

INTRODUCTION

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I. THE MEANING OF THE "EARLY SHŌWA ERA" IN THE MODERNIZATION OF JAPAN

TWO PREVIOUS NUMBERS of *The Developing Economies* (III-4 and IV-4) have been devoted to studies of the modernization of Japan. This issue is the last in the modernization series and deals mainly with the early Shōwa era, or the pre-war and war years from 1926 to 1945.

The early Shōwa era was a period of significance and of profound emotion for Japanese. We think about this period with a sense of acute pain. The two decades of the "inter-war" and the Second World War years were ones of turbulence and confusion throughout the world. For Japan, in particular, they were 20 years of economic crises and "the fifteen-year war,"¹ for she, unlike the Western powers, did not enjoy economic development during the 1920's (the so-called "relatively stabilized period") and was shaken by repeated economic crises. Beginning with the invasion into Manchuria in 1931 and the establishment of an ultra-nationalistic system at home, Japan fell down the steep slope of a fifteen-year war which led to her defeat in 1945.

People often talk about the "disgrace of Shōwa" in comparison with the "glory of Meiji." These phrases are not entirely without basis. But this is not to say that the "glory of Meiji" abruptly transformed into the "disgrace of Shōwa" without any transition or connexion. The early Shōwa era was a period which saw the breaking down of the progress of Japanese modernization; it was, so to speak, an "intermediate settlement" which Japan reached a plateau in her modernization. The settlement was indeed disastrous. Thus the seeds of the disgrace of Shōwa were present in the glory of Meiji. "Meiji" can neither be expressed only by "glory" nor can it be separated from "disgrace." Thus this view insists that the modernization of Japan since Meiji was "the road to the early Shōwa era." This argument has been adopted

¹ The war which began with the aggression into Manchuria in 1931 and ended in the defeat of 1945.

fairly widely in the Japanese academic world.

Currently, among foreigners' views of Japan, we can see a prevailing interpretation according to which the modernization of Japan has been evaluated highly given Japan's achievement of high rates of economic growth in the post-Second World War context. Thus, such a view seeks to find a successful example of the modernizing of a backward nation in Japan. But we, as Japanese, cannot neglect nor treat lightly the facts of the fifteen-year war and "August 15" in the one hundred years since Meiji. Therefore, we cannot picture the course of her modernization in purely roseate colours. We should not regard the history of her modernization as only bright; we must not overlook the dark side of history which is ineluctably connected with the bright. The early Shōwa era vividly illustrates our viewpoint.

The view which regards history as only dark, however, is also biased. Such is not the prevailing view among Japanese scholars. We cannot look at the road to the fifteen-year war simply as the inevitable fate of modern Japan: it was a road along which Japan herself chose to proceed. From the later Taishō to the early Shōwa eras, i. e., the 1920's, Japan passed through a period of fatal choice. After the Manchurian Incident of 1931, the choice was almost settled and with the February 26th Incident of 1936 and the Sino-Japanese Incident of 1937 it was fixed once and for all. In this sense, the period from the latter half of the 1920's and the early 1930's is particularly significant.

Inevitability and choice in history are concepts which raise difficult theoretical questions, which we cannot discuss at length in limited space. However, we can say at least that it is meaningless to insist in abstract terms upon the priority of one over the other. History is always composed of a variety of possibilities; according to which of these possibilities is realized, another set arises. Thus, we cannot talk about history without analysing in concrete terms the conditions which sway history. In early Shōwa Japan, certain alternatives were examined among a variety of possibilities which were opposed to each other, e. g., the Inoue versus the Takahashi financial policies; parties versus military politics; the Shidehara versus the Tanaka diplomacies. As the result of the choices made among these, the road to the fifteen-year war had been followed.

We cannot regard the road to the fifteen-year war either as an inevitable fate, or as an error in choice. It is well known that free choices had never been possible for Japan. First of all, the administrators of those days did not make decisions either arbitrarily or on the spur

of the moment: choice was not free from the influence of that social structure peculiar to Japan which had evolved in the course of her modernization. The choice was made only among possibilities which had been provided for by two historical factors, that is, the socio-politico-economic conditions in Japan and the international environment. From the above statements it becomes clear that the range of choice left to early Shōwa Japan was fairly limited. Thus it is quite wrong to regard the road to ultra-nationalism and the fifteen-year war as an error in choice.

