP officials on the importance of openness in the public sphere. Finally, the occupation came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of San Francisco in 1952 and the Japanese were back in control of their own destiny.

The devastation of the war, however, was so great that Japanese were most interested in economic recovery and growth. In general, Japanese worked extremely long hours, sacrificed and saved money for the future. They spent very little on consumer goods, lived in small houses or tiny apartments and hoped for stability and a return to normality.

The Role of Women. After the war and occupation, women were freed from formal social restrictions, but nonetheless mostly returned to traditional roles in society. The main breadwinner in the home was to be the husband. Women would often enter the work force as recent graduates but would resign when they married and started a family. As a result, Japanese society came to resemble a patriarchy, at least in the public sphere. When women married, they often moved into a multi-family dwelling where they were expected to care for their husband's parents as well as their own husband and children. Mothers-in-law, who were supposed to give up many of their household duties when a daughter-in-law moved into the home, often refused to step back and let someone else run the household. This caused a great deal of stress in the family then and is occasionally still a problem. In contemporary Japan, women have more freedom of choice. They can still enter the work force and increasingly are not expected give up their careers when they marry. Still, a sizable number of women exit the workforce to care for their families.

Population. Japan is a medium-sized country and is roughly the size of the U.S. state of California. However, it is 75% mountainous, which means that only 25% of the land in Japan is suitable for farming or habitation. The population of Japan is 128 million and ranks 10th among the most populous countries in the world. The Japanese government is aware that such a large population is likely not sustainable but still offers incentives to families to produce more children because of the need to maintain the social safety net. Nonetheless, the vast majority of couples have decided to have fewer than two children. As a result, the population of Japan has stopped growing and has begun to decrease. Indeed, within two generations, the United Nations predicts that Japan's population will decrease to approximately 87 million. That is a drop of 41 million people! Though life will undoubtedly be more comfortable for Japanese with that many fewer people, the smaller population is expected to cause significant social disruption. Since very few nations in the modern era have experienced this sort of population decline (outside of war), it is not known how this will affect society and the economy.

Economy

Recovery. The Japanese economy was in no way totally recovered from the ravages of the war in the middle years of the occupation. There was still widespread homelessness, occasional outbreaks of epidemics and disease, hunger, and significant unemployment. These economic conditions (and associated social and medical ills) were not totally eradicated for a generation after the war. Early relief came from an unexpected event: the Korean War. Though Japanese soldiers did not officially participate in the war, the conflict had the benefit of jump-starting Japanese manufacturing in textiles, steel production and other industries. It was cheaper and more efficient for UN forces to buy Japanese manufactured goods than it was to manufacture them (mostly in the US) and ship them across the world. Companies that provided items for the war effort such as trucks, spare parts, clothing, and the like recovered very quickly. Some, such as Toyota, Ajinomoto, Fuji (parent company of Subaru), and Hitachi become major, international conglomerates known the world over for innovation and excellence. During the Korean War, food production also returned to pre-war levels and widespread malnutrition was vanquished, although very poor areas of the major cities where shanty towns existed still experienced hunger. By 1954, the Japanese economy had surpassed pre-war levels.

Economic Growth. The Japanese government decided that its highest priority in the 1950s, 60s and 70s would be economic growth. In order to facilitate this, the government assigned the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) the task of determining economic policy. For Japan, this would mean that exports became the priority and that all industries would support this goal. The Japanese government underwrote financing for key industries by guaranteeing loans at extremely low rates, but there were strings attached. Companies selected were expected to invest for the long term and were to prioritize stable employment above profits and the payment of quarterly dividends. This was, however, problematic for entrepreneurship and for companies that wanted to expand or change what they produced. If a company wanted low-interest government-backed loans, CEOs had to ask permission of MITI officials, which was not always forthcoming. The most famous example is the Honda Corporation, maker of some of Japan's finest motorcycles. In the early 1960s, Honda's founder and CEO Soichiro Honda wanted to expand into automobiles, but was denied government backing. Undeterred, he went abroad for financing and started building some of the world's finest cars.

