

Empires: West and East—Curious Conjunction and Contemporary Consequences, Complexity and Circumstances

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W.G. Beasley declared in his carefully nuanced *Japanese Imperialism 1894–1945*,

I do not believe in mono-causal explanations of complex historical phenomena, especially those which endure over long periods of time. Even a concept as broad as economic determinism, central though it is to this subject, does not seem to me a sufficient basis on which to analyse imperialism, either in the case of Japan, or more generally. Hence I do not find it necessary to make a choice between the theories of internal ‘push’ and external ‘pull’. Both are relevant.¹

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And added aptly,

I do not believe that the human impetus towards imperialism needs explaining. Men, acting individually or in communities, have always sought to establish dominion over others, where they could. What the character of a society, or the international circumstances with which it has to deal, does indeed determine is the timing and direction of the impetus, the degree of its success and failure, the kind of advantages that are sought, the institutions that are shaped to give them durability. That is what I understand by the nature of imperialism. That is what I propose to examine with respect to Japan.²

William Dalrymple wrote shrewdly of British colonialism in India,

Many historians blithely use the word ‘colonialism’ as if it has some kind of clearly locatable meaning, yet it is increasingly apparent that at this period there were multiple modes and very different ways of inhabiting, performing and transgressing the still fluid notion of Britishness.³

Complexity, of course, has wider imperial application. There is a need for only one eye to appreciate this. However, not only is complexity important in any consideration of imperialism but so also is circumstance. It underpins every political action.

Complexity and circumstance are given appropriate emphasis in *Japanese Imperialism*.

A TALE OF TWO EMPIRES: JAPANESE ADAPTATION AND BRITISH INSPIRATION

Adaptation: The Japanese Empire Circa 1940

Did he live his life again in every detail of desire, temptation, and surrender during that supreme moment of complete knowledge? He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision, - he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath – ‘The horror! The horror!’⁴

This extract from Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* refers to the appalling atrocities of the Belgian imperialist in the Congo. It applies equally to the Japanese imperialist in East Asia (Fig. 2.1).

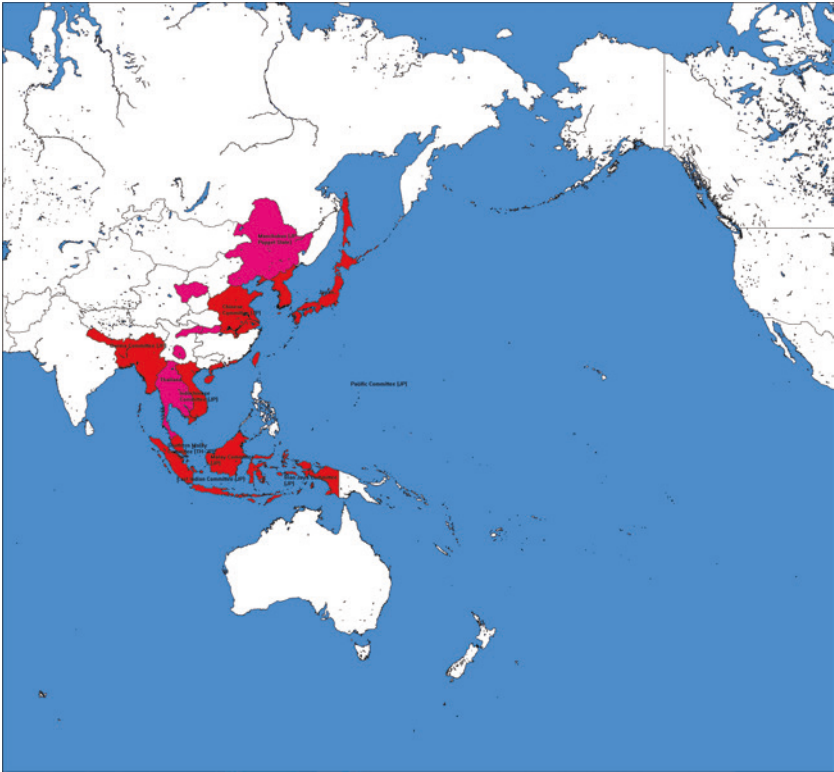


Fig. 2.1 Japanese Imperial Acquisitions in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century. *Source* added by GGW Posted in Japan (Great Global War), available from: [http://althistory.wikia.com/wiki/Japan_\(Great_Global_War\)](http://althistory.wikia.com/wiki/Japan_(Great_Global_War))

The British Empire Circa 1890: Inspiration

The British Empire was vast. On its metamorphosis into the British Empire and Commonwealth, it was the largest land and sea empire in the world. It comprised a quarter of the earth's surface and a quarter of the world's population.⁵ Its composition was complicated: its certainty was uncomplicated. Its 'core ideology' was based on an unquestioned subscription to its imperial mandate. British imperialists possessed an unshakable conviction of their unique superiority. Theirs 'was not an imperialism characterized by "complex and sophisticated theorising" but



Fig. 2.2 British Empire circa 1890 (Source <http://college.saintebarbe.pagespro-orange.fr/victoria/empire.htm>)

a simple imperial world view made up of patriotic, military and racial beliefs only vaguely located in specific imperial settings, and based on assured self-belief!⁶ Geopolitical certainty encased in a hard moral shell (Fig. 2.2).

The outcome was a huge imperial Enterprise. The edifice of this Enterprise possessed an astonishingly strong ‘transom of widespread control’.⁷ However, its cement was subject to cracks. Not only were there cracks beneath the imperial wallpaper but also the fissures grew wider and wider. Eventually, the Enterprise collapsed. While it was a seemingly strong construction, it served as a model for Japanese imperialism. Similarities are self-evident: solid self-belief, imperial ambition, impressive success, ultimate collapse.