Our discussion may be focused on the interpretation that the early Shōwa era was an "intermediate settlement" in Japanese modernization. Japan's belated emergence since Meiji as one of the world's capitalist nations gave rise to a symbiotic relationship between her traditional systems and her newly-grown industrialization, and to the ambivalence between bright and dark.² This symbiosis in the Japanese pattern or framework of modernization supported the development of Japan in the Meiji era; it reached a certain degree of maturity and then heightened the tension and contradictions within the framework itself. The framework should have been changed in the Taishō era. The First World War, however, led Japan to realize quantitative expansion without reforming the framework and, as a result, the fetters on and contradictions in this framework were intensified. (However, signs of change such as "Taishō Democracy," etc., were seen in the course of time.) In addition, the World Economic Crisis dealt Japan a hard blow. Japan was engulfed in an international disturbance without having overcome her weak structure. The range of choice open to Japan was narrowed so that at that time she was already biased towards the road to the fifteen-year war.

The question of whether the progress of Japanese history since Meiji was inevitable or an error in choice cannot be answered on the basis of one-sided discussion. In fact, this is a problem to which no scholar can give an answer agreeable to others. The answer would naturally be related to how one understands the Taishō and Meiji eras and, further, the Meiji Restoration. In the Japanese scholarly world, however, almost no one holds the opinion that the road to the war represented only an error in choice. It is popularly held that Japan, after having made certain choices within the range of alternatives presented by domestic and international conditions, was compelled to reduce further her range of choice and at last constructed the road to the fifteen-year war. Only

² Refer to Ōtsuka Hisao 大塚久雄, "Modernization Reconsidered," *The Developing Economies*, Vol. III, No. 4 (Dec., 1965).

from this viewpoint may one be able to explain totally August 15, the subsequent reform in socio-political systems, and the striking post-war development. And also it may be that we will find herein the tragedy of a late-developing capitalist country.

This issue of our Journal deals with the tragic early Shōwa era from the viewpoint outlined above. The subject matter is the course of choice leading to the fifteen-year war and the domestic and foreign conditions which swayed this course. We intend to examine the actual progress of Japan during the early Shōwa era by taking into consideration the characteristics of Japan's modernization on the one hand and of "August 15" and post-war Japan on the other.

For the reader's convenience we will give a brief summary of the domestic and international environments of the relevant years, plus, a statement of the themes with which each article deals.

II. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WHICH SWAYED THE "CHOICE"

Let us first examine the economic conditions which determined Japan's road towards the war. The Japanese economy in the 1920's and 1930's was characterized by a series of economic crises which lasted for far longer and were far more severe than those in Western countries and by her efforts to extricate herself from these crises. The Japanese economy, which had seen rapid expansion of production capacity during the period of the First World War, was affected by repeated economic crises in the 1920's and never enjoyed the so-called relatively stabilized period of capitalism. The weakness of a late developing capitalist country to catch up with the advanced capitalist countries was exposed under the pressure of the both domestic and foreign economic difficulties.

First, the agricultural crisis should be mentioned. The agricultural villages in which more than half the population lived constituted the basis of Japan's social structure. As is revealed from the nature of the payment of rent in kind—which amounted to about half of the farmer's crops—there existed a system of parasitic landlordism combined with minute-scale tenancy by poverty-stricken peasants. The villages were hit hard by a long-term agricultural crisis which lasted from the 1920's to the mid-1930's. The price fall for agricultural products was greater than that of general prices: in 1931, the price of agricultural products fell to its lowest point, 40% of what it had been in 1919, the peak; in particular, the price of cocoons, one of the major agricultural products, declined heavily to 25% of its price in the peak year. As a result, the

white slavery often occurred in the villages. This economic crisis was related not only to the agricultural villages but also to the whole of Japan. Already in the Taishō era, the money economy which had developed since the First World War around the urban centres began to penetrate deep into the agricultural society and shake the foundations of the old system. Even when the fetters of the old system were exposed, it was still difficult to destroy the framework of the old system to make way for new capitalist development. Thus crisis in the agricultural villages and the subsequent social unrest formed a hotbed for military Fascism; and these two factors functioned as the most influential elements in the decisions which led to the road of the fifteen-year war. The claim for destruction of the old system which began to bud at that time was not to be fulfilled until the defeat of 1945 and the subsequent Land Reform.