Japanese economic policies were successful beyond all expectations. The growth rate per year between 1955 and 1960 was 9.1%, between 1960 and 1965 was 9.8% and 1965 and 1973 was 10%. These are extremely high numbers and were three times higher than the US growth rate during the same period. By the late 1980s, Japan had become the world's second largest economy. However, in the drive to grow the economy, social and cultural

issues received little attention from Japan's governing elite. Some of these would become problematic in contemporary Japan.

By 1990, the Japanese economy had reached a plateau. Though individual companies grew, sustained economic growth nationwide had stopped. There has been very, very little economic growth since the late 1980s. Japanese economists, government officials and business leaders have struggled to find ways to prime the economy, but have largely failed. Japan is now dealing with deflationary tendencies in the economy and a decreased population—both of which mean that the growth of the postwar period will likely not be seen again.

Readings

- 1) James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), pp. 555-632.
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- 3) Shūsaku Endō, *Silence*, William Johnston, trans., (Tokyo: Kodansha Press, 1982).
- 4) William Tsutsui, *Manufacturing Ideology: Scientific Management in Twentieth-Century Japan*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).
- 5) John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, (New York: Norton Press, 2000).
- 6) Herbert Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2000).

Questions for Discussion

- 1) The relationship between Japan and the United States has proven to be enduring and very strong. Japan obviously feels as though it is better to remain under the US military umbrella than to build up its own military to the extent that it is capable of protecting its interests alone. Other than military protection, what benefit has Japan reaped from its relationship with the United States? Will there come a time in the foreseeable future when Japan may feel that their relationship with the US should come to an end? What might cause a reevaluation of the alliance? If Japan decides to end the alliance, how might this affect stability in the region?
- 2) Japan's decision to prioritize economic development in the years following the occupation was very consequential. Japan is now one of the wealthiest nations in the world and has the third largest economy. What might have been some of the social and cultural costs of the decision? Many in Japan would argue that in the process of becoming rich, the essence of Japanese culture has been diluted. Do you agree or disagree that Japan has somehow been diminished by its single-minded drive for economic growth? Given that Japan has not experienced meaningful economic growth for the last two and a half decades, to what extent has Japan reevaluated its national goals? Should the government emphasize something else? Or is the economy still the most important priority?
- 3) Historians have struggled to discern a meaningful narrative for post-war era Japan that didn't rely on economics. And there have surely been a significant number of other events, movements and narratives that deserved attention over the past 70+ years. What might some of those events have been? What might be a good alternate narrative for the post-war years? Given that military history would be extremely difficult to approach, should historians focus on cultural or social history? Diplomatic or intellectual history? Or should historians investigate something altogether different?

Texts

- 1) Chapters two and three of the 1947 Japanese Constitution. In the public domain.

CHAPTER II RENUNCIATION OF WAR

Article 9. Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

CHAPTER III RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PEOPLE

Article 10. The conditions necessary for being a Japanese national shall be determined by law.

Article 11. The people shall not be prevented from enjoying any of the fundamental human rights. These fundamental human rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be conferred upon the people of this and future generations as eternal and inviolate rights.

Article 12. The freedoms and rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be maintained by the constant endeavor of the people, who shall refrain from any abuse of these freedoms and rights and shall always be responsible for utilizing them for the public welfare.

Article 13. All of the people shall be respected as individuals. Their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness shall, to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare, be the supreme consideration in legislation and in other governmental affairs.

Article 14. All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin.

Peers and peerage shall not be recognized.

No privilege shall accompany any award of honor, decoration or any distinction, nor shall any such award be valid beyond the lifetime of the individual who now holds or hereafter may receive it.

Article 15. The people have the inalienable right to choose their public officials and to dismiss them.

All public officials are servants of the whole community and not of any group thereof. Universal adult suffrage is guaranteed with regard to the election of public officials. In all elections, secrecy of the ballot shall not be violated. A voter shall not be answerable, publicly or privately, for the choice he has made.