THE MAKING OF BRITISH IMPERIAL MASCULINITY

A point of substance should be noted before a direct consideration of Japanese ethnocentrism, nationalism and imperialism: late nineteenth British imperial martial masculinity. The making of a confident martial

manhood was an ideological construct manufactured on the late nineteenth century playing fields of the by then extensive public (private) upper middle class schools—greatly expanded on the back of the wealth created by a combination of industrialization and imperialism,⁸ caught confidently in this extract,

Lord Granby, who was in many aspects the type of Englishman formed out of school life and our sports; ...one of the results of the ideals in school life and in sport being to raise all training, mental and bodily, to the level of the higher classes ... Every Englishman, as Mr Rudyard Kipling has told us in verse and prose, is an aristocrat when among the inferior races; and from the rare insight Kipling has into the many sided character of our national life', that great genius has risen to be the laureate of England, (celebrating) the English as formed by the hunting field, the cricket pitch, and the football ground.⁹

And even more confidently in this one,

Many a lad who leaves an English public school disgracefully ignorant of the rudiments of useful knowledge, who can speak no language but his own, and writes that imperfectly, to whom the noble literature of his country and the stirring history of his forefathers are almost a sealed book, and who has devoted a great part of his time and nearly all his thoughts to athletic sports, yet brings away with him something beyond all price, a manly straightforward character, a scorn of lying and meanness, habits of obedience and command, and fearless courage.

The alleged confident consequence,

Thus equipped, he goes out into the world, and bears a man's part in subduing the earth, ruling its wild folk, and building up the Empire; doing many things so well that it seems a thousand pities that he was not trained to do them better, and to face the problems of race, creed and government in distant corners of the Empire with a more instructed mind... however, with all his defects, (he) has done yeoman's service to the Empire; and for much that is best in him our public schools may fairly take credit.¹⁰

The distinguished historian of Victorian England, Geoffrey Best has stated, that the Victorian public school had a wide impact in society, '... recognition in *the non-public school world* (emphasis added) ... of the diffusing power of the public school ethos is provided by the extraordinary

popularity of “public school” fiction—frequently found at *immense and ridiculous removes from reality* (emphasis added)—among boys in “state” elementary and secondary schools {and} by the fact that the British Borstal institution, a successful device for the disciplining of juvenile criminals...was modelled expressly on the public school house system and ideals of personal conduct’.¹¹

PLAYING FIELD AND BATTLEFIELD: SYMBIOSIS

Numerous versifiers of the imperial period saw the closest connection between playing field and battlefield. For them the mortar of moral association was solid. One self-confidently sang this patriotic siren-song of the imperial duty of the privileged English public schoolboy.

Hark the Empire calls, and what we answer give?
How to prove us worthy of the splendid trust?
Lo! We serve the Empire by the lives we live;
True in all our dealings, honest, brave and just,
Training mind and body for the Empire’s need.¹²

Proselytizers were not troubled by mists of moral uncertainty.

Norman Gale, a prolific period versifier and assured exponent of imperial homiletics, observed canonically of the school cricket field of the privileged,

See in bronzing sunshine
Thousands of good fellows,
Such as roll the world along,
Such as cricket mellows!
These shall keep the Motherland
Safe amid her quarrels;
Lucky lads, plucky lands,
Trained to snatch at laurels.¹³

Numerous verses of the time were paeans to a predominant period educational ideology which obsessed the British imperial schools for the privileged: Athleticism,

...a neologism born of moral passion. Physical exercise was taken, considerably and compulsorily, in the sincere belief of many, however, romantic,

misplaced or myopic, that it was a highly effective means of inculcating valuable instrumental and impressive educational goals; physical and moral courage, loyalty and co-operation, the capacity to act fairly and take defeat well, the ability to both command and obey... the famous ingredients of character training which the public schools considered their pride and their prerogative.¹⁴

It is crystal clear, and beyond dispute, that for many imperialists of the period, team games became ‘the wheel round which ... moral values turned. It was a genuinely and extensively held belief that they inspired virtue; they developed manliness, they **formed character**’ (emphasis added).¹⁵ To embrace appropriate complexity, however, it is sensible to recognize that there were some who sowed tar among the wheat, cynical casuists who used moral argument as a cover for simple pleasure. In addition, there were opportunists, especially housemasters, who saw games in terms of control and publicity. The truth of the matter is that the ideology involved virtuousness, indulgence and expedience; it embraced idealism, casuistry and opportunism. ‘It was ... a complex manifestation. And its origins ... were equally complex’.¹⁶ Nevertheless, even E.C. Mack, the mid-twentieth century doyen of the history of the public school but no starry-eyed advocate, in his monumental two-volume study,¹⁷ discovered virtue in the imperial consequences of cricket pitch and rugby field. He argued that ‘the training largely acquired on the games field was the basis of courage and group loyalty that created responsible, honourable boys, willing to give their lives unquestionably to the preservation and expansion of Empire’.¹⁸ The self-sacrificial ideals of Athleticism were ‘anthemed’ in an astonishing plethora of ‘carols of chauvinism:’ inspirational hymns praising militant masculinity. During the Great War hysterical chauvinistic admiration for the martial self-sacrifice of the public schoolboy as imperial warrior became corybantically frenzied: the outcome of extreme cultural metamorphosis,

They fronted the storm and the flame
They laughed in Death’s face as they fell
They rejoiced in red strife as a game:
They sang as they strode into Hell.¹⁹

The public school game *par excellence* of cricket took on a bizarre militaristic metastatic and metaphysical transformation.

On Flanders's fields the public schoolboy faces, wrote one magniloquent versifier, the Hun demon bowler, his field gun trained upon the stumps pumping Krupp's shells from 'a concrete grandstand far beyond the boundary'. He continued, 'The stars blink down from the pavilion and the conditions are atrocious—no screen and too much mud for cricket lovers;' but he adds there was is no appealing against the light in this match!²⁰

The supreme songster of public school martial self-sacrifice was Henry Newbolt:

Our game was his but yesteryear;
We wished him back; we could not know.
The self-same hour we missed him here
He led the line that broke the foe.

The outcome was predestined,

'To-morrow may well bring'; we said,
'As fair a fight, as clear a sun'.
Dear lad, before the word was sped,
For evermore thy goal was won.²¹

Over and above being deluged by unremitting verse outpourings, the public schoolboy was submerged under unrelenting prosody from chapel pulpits and speech day podiums.