Second, the cities were also repeatedly attacked by crises. In 1920, the post-war depression came as a reaction to the economic expansion during the First World War. In 1923, the Kantō Great Earthquake shook Japan; the facile financial and monetary policies taken for relief and reconstruction provoked the financial crisis of 1927. Before she could overcome these crises, Japan was entangled in the World Economic Crisis of 1929, which is referred to as the "Shōwa economic crisis." In brief, we may say that the economy had tackled the series of crises by adopting measures for inflationary relief without removing the cancer which had been festering in Japanese capitalism since the Meiji era; as a result of the rapid development of which various contradictions had developed within the economy.

What should be noted in this context are the financial policies adopted by Inoue Junnosuke 井上準之助 and Takahashi Korekiyo 高橋是清 respectively.³ It would be inappropriate here to examine these two policies in detail. But we may say that these two policies were the attempts of Japanese capitalism to overcome the crises deriving from its unique structure. The two financial policies, however, represented choices which were aimed at opposing goals; and the failures of both may illustrate the depth of the crisis.⁴

³ Inoue Junnosuke was Finance Minister in the cabinet of Hamaguchi Osachi 濱口雄幸, which was formed in July, 1929; his policy was characterized by the lifting of the gold embargo and instigation of deflationary measures. Takahashi Korekiyo held office as Finance Minister in the cabinets of Inukai Tsuyoshi 犬養毅, Saitō Makoto 齋藤實, and Okada Keisuke 岡田啓介, respectively. He reimposed the gold embargo and paved the way for an inflationary policy which would carry out "emergency public finance" after the Manchurian Incident of 1931.

Inoue introduced such deflationary policies as comprehensive tight finance, the consolidation of government bonds, industrial rationalization, etc., and realized Japan's return to the gold standard by lifting the gold embargo in January, 1930 after an interval of 13 years. The policy was in essence a surgical operation attempting to interrupt the chronic inflation which had been experienced since the First World War, and to reconstruct Japanese capitalism on the basis of the logic of world capitalism.⁴ The policy was characterized by capitalistic rationality. It resulted, however, in wretchedness. The curtain was lowered on the drama of the rescinding of the gold embargo after only two years; on the stage, no action had occurred other than the deepening of the crises at home and the loss of a huge amount of specie. The opening of the drama was ill-timed; in the autumn of 1929, the world economic crisis had already commenced, and Japan made the decision to return to the gold standard on the eve of the world-wide collapse of the gold standard. The failure of the Inoue policy which had been formulated on the basis of a misunderstanding of the situation was inevitable for two reasons. First, Japan still adhered to automatic gold standard adjustments, upon which, judging from the nature of capitalism, it was not even then realistic to rely; and second, the structure of Japanese capitalism was in such dire straits that it was impossible for it as a whole to endure such a trial.

The Takahashi financial policy, which succeeded upon the collapse of Inoue's, chose to overcome the crisis in a manner quite the opposite of its predecessor. Takahashi reimposed the gold embargo, employed a managed currency system, and hoped to overcome the depression by a policy of financial spending based on the issue of deficit-covering bonds. Takahashi, though not a member of the academic world, was considered a first-rate economist; it was Takahashi who implemented, for the first time in the world, Keynes' theories which subsequently became accepted on a world-wide scale. However, Takahashi's inflationary deficit-financing policy resulted in continued movement down the road to the fifteen-year war. This was due to the fact that, first, the policy was aimed solely at overcoming the urgent difficult situation by inflation, without solving the domestic structural contradictions. Second, for that reason, the policy devoted its attention primarily to establishing equilibrium of the national economy and economic nationalism, while in the international economy

⁴ It is symbolic in this context that both Inoue and Takahashi were assassinated in acts of military and rightist terrorism, the former in the so-called Ketsumeidan 血盟團 (Blood Pledge Corps) Affair of 1932 and the latter in the February 26th Incident of 1936.