Article 16. Every person shall have the right of peaceful petition for the redress of damage, for the removal of public officials, for the enactment, repeal or amendment of laws, ordinances or regulations and for other matters; nor shall any person be in any way discriminated against for sponsoring such a petition.

Article 17. Every person may sue for redress as provided by law from the State or a public entity, in case he has suffered damage through illegal act of any public official.

Article 18. No person shall be held in bondage of any kind. Involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime, is prohibited.

Article 19. Freedom of thought and conscience shall not be violated.

Article 20. Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the State, nor exercise any political authority.

No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious act, celebration, rite or practice. The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity.

Article 21. Freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed. No censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated.

Article 22. Every person shall have freedom to choose and change his residence and to choose his occupation to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare. Freedom of all persons to move to a foreign country and to divest themselves of their nationality shall be inviolate.

Article 23. Academic freedom is guaranteed.

Article 24. Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis. With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.

Article 25. All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living. In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavors for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security, and of public health.

Article 26. All people shall have the right to receive an equal education correspondent to their ability, as provided by law.

All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free.

Article 27. All people shall have the right and the obligation to work. Standards for wages, hours, rest and other working conditions shall be fixed by law. Children shall not be exploited.

Article 28. The right of workers to organize and to bargain and act collectively is guaranteed.

Article 29. The right to own or to hold property is inviolable.

Property rights shall be defined by law, in conformity with the public welfare.

Private property may be taken for public use upon just compensation therefor.

Article 30. The people shall be liable to taxation as provided by law.

Article 31. No person shall be deprived of life or liberty, nor shall any other criminal penalty be imposed, except according to procedure established by law.

Article 32. No person shall be denied the right of access to the courts.

Article 33. No person shall be apprehended except upon warrant issued by a competent judicial officer which specifies the offense with which the person is charged, unless he is apprehended, the offense being committed.

Article 34. No person shall be arrested or detained without being at once informed of the charges against him or without the immediate privilege of counsel; nor shall he be detained without adequate cause; and upon demand of any person such cause must be immediately shown in open court in his presence and the presence of his counsel.

Article 35. The right of all persons to be secure in their homes, papers and effects against entries, searches and seizures shall not be impaired except upon warrant issued for adequate cause and particularly describing the place to be searched and things to be seized, or except as provided by Article 33.

Each search or seizure shall be made upon separate warrant issued by a competent judicial officer.

Article 36. The infliction of torture by any public officer and cruel punishments are absolutely forbidden.

Article 37. In all criminal cases the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial tribunal.

He shall be permitted full opportunity to examine all witnesses, and he shall have the right of compulsory process for obtaining witnesses on his behalf at public expense.

At all times the accused shall have the assistance of competent counsel who shall, if the accused is unable to secure the same by his own efforts, be assigned to his use by the State.

Article 38. No person shall be compelled to testify against himself. Confession made under compulsion, torture or threat, or after prolonged arrest or detention shall not be admitted in evidence.

No person shall be convicted or punished in cases where the only proof against him is his own confession.

Article 39. No person shall be held criminally liable for an act which was lawful at the time it was committed, or of which he has been acquitted, nor shall he be placed in double jeopardy.

Article 40. Any person, in case he is acquitted after he has been arrested or detained, may sue the State for redress as provided by law.

2) From the *Shiryō Meiji Hyakunen* (A Documentary History for the Meiji Centennial), Asahi Shinbunsha, ed., (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1966), pp. 561-562. Translation found in *Japan: A Documentary History: The Late Tokugawa Period to the Present*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), pp. 527-529.

Plan to Double Individual Income, December 27, 1960

1) *Objectives of This Plan*

The plan to double the individual income [hereafter referred to as the plan] must have as its objectives doubling of the gross national product, attainment of full employment through expansion in employment opportunities, and raising the living standard of our people. We must adjust differentials in living standards and income existing between farming and non farming sectors, between large enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, between different regions of the country, and between different income groups. We must work toward a balanced development in our national economy and life patterns.