Geoffrey Best has stated that the exhortatory language of the public school playing field was a marked feature of public school speech writing on military matters, 'a curious phenomenon that provides a *graphic* (emphasis added) example of the connection between sport and war in the public school mind, is the sports terminology which is *such a noticeable feature of all public school speech and writing on military matters...*'

To drive home the point, he added,

Churchill remarks in his *Early life* that war seemed to him at Harrow and still seemed to him in India, an extension of school games (emphasis added).²²

While Baden—Powell declared in his *Sport and War* published in 1900, "What sort of sport did you have out there?" is the question which

men, have as a rule, greeted one another on return from the campaign in Rhodesia; and one could truthfully say, “We had excellent sport”. (Emphasis added)’. He added that the military operations were sufficiently sporting as to be most enjoyable.²³

COMMENTS AND CAVEATS

Cautionary comment is now in order to correct any inclined to naivety of perception regarding the impact of the poetry and prose of exhortation into public school martial self-sacrifice. Academics who have made the effort to accumulate extensive literary evidence of the obsession of the late Victorian and Edwardian public school system with the creation of playing fields have accumulated extensive associated evidence of the extent of the rhetoric of literary indoctrination into a martial mindset via these fields. This was no specious rhetoric. Failure to appreciate its significance is to be guilty of academic myopia. The rubric of indoctrination was a manifesto of martial self-sacrifice.

Two informed caveats are also in order,
The first,

...as the distinguished American cultural anthropologist, Edward Sapir noted, ‘**The real world is to a large extent built upon the language habits of the group** (emphasis added) ... we hear and see ... and perceive **very largely** (emphasis added) because the language habits of a community predispose certain choices of interpretation’.²⁴

The second,

...it is now a **familiar argument** (emphasis added) that the ‘speech’ of a culture, namely all forms of its language including poetry, song and prose orders the experience of its members, shapes their view of reality and determines their actions.²⁵

A comment by Basil Bernstein, the distinguished sociologist of language, too, has pointed relevance. He has argued that language is a major process in the transmission of social genes and both shapes and reflects collective values, collective action and indeed, social structure.²⁶ Aldous Huxley, the acerbic social commentator, has written, ‘Words have power to mould men’s thinking, to canalise their feelings, to direct their willing

and acting'.²⁷ Finally, these self-evident truths, of course, are equally understood by men of letters. The respected poet of nostalgia, William Cory doubted whether in human experience an idea becomes complete until it has found words in which to embody itself. He added the warning that not to be aware of this fact is a form of self-indulgence and a '*peculiarly idle form of self-deceit*' (emphasis added).²⁸ It might be usefully added in passing to provide a sense of perspective that language in all these regards, has the edge over statistics!

To press home the point for the mythologically myopic, these 'myths of manliness', myths with a profound purpose, were replete with carefully constructed moral calculi. Myth, of course, 'is an essential tool for exploring, mapping and delineating the world of experience'.²⁹ Terence Hawkes in his insightful *Structuralism and Semiotics* argued, 'Man constructs the myths, the social institutions, virtually the whole world and in doing so he constructs **himself** (emphasis added)'.³⁰

The literary extracts above are selected from scores, indeed hundreds, of metaphorical icicles in 'a huge ice-flow' born along in a surging imperial ocean of exhortatory poetry and prose. Its power should not be foolishly underestimated. The 'ocean' and its icicles require thoughtful and informed consideration. Its currents formed emotions: shaped minds; moulded youth.

Cultural Stereotypes: Cultural Consequences: Crucial Resonances

Cultural stereotypes reveal the ideological priorities of a culture. These 'icons of representation', set hard in firmly cemented mental constructions invariably determine ideological preconceptions. Societies need stereotypes in order to structure their universe, manage the 'flux of reality', consolidate apparent truths, and create an ordered world. All cultures have their functional stereotypes; purposeful products of the culture that creates them: '...None is random: none is isolated from the historical context'.³¹ The reason is not hard to find, the yearning for order is an indispensable and indisputable part of the human condition as is the inclination to yearn for firm lines and clear concepts. When we have them, of course, we have to face the fact that some realities elude them. Nevertheless, societies have the need

...to organise the world in controllable patterns, to employ root metaphors: explanatory word images, to allow them to make sense of the

world. They perceive the world through such historically determined metaphors. These stereotypic constructions allow an accommodating “perceptual blindness”. They protect cultures from ‘counter-information likely to produce confusion’.³²

There is nothing exceptional in the creation of stereotypes for control—political, social *and* ethical. It is a *commonplace* of culture; the sheet anchor keeping a culture from dangerous shoals.

Cultures transmit ideological imperatives created in an attempt to control its cultural world. Both British *and* Japanese imperial cultures were no different from other cultures in this respect. However, British imperial culture was exceptional in its devotion to *one* ethical imperative: Athleticism. The imperial playing fields were locations for image construction in an attempt to control the colonized. There was an ‘imperial obsession’ with the Playing Field as the source of ‘character’ formation—the essence of the superior moral entitlement to rule. This obsession resulted in consistent and careful attempts to project a unique imperial stereotype: *homo ludens imperiosus*, central actor in an imperial ‘morality play’ with an allocated destiny: the Civilizing Mission. The certainties implicit in this ethnocentric moral myopic construction provided protection from a paradox: despotism abroad and democracy at home. Above all, the stereotype offered for many, a secure sense of superior ethnic ethical identity.³³ However, this imperial stereotype was both a secure and insecure construction. In the British Empire, it was a source of assimilation and dissimulation: Similarities with the Japanese Empire are self-evident.

Athleticism and Bushido: Mutuality: The Way of the Warrior

Similarities to Athleticism are transparent in the long established tradition of Japanese Bushido, a moral, heroic concept of martial manhood, ‘...The first objective of *samurai* education was to build up character. The subtler faculties of prudence, intelligence, and dialectics were less important... a samurai was essentially a man of action’.³⁴ And again, ‘Bushido [is] an outstanding characteristic of our national Morality ... In effect, man tries to fulfil true life by way of death’.³⁵

Japan in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries moved impressively with the times. In consequence, it used *both* traditional and contemporary sport with their martial purposes as a means of imperial cultural consolidation.

The ‘Way of the Warrior’ was intrinsic to Japanese culture. Its ethical purpose is evident in this self-delusionary statement,

Our nation is one that holds **Bushido** in high regard ... This martial spirit ... tries to give life to all things and it is not that which destroys ... Here lies the martial spirit of our nation.³⁶

It constituted a stereotypical cultural construct in an attempt to control the world: the self-sacrificial warrior.