⁵ In this context, corresponds to the "Matsukata financial policy" in the Meiji era.

it intended to increase exports by means of low exchange rates, which provoked international criticism of and opposition to Japan's "social dumping." Third, the combination of Takahashi's policy together with the aggressive policy of the military which began to be actualized with the Manchurian Incident in 1931 resulted in the removal of the means of financial control over the expansion of military expenditures from the hands of the government. Takahashi himself protested against the demands put forth by the military. In the end he was assassinated for his endeavours to revive the sound finance policy which he had himself originally abandoned. He wished to brake the train running on the rails towards war; but he could not stop the train which he himself had started. The financial policy employed by Baba Eiichi 馬場鐵一 which followed removed the last restraints and thenceforth the economy rushed straight into war.

This summary of the catastrophic condition of the Japanese economy in the early Shōwa era illustrates basically the context in which Japan's choice for war was made. Detailed explanations of the circumstances will be discussed herein in articles by Ōuchi Tsutomu, Chō Yukio, Ōshima Kiyoshi, and Takahashi Makoto. We have, of course, no intention to assign responsibility for that tragic choice to Inoue and Takahashi personally; the policies of the two men represent the only possibilities open to Japanese capitalism at that time. Rather, we wish to confirm here that the range of the choice itself was extremely narrow. The conditioning factors behind this narrowness were, first, the institutions of the state since the Meiji era. The range of options available for overcoming the economic crisis was limited by such contradictions in the structure of the Japanese capitalism as 1) the fact that the development of agriculture lagged behind industrialization; 2) the development of the industrial sector into a dual structure with *zaibatsu*-affiliated big business on the one hand and widespread medium, small, and minute enterprises on the other; and 3) the particular nature of inflationary expansion of the economy which continued for a long time. In particular, these conditions were inseparably bound to the policy of the *Tennōsei* 天皇制 (Emperor System); therefore, fundamental economic reforms were forced to compete with the obstacles of the existing socio-political order. In this sense, economic choice was affected by conditions in which political choice had in fact already been determined. Second, as is well known, the direction and characteristics of the measures taken to surmount the economic crises were conditioned by the external environment, and in particular the world economic crisis and the political situation in Asia. At this point,

it becomes necessary to examine the choices available during the early Shōwa era in a total context, and from the two standpoints of national politics and of the international environment. Shinobu Seizaburō and Saitō Takashi will discuss these points.

III. POLITICAL ROLE IN HOME AND ABROAD

Taishō Democracy Movement⁶ and its rapid decline were an important event to which close attention should be paid when we consider the choice that Japan had to make in the early Shōwa era. With the advance of modernization from the Meiji era, Japan experienced two great mass movements for developing democracy in Japan. One of these two was the *Jiyū minken undō* 自由民権運動 (Liberty and Popular Rights Movement); the other, the Taishō Democracy Movement. The Liberty and Popular Rights Movement was an anti-government movement which continued for fifteen years from 1874 to 1889, and frequently showed revolutionary upswings embracing vast numbers of people in various classes. It may be said that since the order and organization of the state during early Meiji remained fluid, the conflict between the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement and the despotic Meiji Emperor System state played an important role in forming the institutions of the state and deciding the course of development of modern Japan. In the end the Movement was defeated, to be succeeded by the Taishō Democracy Movement after a long interval of twenty years in which the government enjoyed considerable political stability. The latter movement also provided Japan with another opportunity for choice but, as in the case of the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement, it was defeated by the powers of the Emperor System state.

The Meiji era had been a period in which the military cliques and the bureaucratic authorities were dominant. Opposition against these ruling powers, however, became apparent among the people at the time when the transition to capitalism was almost completed and the firm framework of the old system came gradually to be an obstacle preventing Japan from further development as a modern state. Opposition first took the form of the *Goken undō* 護憲運動 (Campaign for the Defence of Constitutionalism); the first *Goken* campaign (1912-1913) mobilized tens of thousands, who encircled the Diet chanting slogans for the defence

⁶ For detailed description of Taishō Democracy, see Matsuo Takayoshi 松尾尊允, "The Development of Democracy in Japan—Taishō Democracy: Its Flowering and Break-down," *The Developing Economies*, Vol. IV, No. 4 (Dec., 1967).

of the Constitution. This resulted in the general resignation of the Katsura 桂 cabinet, the so-called *Taishō seihen* 大正政變 (Taishō Upheaval). It was the first time in Japan's modern history that a mass movement had a direct effect on the government.