2) *Targets to Be Attained*

The plan's goal is to reach 26 trillion yen in GNP (at the fiscal year [FY] 1958 price) within the next ten years. To reach this goal, and in view of the fact that there are several factors highly favorable to economic growth existing during the first part of this plan, including the rapid development of technological changes and an abundant supply of skilled labor forces, we plan to attain an annual rate of growth of GNP at 9 percent for the coming three years. It is hoped that we shall be able to raise our GNP of 13.6 trillion yen (13 trillion yen in FY1958 price) in FY1960 to 17.6 trillion yen (FY 1960 price) in FY 1963 with application of appropriate policies and cooperation from the private sector.

3) *Points to Be Considered in Implementing the Plan and Directions to Be Followed*

The plan contained in the report of the Economic Council will be respected. However, in its implementation we must act flexibly and pay due consideration to the economic growth actually occurring and other related conditions. Any action we undertake must be consistent with the objectives described above. To do so, we shall pay special attention to the implementation of the following:

a) Promotion of Modernization in Agriculture

To secure a balanced development in our national economy, we shall enact a Fundamental Law of Agriculture as a means of promoting modernization in agriculture. The proposed law shall serve as the basis of our new agricultural policies on issues ranging from agricultural production, income and structure, to various other measures.

Concurrent with this, we shall actively secure investment for infrastructure required for agricultural production, and moneys required for promoting modernization in agriculture.

Enhancement of coastal fishing shall be undertaken in a similar manner.

b) Modernization of Medium and Small Enterprises

To enhance productivity in medium and small enterprises, to relax the ills associated with our economy's dual structure, and to promote vigorously various measures required to attain these objectives, we shall secure an adequate and just supply of funds for modernization of medium and small enterprises.

c) Accelerated Development of Less Developed Regions

To accelerate development of those less developed regions (including southern Kyushu, western Kyushu, Sanin region, and southern Shikoku) and to adjust difference in income levels, we shall establish without delay a plan for comprehensive multi-purpose development of the land. This will enable us to develop these regions' resources. Special consideration will be given to tax incentives, financing and rates of assistance permitted for public sector investment. We shall study legislation necessary to implement these measures. We shall see to it that industries appropriate to these regions will be located there. In this manner the welfare of the inhabitants in these regions may be advanced and the regions' less developed status may be rectified.

d) Promotion of Appropriate Locations for Industries and Reexamination of Regional Distribution of Public Sector Projects

It is certainly important to respect the use of sound economic reasons in selecting industrial locations, if we are to maintain for a long period of time our country's high rate of growth, to strengthen international competitiveness, and to heighten the utility of our social capital investment. This must not be carried out in a manner that will promote greater differentials between regions.

While respecting rationality in mg economic decisions and at the same time preventing spread of differentials between regions, we must adjust flexibly the amount of moneys invested or loaned for public works in different regions according to the special conditions existing in these regions. In this manner we shall be able to enhance the utility of public works projects consistent with economic development which at the same time contribute toward minimizing differentials between regions.

e) Active Cooperation with the Development of World Economy

Raising productivity means strengthening our export competitiveness. Bearing in mind that an important key to the success of this plan is in the expansion of our exports and an increase in revenues in foreign currencies, we must promote a viable export strategy accompanied by other measures increasing non trade revenues such as tourism and maritime transportation. We shall actively seek cooperation with other countries in promoting economic development in less-deed countries and raise their income levels.

3) Found in *Made in Japan: Akio Morita and Sony* by Akio Morita, founder of Sony (New York: Penguin Press, 1986), pp. 63-66, 70-71.