English ‘sportsmanship’ led directly to a Japanese late nineteenth century concept of ‘sportsmanship’ linked closely to traditional Japanese concepts of education, nationalism and militarism to create strong bodies for a strong state. English ‘sportsmanship’ was admired because it was perceived as the source of British Imperialism: global power achieved by strong bodies of a strong state.³⁷

Similarities between Athleticism and Bushido are vividly clear in this statement:

‘**Bushido**’ is a modern term rather than a historic one. The ‘way’ itself originates from the samurai moral values, most commonly stressing some combination of ... loyalty, martial arts mastery and honor until death.³⁸

The British imperialist used sport as a means of hegemonic control. The Japanese imperialist inspired by the success, grandeur and extent of the largest land and sea empire in the history of the world, did likewise: a posteriori subscription to a perceived effect and cause!

Japan’s use of sport as imperial enculturation as was the British use was confronted. British and Japanese imperialism left legacies but of a rather different kind; in the case of Japan exceptional long lasting embittered resentment born in part by sustained recollection of a brutal use of militaristic sport.

IMPERIALISM: ‘CAVEAT EMPTOR:’ CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES

One thing should be made very clear. Any claim that these ‘civilized’ imperialists were able to impose their sporting ethical values completely on the ‘uncivilized’ should never be pressed too strongly. There was never a monolithic cultural response to the use of sport for imperial

control on the part of the colonized. It is time for a sophisticated analytical agenda and for a nuanced approach to imperial sport. Again, it is time for caveats: in all cultural, imperial settings involving modern sport, ‘we should certainly appreciate the independent, creative capacities of (de facto) politically inferior societies and individuals, while at the same time recognizing the effectiveness, due to the ideological and institutional advantages possessed by imperial agents and agencies of hegemonic control’.³⁹ One major issue any analyst of imperial proselytism and its cultural consequences should confront is the nature of interpretation, assimilation and adaptation and the extent of resistance and rejection by the proselytized. In the assessment of the extent of attempted cultural implementation any analyst worth his salt must be aware of cultural discontinuities as well as continuities. The advantage is real,

In the consideration of the imperial spread of modern sport ... cultural encounters between dominant and subordinate cultures provide an excellent opportunity to place ... colonial knowledge and control in the context of their partial *and ironic realisations*.⁴⁰

Sport as a form of cultural imperialism could help bring about political ‘marriage;’ *equally* it could help bring about political ‘divorce’ between colonizers and colonized.

Nevertheless, in the fullness of time, ‘Imperial sport {transmuted and transformed} has been a potent cultural global force with both direct and indirect influences, highly visible in its modern interpretations, amazingly influential in its evolutionary outcomes and astonishing widespread in its modern consequences’.⁴¹ A major driving force in this astounding global modernization was the British Empire, it ensured... the transmission of much of modern sport played in the modern way to many parts of the world where it was mostly assimilated, frequently adapted, and only infrequently rejected. The outcome has been a contemporary cultural revolution of gargantuan size. The world, at one level, is now a vast playground but its play has become much more than sport. The political, economic, cultural and emotional resonances... are stupefying deafening... sport is now part of politics, economics and culture—within nations and across nations. Modern sport played globally, politicized globally and, last but not least *enjoyed* globally—whatever the local variations, interpretations and nuances—‘... is an obsession’.⁴² It owes much to the British Empire and its *Homo Ludens Imperiosis*. One modern

empire greatly influenced by Him and all he was thought to personify, was the Japanese Empire.

A FRESH LENS AND A NEW FOCUS

It is time for a fresh lens and time to slide its focus eastwards to concentrate its ‘eye’ on Japanese imperialism. It is time for a close scrutiny of Japanese cultural imperialism and the use of sport. The point must be made immediately that it is crucial to be aware of the complexities involved in any consideration of the influence of Japanese *homo ludens imperiosus*. There are two fundamental requirements:

We should fully recognize that dominant elites in empire did seek ‘in purposive fashion to engineer the conformity of subordinate groups’ through sport, [but] we should also recognize that sport was an area of negotiation. The tensions inherent in all hegemonic relations should not be overlooked. We should also be wary of carelessly patronizing indigenous cultures and at least attempt to be sensitive to the dangers of stereotyping, reductionism and global generalization. Above all, we should be prepared to confront fully the possible disparities between ideological assertion, intention and realization.⁴³

JAPANESE COMPLEXITY

There are... good reasons... to reject the simplistic identification of modernization (emphasis added) with ‘Westernization’ and the use of ‘Westernization’ as a generic term to denote the large - scale cultural transformations engulfing the non-Western world. ... In various instances, indigenous needs and resources have produced in combination such phenomena as business mentalities, specialized occupational roles, centralized nation – states and rationalized culture.⁴⁴

... and it can be usefully added, specific interpretations and outcomes of modern sport.

JAPANESE IDIOSYNCRASY

The Japanese... have become obsessive about defining themselves; Who are We? Why are we so different from everybody else? ... Out of this national navel-staring has grown ... Nihonjinron, literally the Theory of the Japanese.⁴⁵

JAPANESE IRONY

By 1964, the chief Japanese symbol of wartime suffering, and subsequently of Japanese pacifism was the bombing of Hiroshima. As a reminder of Japan's peaceful intentions, and perhaps in a fit of self-pity of Japan's own suffering in the past, the young man chosen to light the Olympic flame was born in Hiroshima on the day it was obliterated by the A-bomb. As the flame was lit, fighter planes of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces scrambled over Tokyo with the entirely pacific intent of drawing the five Olympic rings in the sky.⁴⁶

JAPANESE IMPERIALISM: DISTINCTIVENESS AND DISPARITY, DISLIKE AND DISTRUST

Distinctiveness and Disparity

... by 1930 Japanese imperialism comprised three disparate elements: a network of colonies and spheres of influence, protecting the approaches to the home islands and guaranteeing certain food supplies; membership of an international system based on treaty rights, conferring trade and investment privileges throughout East Asia; and an incipient special relationship with China, geared in particular to the needs of Japan's industrial economy. The events of the next decade were to bring these ingredients together in such a way as to make Japan's case distinctive in the history of empire.⁴⁷

Dislike and Distrust

... it is legitimate for us to note ... that the consequences of Japanese imperialism did not end with surrender in 1945. Nor did the emotions it aroused. Those who look back in bitterness on the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere can easily persuade themselves, or be persuaded, that Japan's close association with the United States, following military occupation, is a variant of 'dependent' imperialism; that commercial success in Asia signals an attempt by Japan to restore the inequalities of 'co-prosperity'; and that militarism remains just below the surface of Japanese life. Such suspicions are a price Japan continues to pay for fifty years of imperialist endeavour.⁴⁸

Memories of a malign domination have not faded from the minds of the victimized. Accusations of a collective Japanese amnesia have not been convincingly answered to the satisfaction of the oppressed.