The second *Goken* campaign (1922-1924) took place after Japanese capitalism had achieved remarkable development during the years of the First World War. The *Goken sampū* 護憲三派 (Three Political Parties of the *Goken* Campaign) won in the election of 1924, replacing the cabinet formed from the military cliques, and succeeded in organizing a cabinet led by a political party. Governments headed by political parties were in power during subsequent eight years until 1932; though in reality, they were by no means strong in their leaderships. However, it should be mentioned that early Shōwa were the same years in which party politics fell into deep confusion and proceeded rapidly towards self-dissolution.

In the Taishō Democracy Movement there evidently again existed an occasion upon which it is conceivable that the selection of another alternative might have led Japan in a direction other than that towards the fifteen-year war. However, it is probably true that the Taishō Democracy Movement, in comparison with the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement, was far more limited in forms of potentiality to avert Japan's course towards war. The reason for this lay first in the fact that the movement was conditioned by the framework of the Emperor System state which had been established in late Meiji. It is worthy of note that the premise that the Meiji Constitution was fundamental to the state was broadly accepted among the democracy movement camp even in the period, from the end of Taishō to the beginning of Shōwa, in which democracy developed to an unprecedented degree. The slogan *Goken* (defence of the Constitution) eloquently expresses this. It may be said that, to the degree to which it adhered to this premise, the democratic movement operated from its inception within certain self-imposed limitations. As will be clearly explained in the article by Shinobu Seizaburō, there existed within the Emperor System state institutions a discrepancy between *kokumuken* 國務權 and *tōsuiken* 統帥權, both Prerogatives of the Emperor. The controversies among the political parties at the time of the London Naval Conference of 1930 displayed typically the defects inherent in the political parties themselves; even members of the political party in power had attacked and censured the cabinet, on the basis of Article XI of the Meiji Constitution which prescribed the Prerogatives of the Emperor. According to the Meiji Constitution the régime had from its inception a built-in mechanism which permitted the Army to

make arbitrary decisions in regard to military actions. This mechanism brought about unlimited disorder in, and irresponsibility to, the political world of Japan. Here lay a fundamental cause for commencement of and the defeat in the fifteen-year war.

In addition to the contradictions within the state we may also observe a contradiction between the rulers and the ruled. The latter contradiction meant that the Taishō Democracy Movement developed in circumstances and restrictions which differed completely from those in which the Liberty and Popular Rights Movement developed. In this situation the mass movements approached socialism, departing from Taishō Democracy and surmounting the limitations of the bourgeois democracy. Particularly under the impact of the Russian Revolution and the experience of the Rice Riots in 1918 as well as of the wretched economic conditions, labour movements made rapid progress and spread throughout the country. Concurrently socialism was broadly accepted among the people.

It was inevitable that the democratic movements which were conducted by bourgeois political parties would oppose the mass movements whose leading principle was socialism. These new circumstances, of course, made it again difficult for the political parties alone to break down the firmly established Emperor System. This is symbolized in the fact that the realization of universal manhood suffrage in 1925 was possible only when it was enacted concomitantly with the Chian iji hō 治安維持法 (Peace Preservation Law) which was aimed solely at the maintenance of the Emperor System. The political parties began to undermine party politics itself when the substantial weaknesses in the democratic movements, which were themselves sponsored by the major political parties who kept a watchful eye on the growing mass movements, combined with the above-mentioned internal contradictions of the state system. In 1940, all the existing political parties dispersed of their own accord and formed a nation-wide, Nazi-style organization, the Taisei yokusankai 大政翼賛會 (Imperial Rule Assistance Association). Thus, the dispute concerning military politics versus party politics, which had been argued throughout the course of Japan's history after the establishment of the party politics in 1924, seemed undoubtedly to be concluded with military politics emerging as the winner.