Made in Japan

The idea on an international market for Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo had been in our minds from early on, and it was inevitable that Ibuka and I would have to travel. In 1952 the tape recorder business was very good, and Ibuka thought he wanted to go to the United States to see what uses were being made of the tape recorder and to learn more about the manufacture of the tape itself. He spoke virtually no English, but he managed to get around and observe things. He came away disappointed because, while he found some language laboratories using tape recorders, he saw that we were making wider use of them in our schools than they were in the U.S. Another disappointment for Ibuka was that none of the tape manufacturers would allow visitors into their plants. But the trip turned out to be of great benefit to us. In 1948, we had both read about the work of William Shockley and others at Bell Laboratories in the "Bell Laboratory Record," and we had been curious about their discoveries ever since. That year small articles began to appear in the American press and elsewhere about the device invented at Bell Labs called the transistor, and on Ibuka's trip he first learned that a license for this marvelous gadget might soon be available. He began to make plans.

This solid-state device was something completely new to our experience, and learning about it and deciding what we could do with it was a job for more than an electronics engineer or two. During one sleepless night in a noisy room in New York's old Taft Hotel near Times Square, it occurred to Ibuka that our company now had about one hundred and twenty employees, about a third of them graduate engineers-electronic, metallurgical, chemical, mechanical - and developing the transistor for our use would be a job that would challenge the skills of all of them. He didn't know then just what we would make with the transistor if we got the technology, but he was excited by the technological breakthrough it represented. Ibuka tried to get an interview with the Western Electric patent license manager the next day, as Western Electric was the patent holder for Bell Labs, but was told the man was too busy to see him, so he asked a friend of his, Shido Yamada, who lived in New York and had worked for a Japanese trading company, to make some inquiries. Then Ibuka went home.

I must make it clear that the transistor being made at that time wasn't something that we could license and produce right off the shelf. This miraculous device was a breakthrough in electronics. Technology, but it could only handle audio frequencies. In fact, when I finally signed the patent agreement a year later, the people at Western Electric told me that if we wanted to use the transistor in consumer items, the hearing aid was the only product we should expect to make with it. In those days there were no transistors made for use in radios. Of course we were not interested in the hearing aid market, which is very limited. We wanted to make something that could be used by everybody, and we had plans to put our research scientists and technicians to work developing our own high-frequency transistor for use in radios. We started to consider what kind of radio we could make with transistors. At that time, the worldwide trend in the radio field was toward a new concept. The new phrase, "high fidelity," or hi-fi, was soon to be in vogue. People would be listening for purity of sound, for realistic reproduction, or at least for sonically exciting reproduction. Some early hi-fi fans were already buying records of locomotive noises, airplanes taking off, horses galloping, police sirens, old weapons being fired, and all kinds of other sound effects to show off their new systems. Speakers were getting bigger, sound was getting bigger, and the words "woofer," "tweeter," "distortion" and "feedback" were entering the language. Amplifiers using many vacuum tubes were thought to give the purest sound. We envisioned the transistor replacing the bulky, hot, and unreliable vacuum tube. It would give us a chance not only to miniaturize electronic products but also to lower the power consumption. If we could devise a transistor that could deliver a high enough frequency, we could make a very small radio powered by batteries. We hoped to get realistic sound using a minimum of power.

Miniaturization and compactness have always appealed to the Japanese. Our boxes have been made to nest; our fans fold; our art rolls into neat scrolls; screens that can artistically depict an entire city can be folded and tucked neatly away, or set up to delight, entertain, and educate, or merely to divide a room. And we set as our goal a radio to fit into a shirt pocket. Not just portable, I said, but "pocketable." Even before the war RCA made a medium-size portable using tiny "peanut" vacuum tubes, but half the

space was taken up by an expensive battery, which played for only about four hours. Transistors might be able to solve that power and size problem.

We were all eager to get to work on the transistor, and when word came that it would be possible to license the technology, I went to New York to finalize the deal in 1953. I also wanted to see what the world was like and where our new company could fit in, so I planned to visit Europe after my New York business was concluded. I was excited when I climbed aboard the Stratocruiser at Tokyo's Haneda Airport, a small suitcase in one hand and a bag slung over my shoulder. I must admit that I was initially discouraged by the very scale of the United States. Everything was so big, the distances were so great, the open spaces so vast, the regions so different, I thought it would be impossible to sell our products here. The place just overwhelmed me. The economy was booming, and the country seemed to have everything.