... Events of the past cannot but be deplorable.⁴⁹

JAPANESE NATIONALISM

Japanese nationalism for some 200 years can be divided into two components: cultural nationalism and political nationalism. With regard to cultural nationalism, there has been conjunction and confrontation. Cultural nationalism embedded in folkloric traditions, for example, was traditionally hostile to political nationalism. However, in the Meiji period (1868–1911) cultural nationalism was a composite of indigenous and imported political ideologies; initially, a bulwark against the global waves of Western colonialism, ultimately, to secure parity of political power with those threatening waves. In the Taisho (1912–1926) and Showa (1926–1989) eras, it evolved progressively into a system of internal totalitarianism and into a system of external imperial domination. An evolutionary progression resulting in Japanese imperial militarism. A new Japanese identity resulted from the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The old feudal order was dismantled in the name of modernization. Samurai had to dispense with swords and topknots. Commoners, who had previously been forbidden from carrying weapons on pain of death, were now required, if necessary, to die for the state. Manufacturing a martial sense of national identity became essential. As Japan's imperial ambitions grew, Japanese identity became more enmeshed in psychological preparation for war.⁵⁰

The path to a despotic imperialism was laid.

ETHICAL ETHNOCENTRISM

The Meiji Constitution of 1889 declared that allegiance to the Emperor was the citizen's higher duty. While the Constitution was a blend of Japanese political idealism and Western political pragmatism, it stressed the uniqueness of the Japanese people (Kokutai).⁵¹ It was characterized by a self-righteousness ethnocentricity. In 1890 the *Imperial Rescript for Seamen and Soldiers* presented Japan as a 'sacred nation protected by the Gods', while the *Imperial Rescript on Education* in the same year became a sacred text, and was memorized by students who swore to offer themselves 'courageously to the State and to protect the Imperial family'.⁵² During the second Sino-Japanese War the *hakko ichiu* came to be viewed by militarists as a doctrine that placed the Emperor at the centre of the phenomenal world providing a religious impetus to the idea of Japanese territorial expansion.⁵³ The result was a strong national identity

reinforced by spiritual conviction. Education now included official textbooks reinforced with as variety of cultural activities. Simultaneously, a strong emphasis on school ‘texts such as the *Kotutai-no-hongi* stressed the centuries—old “uniqueness” of Japan. Cultural courses were supplemented ‘with military and survival courses’.⁵⁴

The path to despotic imperialism was extended further.

VICTOR AND VICTIM

In due course, the self-perceived Western victim had turned Eastern victor. There was an ironic outcome. The victor would again become victim. In the Second World War, over one million military and nearly half a million civilians died: a total of over two million dead, while in the period of ruthless imperial rule in East Asia millions of East Asians died. There was a further irony. As noted earlier, Asians learnt the harsh truth that liberation from Western imperialism promised by the Eastern imperialism led only to new imperial masters far worse than the old ones. A brutal, martial Eastern imperialism born of a warrior tradition, and seeking to emulate a global Western imperialism characterized Japan’s Asian invasions.

Our present mission as a people is to build up a new Japanese culture by **adopting** (emphasis added) and sublimating Western cultures...to the advancement of world culture.⁵⁵

IMPERIAL EDUCATION: SELF-SACRIFICE EXALTED

The creation of a loyal, patriotic masculinity owed much to the education system before and during the fascist period. The system reveals a marked similarity between British imperial education and Japanese imperial education in instilling self-sacrificial patriotism. Models and myths of military heroism filled Japanese schoolboy novels, schoolbooks and juvenile verse.

Saburo Ienaga stated in his *The Glorification of War in Japanese Education*, ‘textbooks, even from the lowest grades, included militaristic content’ (emphasis added). He further observed that ‘After 1904 elementary school texts were compiled by the national government; all Japanese children were taught from books produced by the Ministry of Education, a ruling elite needs a modern education system to get its

message across'. He concluded, 'There is no doubt that the emphasis on militarism in the curriculum, combined with the media's glorification of war and the government's suppression of pacific and liberal views, was a major factor in socializing the great majority of Japanese to support aggression enthusiastically'.⁵⁶

In the Introduction entitled 'Imperialism, History and Education' to *Benefits Bestowed? Education and British Imperialism*, it is stated 'that the central role of imperialism should be noted on all debates about culture, media and society between the 1870s and the 1940s'.⁵⁷ The comment attracted a correction in response, 'sound advice, yet surely incomplete. In *the full context of empire* (emphasis added), the list should certainly include education'.⁵⁸ The role of education in creating and controlling compliance to Japanese imperial political principles and priorities was crucial. The alleged Jesuit maxim, 'Give me the child until he is seven and I will give you the man' seldom had greater pertinence. By the 1930s through the committed efforts of Sadao Araki,⁵⁹ a former army general who became Minister of Education in 1931 martial indoctrination engulfed young Japanese. Araki played a crucial role ensuring the doctrine of *seishin kyōiku* (spiritual training) as an ideological backbone for army personnel. As Minister of Education he supported the integration of the samurai code into the national education system. He built upon the political and economic reforms following the Meiji Restoration. From 1937 the Emperor was supreme commander of all armed forces. Under Sadao Araki, education became a vehicle for single-minded indoctrination into a militarized mindset and for the inculcation of a militaristic masculinity. In schools, minds were shaped by military orientated textbooks and bodies by military-style training. College students were indoctrinated into a martial culture. Male students received advanced military training, female students received first-aid training. The Imperial Youth Federation was established to perpetuate a martial culture. The Yasukuni Shrine, established in 1869, received state patronage. Agencies were set up to enforce compliance to militaristic nationalism by both the police and the army, while a series of Peace Preservation Laws were implemented banning freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. By the early 1930s the State was controlled by the military. Democratic institutions set up in the 1890s were side-lined and ineffective. In 1936, the army obtained the right to nominate the Army Minister in the civilian government. What this progression illustrates was

that analyses of imperialism should never be treated as static.⁶⁰ Japanese imperialism had now gone through various stages of development ending in despotic military control.