Both these various points and relevant contemporary problems will be treated in the articles by Kamishima Jirō, Takeuchi Yoshitomo, Arase Yutaka, and Fujitake Akira. The Emperor System, the basis of the régime that forced Japan to choose the fifteen-year war, was not a mere

political institution but an entity which included social, cultural, religious, ethical, and socio-psychological aspects of the society. Kamishima will discuss the mental structure of the common people that sustained the Emperor System, and will try to elucidate the social structure within which the common people cultivated their mental and spiritual attitude.⁷

Arase will deal with the role of journalism in the period between the two world wars, the years which have been regarded as the most significant in relation to the choice of the directions open to Japan. Fujitake will analyse mass society, which had already appeared in the 1910's. As will be clear from his article, concomitant with the economic development after the First World War, the flow and concentration of population into the cities were intensified, mass consumption flourished, mass culture was diffused, education expanded, and organizations of mass media developed. All of these advancements came to be the foundation of the democracy of that time and subsequently supported its development. However, mass culture was diffused mostly in the cities, leaving the rural districts intact and having no relationship with the political mass movements. It functioned as a tranquillizer for the people who lived under circumstances of economic depression and social unrest derived from intensification of militarization, but as soon as the war broke out mass culture was compelled to reorganize as part of the national order for the prosecution of the war.

As the war came to be thought of as inevitable, both journalism and mass communications began to transform themselves into tools for the mobilization of the people and for the strengthening of fanatic ultranationalism. The history of Shōwa Japan, and in particular its early years, must be said to have shown this: that both mass culture and mass communication developed in the absence of a democratic order supporting the popular and political rights of the people. In this context, accomplishment of democratization became an important task for Japan in the mid-1920's, and was actually promoted not by the Taishō Democracy Movement under the leadership of the dominant political parties,

⁷ In this regard there are two excellent works: Masao Maruyama, *Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics*, London, Oxford University Press, 1963 and Fujita Shōzō 藤田省三, *Tennōsei kokka no shihai genri* 天皇制國家の支配原理 (Principle of Control in the Emperor System State), Tokyo, Miraisha, 1966. An article in Maruyama's book, "Theory and Psychology of Ultra-Nationalism," has been devoted to discussing the problem of similarity and analogy between the Emperor System or ultranationalism in Japan and Nazism in Germany. Since we have as yet few works about this problem Kamishima's article as well as Maruyama's will be provocative to readers who are interested in the problem.

but by mass movements led by the socialists. Generally speaking, on the stage of world history during the first half of the 20th century, the promotion of bourgeois democracy in those countries whose civilization and politics were not fully developed along democratic lines was accelerated as Marxism took the initiative. In other words, promotion of bourgeois democracy in those countries came to be inseparably related with the development of socialism.

As will be clearly explained in Takeuchi's article, Marxism in early Shōwa Japan was the first and the sole ideology that was able to criticize and make a frontal attack upon the Emperor System. Therefore, it inevitably possessed a dual character as a socialist movement and as a democratic movement; and in this sense, Marxism could extend roots among members of various classes of the society. Furthermore, Marxism made a great contribution to the establishment of "social science" in Japan. However, Marxism in Japan was immature, while the Emperor System was surprisingly strong. It failed to obtain by itself substantial social and political influences, due to exhaustive suppression by the state.

Among other important factors conditioning Japan's successive decisions leading to the war, we must not overlook that of international environment. Let us, therefore, examine in some detail the circumstances provided by the Western powers in which Japan had been compelled to choose the way leading to war, and the manner in which the Japanese government adapted her foreign policy to this international situation. In this case the policies vis-à-vis the China problem came first to mind and, in particular, the Shidehara and Tanaka diplomacies,⁸ which in regard to continental policy had different approaches just as in the case of the opposing financial policies of Inoue and Takahashi.

The Shidehara diplomacy, in general, may be defined as a diplomacy of co-operation with England and America. The principle of co-operation with these two countries was adopted in order to cope with the international political atmosphere stemmed from the so-called relative stability of world capitalism in the 1920's and from the system established after the Washington Conference of 1921-1922. And this co-operation policy was maintained for a considerable period as the keynote to Japan's foreign policy. The lifting of the gold embargo and the Inoue financial

⁸ Shidehara Kijūro 幣原喜重郎 held office as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the three cabinets from 1924 to April, 1927, and then in the two succeeding cabinets from July 1929 to December 1931. During the years that Shidehara did not occupy the foreign minister's office, General Tanaka Giichi concurrently held the offices of Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs. He organized the cabinet after the surrender of Japan, from October 1945 to May 1946.

policy may be understood as economic consequences arising necessarily from the Shidehara diplomacy.