When I mailed Ibuka the license agreement with Western Electric, I had a surge of confidence. But in Japan exchange control was very strong at the time, and we needed approval from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) to remit the initial transistor license fee of twenty-five thousand dollars out of the country. The transistor was so new, and foreign currency was so scarce in Japan, which was just then beginning to accelerate its recover from the war, that the bureaucrats at MITI could not see the use for such a device and were not eager to grant permission. Besides, MITI thought that such a small company as Totsuko (as we were known) could not possibly undertake the enormous task of dealing with brand-new technologies. In fact, they were adamant against it at first. Ibuka was eloquent on the possible uses of this little-known device, but it took him six months to convince the bureaucrats. MITI has not been the great benefactor of the Japanese electronics industry that some critics seem to think it has. . . .

We wanted a new name that could be recognized anywhere in the world, one that could be pronounced the same in any language. We made dozens and dozens of tries. Ibuka and I went through dictionaries looking for a bright name, and we came across the Latin word *sonus*, meaning "sound." The word itself seemed to have sound in it. Our business was full of sound, so we began to zero in on *sonus*. At that time in Japan borrowed English slang and nicknames were becoming popular and some people referred to bright young and cute boys as "sonny," or "sonny- boys," and, of course, "sunny" and "sonny" both had an optimistic and bright sound similar to the Latin root with which we were working. And we also thought of ourselves as "sonny-boys" in those days. Unfortunately, the single word "sonny" by itself would give us troubles in Japan because in the Romanization of our language, the word "sonny" would be pronounced "sohn- nee," which means to lose money. That was no way to launch a new product. We pondered this problem for a little while and the answer struck me one day: why not just drop one of the letters and make it "Sony"? That was it!

The new name had the advantage of not meaning anything but "Sony" in any language; it was easy to remember, and it carried the connotations we wanted. Furthermore, as I reminded Ibuka, because it was written in roman letters, people in many countries could think of it as being in their own language. All over the world governments were spending money to teach people how to read English and use the roman alphabet, including Japan. And the more people who learned English and the roman alphabet, the more people would recognize our company and product name- at no cost to us.

We kept our old corporate name for some time after we began putting the Sony logotype on our products. For our first product logo, we used a tall, thin sloping initial letter inside a square box, but I soon realized that the best way to get name recognition would be to make the name as legible and simple as possible, so we moved to the more traditional and simple capital letters that remain today. The name itself is the logo.

We managed to produce our first transistorized radio in 1955 and our first tiny "pocketable" transistor radio in 1957. It was the world's smallest, but actually it was a bit bigger than a standard men's shirt pocket, and that gave us a problem for a while, even though we never said which product we had in mind when we said "pocketable." We liked the idea of a salesman being able to demonstrate how simple it would be to drop into a shirt pocket. We came up with a simple solution- we had some shirts made for our salesmen with slightly larger than normal pockets, just big enough to slip the radio into.

The introduction of this proud achievement was tinged with disappointment that our first transistorized radio was not the very first one on the market. An American company called Regency, supported by Texas Instruments, and using TI transistors, put out a radio with the Regency brand name a few years before ours, but the company gave up without putting much effort into marketing it. As the first in the field, they might have capitalized on their position and created a tremendous market for their product as we did. But they apparently judged mistakenly that there was no future in this business and gave it up.

Our fine little radio carried our company's brand new name, Sony, and we had big plans for the future of transistorized electronics and hopes that the success of our small "pocketable" radio would be a harbinger of successes to come.

In June 1957, we put up our first billboard carrying the Sony name opposite the entrance to Tokyo's Haneda International Airport and at the end of the year we put up another in the heart of the Ginza district of Tokyo. In January 1958 we officially changed our company name to Sony Corporation and were listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange that December.