The path to despotic imperialism was complete.

ASYMMETRICAL IDEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION: JAPANESE PROSELYTIZERS OF 'ANGLO-SAXON' ATHLETICISM

Japanese proselytizers of Athleticism convinced of its value for physical, mental and moral health and martial qualities included several influential Japanese; in particular, Chiyosaburo Takeda, an acolyte of an English advocate of Athleticism, Frederick William Strange. His advocacy was typical of a far-flung imperial caste. Late-Victorian and Edwardian British imperial advocates of Athleticism with total sincerity and absolute self-confidence 'took as means of acquiring [the perceived] precious instrumental commodities [of Athleticism] to, among other places, the lush tropical rain forests of Africa, the verdant islands of the Pacific, the parched plains of India and the windswept prairies of Canada. Whatever the aims of other missionaries from the diverse sects and organizations which attempted to spread the Christian message, their first purpose was to create a universal Tom Brown: loyal, brave, truthful, a gentleman and, if at all possible, a Christian'.⁶¹ They journeyed far beyond the British Empire. One of these moral missionaries, Frederick William Strange (1853–1889) reached Japan. He became a teacher at the school attached to Tokyo University together with Kikuchi Dairoku, who later became first the President of Tokyo University and then Minister of Education. Takeda, for his part, became a committed apostle of Strange. He once recalled the moral message Strange proclaimed,

The aim of the exercise is not only to discipline the animal spirit of the human being, but also to cultivate the intelligence and morality of man. Exercise is not an aim but an instrument. The aim of the training of the body does not solely rest upon the preservation of health or longevity, but it does reside in more than that; the moral training of the playing field evokes human qualities far more than the disciplines of the class room.⁶²

Strange was a notable sportsman and 'the personification of sportsmanship'. He was also a relentless proselytizer. His book *Outdoor Games*

made this clear. His ambition was to interest Japanese youth in outdoor games. Such was his success that in 1888 the Meiji government awarded him a decoration for his publication. He died the following year. His obituary in the *Japan Weekly* recorded that,

During the last six or seven years of his career, he devoted himself to the task of encouraging a love of athletic sports and out-door exercise among the students of Tokyo University and its Principal Schools, with results of **permanent value** (emphasis added) to the nation.⁶³

Strange was Takeda's lifelong inspiration. Takeda considered him 'the founding father of our country's exercise'.⁶⁴ Takeda was his committed panegyrist. He promoted the concept of *Kyogi undo*—Athletic Exercise. It had a special emphasis: subscription to the western sport. His book *Riron Jikken, Kyogi Undo* (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1904)—a homily layered and embroidered with both the idealism and pragmatism of Athleticism, made it clear that 'Athletic Exercise' was the key to the capacity of nations. The term for Takeda represented social Darwinistic 'survival of the fittest', and 'an imperialist symbol for the struggle for dominance between races and nations in pursuit of conquest and control'.⁶⁵ He coined the term *kyogido*. Its virtue lay in the instrumentality of exercise. 'Athletic Exercise' was to produce 'a manlike man, trained sinews, toughened nerves, improved intellect, disciplined emotions'. 'Athletic Exercise' excluded Japanese martial arts. They failed to create the strongest. They were not able to ensure that a nation's physical qualities were comparable to those of the best races in an age of imperialism. Ironically, however, his inspiration was part drawn from Japanese history. His model, de facto, replicated the traditional *shugyo* or *musha shugo*—the endurance of hardship and suffering. He updated it and dressed it in 'Darwinian clothing'. He was a committed cultural synthesist. He attempted a confident syncretism of East and West. His 'sports-manship' was an antiphonic response to Western and Eastern values; a blend of West and East. 'Kyukudo was a modern notion of *bushido* with the modern purpose of creating a hegemonic imperial nation in imitation of the English and their empire'.⁶⁶ It should not be overlooked that Takeda wrote a book for boys, *Shinshin Tanren, Kyogi Undo* (Training of the Body and Mind: Boy's Athletic Exercise) (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1904) published significantly at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War

(1904–1905) and at the moment Japan signed the first Korean-Japanese Agreement (1904). ‘Sportsmanship’ was, for Takeda, the inspiration for founding the *Dai Nihon Teikoku* (the Empire of Greater Japan). Takeda’s imperialistic ambitions are conspicuous in this book: ‘You know the reason why I often call you boys of the hegemonic country’, he wrote, ‘because, as our *Dai Nihon Teikoku* becomes an even stronger nation of the Axis powers, I want you to rouse yourself and make ours one of the hegemonic country of the world. Boys of a good hegemonic country! How happy you are to be born in this good age!’⁶⁷ Those who were influenced by Strange and Takeda included Kikuchi Dairoku, mentioned earlier, who advocated English Athleticism in his *Spirit of Exercise* (1899). He stated the virtues of ‘English Athleticism’ were analogous to those of Japanese *Bushido*. He was infected with a curious spiritual pseudo-anthropomorphism.

In the final analysis, as Ian Boruma has caustically noted, of the period Japanese Anglophilia,

Coubertin’s quasi-platonic brand of Anglophilia, with its worship of the muscular English gentleman, the Corinthian sportsman, the spiritual aristocrat who rules a world without politics by dint of his moral superiority, cultivated by cricket ... is **dangerously naïve (emphasis added)**. Ideals of unity unchecked by democratic politics lead to tyranny ... the final consequence of a noble vision that took **Tom Brown’s Schooldays** too seriously.⁶⁸

Flattery by way of exhortation reached back across the globe,

General Sir Ian Hamilton, on unveiling the Boer War memorial tablet at Glenalmond College, exhorted the boys to be ready to ‘fight for ‘Glenalmond, Scotland and the Empire’ and urged on them **the Japanese spirit of self-sacrifice: a willingness to meet a patriotic death ‘as a bridegroom goes to meet his bride’**. (Emphasis added)⁶⁹

He visited many public schools to stress to their pupils the necessity of duty and the need for a subscription to martial self-emulation.⁷⁰ He had influential media support. The outspoken war correspondent, Charles a Court Repington, educated at Eton and The Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and former officer and writer of several studies of war including *The War In the Far East 1904–1905* (1905), a widely read author,

praised ‘the moral strength and sentiment of collective self-sacrifice which distinguished the warriors of Japan’.⁷¹

NEMESIS

In summary, Japan’s imperial progression unfolded as follows,

Japan began with what might be called a period of ‘dependency’, when a strength recognizably greater than that of the country’s neighbours was combined with weakness vis-à-vis the other powers. In the after 1894 alignment with Britain and the United States was the necessary concomitant of putting together the rudiments of a Japanese empire. In the second stage, starting in 1905, Japanese imperialism became more self-assertive. Like Bismarck’s Germany a generation earlier, Japan behave after the Russo-Japanese War as an abrasive latecomer, seeking equality of esteem not only through an insistence on treaty rights, but also through the acquisition of spheres of influence. Finally, after 1930 – though there had been indications of it as early as the First World War – Japanese leaders set out to substitute a Japan-centred system of imperialism in East Asia for that which they had inherited from the nineteenth-century West.⁷²

However, the empire ended as ‘an irrelevance:’

From July and August 1944 when American forces captured Saipan and Guam, the naval and air defences of the Japanese home islands had been in peril. With the loss of Iwo Jima in March 1945 and of Okinawa in June, they crumbled. Japan was thereafter in a state of siege. And battered by air attack, Japanese industry could no longer have made use of raw materials from the southern region, even if it had been able to obtain them. Indeed, some weeks before the atom bomb brought Japanese surrender, the scale of conventional bombing had demonstrated that the enemy’s ability to destroy Japan’s industrial heartland from the air made possession of an empire an irrelevance.⁷³

‘The Sword of Damocles descended on Japan with ... catastrophic force in 1945’.⁷⁴

Now ‘Japan lay in ruins... Japan had left Asia. But the price of doing so was to become a subordinate to another power—the United States’.⁷⁵

A LONG AND DARK SHADOW

Imperial progression had reaped the whirlwind. Fresh storms, albeit with lesser intensity but no less real, would come in the post-imperial period. Refracted Revanchism lay ahead.

NOTES

1. W.G. Beasley, 'Introduction', *Japanese Imperialism, 1894–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).
2. Ibid.
3. William Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal: The Fall of Delhi, 1857* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), 10.
4. Joseph Conrad, *The Heart of Darkness*. Quoted in, Valerie Eliot, (Ed.), T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, (London: Faber and Faber, 2010), 2.
5. J.A. Mangan, 'In Pursuit of Perspective: the Other Empire of Sport-cultural Imperialism for Confident Control and Consequent Legacies' in, Mark Dyerson, J.A. Mangan and Roberta J. Park (Eds.), *Mapping an Empire of American Sport: Expansion, Assimilation, Adaptation and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 2013), 196.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. See, J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
9. J.A. Mangan and Callum C. McKenzie, 'The Other Side of the Coin: Victorian Field Sports and English Elite Education' in, J.A. Mangan (ed.), *Making European Masculinities: Europe, Gender, Sport*, (London: Cass, 2000), 80–1. See also, J.A. Mangan and Callum C. McKenzie, *Militarism, Hunting, Imperialism: 'Blooding' the Martial Male* (London: Routledge, 2010), *passim*.
10. Mangan, 'Prologue', in, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 9.
11. Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School' in, Brian Simon and Ian Bradbury (Eds.), *The Victorian Public School: Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1975), 130.
12. Quoted in, Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 137.
13. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 9.

14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Edward C. Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion 1780–1860* (London: Methuen, 1938) and *Public Schools and British Opinion Since 1860* (New York: Octagon Books, 1973). (Mack is without equal as a public school historian with his encyclopaedic coverage of the evolution of world-famous British Public (private) School System.)
18. Quoted in Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 8.
19. Quoted in Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 194.
20. Ibid.
21. Henry Newbolt, 'The Schoolfellow' in, *Poems New and Old* (London: John Murray, 1912), 88.
22. Best, ' Militarism and the Victorian Public School', 140.
23. Baden-Powell was consequently extremely keen that cadet corps as well as games were part of public school life. See, Mangan and McKenzie, *Militarism, Hunting and Imperialism*, 153.
24. See, J.A. Mangan, 'Play up and Play the Game: the Rhetoric of Cohesion, Identity, Patriotism and Morality' in, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 181.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Aldous Huxley, *Words and Their Meanings* (The Ward Ritchie Press, 1940), 9.
28. Cory was along with other creations, the composer of the 'jolly' but movingly evocative *Eton boating Song!*
29. See, J.A. Mangan, "'Muscular, Militaristic and Manly': The Middle-Class Hero as Moral Messenger" in, J.A. Mangan (ed.), *'Manufactured' Masculinity: Making Imperial Manliness, Morality and Militarism* (London: Routledge, 2013), 159.
30. Ibid.
31. J.A. Mangan, 'Images for Confident Control – Stereotypes in Imperial Discourse' in, J.A. Mangan (ed.), *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and Education in the British Colonial Experience*, (London: Routledge, 1993 and 2012), 7. (This essay covers the issue of stereotypes, culture and society more fully than is possible here in the space possible.)
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.

34. Brett & Kate McKay, 'The Bushido Code: The Eight Virtues Of The Samurai'. The Art of Manliness, available at: <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2008/09/14/the-bushido-code-the-eight-virtues-of-the-samurai/>, accessed, 20 July 2016.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. See Ikuo Abe and J.A. Mangan, "'Sportsmanship': English inspiration and Japanese response: F.W. Strange and Chiyosaburo Takeda' in, J.A. Mangan and Fan Hong (Eds.), *Sport in Asian Society: Past and Present*, (London: Cass, 2003), *passim*.
38. 'Bushido', Wikipedia, available at: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bushido> accessed, 21 July 2016.
39. J.A. Mangan, 'Epilogue: Imperial Complexities', in Dyerson, Mangan and Park (Eds.), *Mapping an Empire of American Sport*, 214.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., 217.
42. J.A. Mangan. 'Epilogue: Post-imperialism, Sport, Globalization' in, J.A. Mangan (Ed.) *Europe, Sport, World: Shaping Global Societies* (London: Cass, 2001), 269.
43. Ibid.
44. J.A. Mangan, 'Epilogue: Imperial Complexities', in Dyerson, Mangan and Park (Eds.), *Mapping an Empire of American Sport*, 216.
45. David Pilling, *Bending Adversity: Japan and the Art of Survival*, (London: Allen Lane, 2014), 257.
46. Ian Buruma. *Inventing Japan: 1853–1964* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 2004), vii.
47. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 254.
48. Ibid., 258.
49. This line from the classical verse by Li Yu in *The Golden Treasury of the Best Chinese Classical Poems*. Translated by Bingxing Zhang (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2010), 321, seems entirely appropriate when considering the continuing reaction of the Chinese people to Japanese Imperialism.
50. 'Imperial Japan. History of WW2' available at: <http://www.history.co.uk/study-topics/history-of-ww2/imperial-japan> for a succinct outline of this evolution.
51. 'Japanese Nationalism', Wikipedia available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_nationalism, accessed, 21 July 2016.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.

55. Japanese Ministry of Education quoted in, Ivan Morris, *Japan, 1931–1945: Militarism, Fascism, Japanism?* (New York: Heath, 1963), 52.
56. J.A. Mangan and Takeshi Komagome, 'Militarism, Sacrifice and Emperor Worship: The Expendable Male Body in Fascist Martial Culture' in, J.A. Mangan (Ed.) *Superman Supreme: Fascist Body as Political Icon-Global Fascism* (London: Cass, 2000), 186. For references to the work of Saburo Ienaga, at one time professor of education at Tokyo University of Education, see <https://www.google.co.uk/#q=Saburo+Ienaga>.
57. J.A. Mangan, 'Introduction' in, J.A. Mangan (Ed.) *Benefits Bestowed: Education and British Imperialism*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 1.
58. Ibid.
59. See, Appendix One for details of the military and political career of Sadao Araki.
60. For a discussion of this point see, Mangan, 'Epilogue: Imperial Complexities' in, Dyerson, Mangan and Park (Eds.) *Mapping an Empire of American Sport*, 215–217.
61. J.A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (London: Routledge, 1998), 18.
62. See, Abe and Mangan, "'Sportsmanship'", 99–128.
63. Ibid., 101.
64. Ibid., 111.
65. Ibid., 115.
66. Ibid., 119.
67. Ibid.
68. Ian Baruma, *Anglomania: A European Love Affair* (Atlantic Books, Main edition, 2010): 165. Baruma's chapter eight, 'A Sporting Man' is worth reading both for Coubertin's idealism and naivety.
69. Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School', 145.
70. Ibid.
71. Mangan and Komagome, 'Militarism, Sacrifice and Emperor Worship', 186. (For brief details of Charles a Court Repington, available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_à_Court_Repington).
72. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism*, 251.
73. Ibid., 250.
74. Alistair Horne, *Hubris: The Tragedy of War in the Twentieth Century* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2015), xxviii.
75. Ibid.
76. 'Sadao Araki', Wikipedia, available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sadao_Araki, accessed 30 July 2016.
77. 'Peace Preservation Law', on Wikipedia, available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_Preservation_Law, 30 July 2016.

APPENDIX ONE

Sadao Araki



Native name	荒木貞夫
Born	26 May 1877, Komae, Tokyo, Japan
Died	2 November 1966.
Allegiance	Empire of Japan
Service/Branch	Imperial Japanese Army
Years of Service	1898–1936
Rank	General
Commands held	6th Division
Battles won	Russo-Japanese War Siberian Intervention Second Sino-Japanese War World War II
Awards	Order of the Sacred Treasures (1st class) Order of the Golden Kite (2nd class) Order of the Rising Sun (1st class)
Other work	Minister of War, Minister of Education

After graduation from the Imperial Japanese Army Academy in November 1897, he was born into the Bushido tradition. His father

'was an ex-samurai retainer of the Hitotsubashi branch of the Tokugana family'. Sadao Araki had a distinguished military career which included Deputy General of Military Training. In 1933 he was promoted to full General. He was appointed Minister for War in 1931. From 1932 'he became more outspoken in promoting totalitarianism, militarism and expansionism'. He fully endorsed the 'philosophy of *Kodoha*' ('The Imperial Way'), which linked the Emperor, the people, land and morality as one indivisible entity, and which emphasized State Shintoism. Araki also strongly promoted *Seishin Kyoiku* (spiritual training) for the army. He resigned his post as War Minister in 1934 due to ill health. When the *Kodoha* army officer rebellion failed in 1936 he was forced to retire. However, in 1938 he was appointed to the powerful position of Education Officer. He was now in 'an ideal position to promote militarism ideals through the national education system and in the general populace'. Araki proposed the incorporation of the *samurai* code in the national education system. He promoted the use of the official academic text *Kokutaino Hongi* ('Japan's Fundamentals of National Policy'), and the 'moral national bible' *Shinmin no Michi* ('The Path of Subjects'), an effective catechism on national, religious, cultural, social and ideological topics'. He used his official government position to good effect to indoctrinate the nation's young into a martial culture.⁷⁶

APPENDIX TWO

The Public Security Preservation Laws

Between 1894 and 1925 Japan implemented a series of laws designed specifically to suppress political dissent.

1. The **Safety Preservation Law of 1894** (保安条例 *Hoan Jō Rei*) was the most drastic of a number of laws introduced after 1875, imposed as 'stringent restrictions on the press, public speeches and political meetings'. The Law was repealed in 1898 to be replaced in 1900 by an even more draconian law.
2. The **Public Order and Police Law of 1900** (治安警察法 *Chian Keisatsu Hō*) was directed specifically against the organized labour movements. In addition to restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly and association, it also specifically prohibited workers from organizing and going on strike. A provision banning women from political associations was deleted in 1922.

3. The **Public Security Preservation Law of 1925** (治安維持法 *Chian Iji Hō*) was directed specifically against socialists, communists and anarchists. An immensely significant law underpinning imperialist, fascist Japan, it was not repealed until after the First World War. In 1941 it was wholly revised. Penalties for communist sympathizers were increased, religious organizations were now included in the remit of the Thought Police and the appeal court for Thought crimes was abolished. Totalitarian control was now complete.⁷⁷

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