What made the retreat of the Shidehara diplomacy from the stage of politics inevitable was the world economic depression and the Manchurian Incident of 1931. Japan's foreign policy was by no means limited to the Shidehara diplomacy. There were those who censured Shidehara's policy especially in regard to China as "weak," and insisted that a harder line be taken and eventually overthrew the Shidehara's line. It was the Tanaka diplomacy, the champion of the "hard line" factions that played a major role in the process towards war in the later 1920's and has come to stand as a symbol of that process. Tanaka Giichi 田中義一 had already held portfolio as Army Minister and had conducted the Siberian Expedition in 1918. Immediately after he organized his cabinet, he abolished without hesitation Shidehara's principle of non-intervention in China affairs, and pushed a hard line towards China by dispatching troops three times during the twelve months from May, 1927 to May, 1928, and by convening the Tōhō kaigi 東方會議 (Far East Conference)—conferences held in June and August 1923 to discuss China policy, whose membership was comprised of the outstanding officers of the diplomatic corps in China, the Army and Navy Ministries, the Kwantung Army, General Staff, and Naval General Staff. Beyond any doubt his foreign policy was the first step to the fifteen-year war.

As mentioned above, even in the transition from the Shidehara to the Tanaka diplomacies, the main concern of the Japanese government was always placed on the China policy; while Shidehara had intended to solve the problem in a rational and gradual manner, having retained as a corollary co-operation with the Anglo-American countries, Tanaka pursued a solution through power. Japanese capitalism, that had already exposed its expansionism to the Far East in the early Meiji era, had now grown up as one of the most advanced imperialist countries of the world. The Twenty-one Demands to China proclaimed in 1915 at the Paris Conference clearly indicated this fact.

Around this period, China was undergoing a revolution which was deeply rooted in a nationalism awakened by the Revolution of 1911; and the object of anti-imperialist movements was changed from England to Japan after the May 4th Movement of 1919. On the other hand, Japan entered into a new critical relationship with England in the same year.

Although the Shidehara diplomacy espoused the principle of the non-intervention in the domestic affairs of China, Japan in fact supported another principle in relation to China, namely that Japan's rights and

interests in Manchuria should be protected. This implies that Shidehara's diplomacy differed from Tanaka's merely in degree rather than in kind.

Continental policy had been a problem common to Japan's leaders ever since the Meiji era; in particular the government consistently concerned itself with the task of strengthening political and economic influences in China, on the basis of the rights and interests obtained in Manchuria as a consequence of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Other "constants" were the facts that the rulers of the country were in fear of the Chinese national revolution and they repeatedly intervened in the revolutionary movements; and that they gave support to anti-revolutionary factions in China. The governments headed by military cliques or bureaucrats were far more willing to support the anti-revolutionary faction than those headed by a political party.

Japan's "support to China" gradually shifted to direct, military intervention, and, after the small-scale dispatch of troops had been carried out several times, direct intervention took the form of the Manchurian Incident (1931), the Shanghai Incident (1932), the establishment of the puppet régime in Manchukuo (1932), and the Sino-Japanese Incident (1937). This course of military escalation—which was inevitable for Japan, who had already withdrawn from the League of Nations in 1933 and deepened her isolation from world politics—at last culminated in the Pacific War. Saitō Takashi will give readers a detailed description on the Japanese diplomacy at the time of the military expansion.

In short, it was in the Shōwa era that Japan was precipitated into direct, military intervention in China; that militarism and ultra-nationalism were developed concurrently with military expansion; that labour and tenant disputes broke out on a scale and with a frequency hardly ever seen, under conditions of continuing economic depression and increasing social unrest; that mass movements, progressive intellectuals, and journalism were oppressed by the Special Higher Police and the Military Police; that assassinations and acts of terrorism, carried out by factions comprised of military and right-wing conspiring together, took place one after the other—the assassination of Prime Minister Hamaguchi Osachi in 1930, of Inoue Junnosuke and Dan Takuma 團琢磨 in 1932 by the Ketsumeidan, of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi at the May 15th Incident in 1932, reaching a peak with the Incident of February 26th, 1936; that the short-lived phenomenon of party politics disappeared; that, with the subjugation of the political, economic, and cultural activities of the people, a total war system was completed under the slogan of "national emergency."

IV. LESSONS FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF THE EARLY
SHŌWA PERIOD

In recapitulation, we may say that because Japan made serious choices leading along the road to the fifteen-year war during early Shōwa, we, the Japanese, had a history of dishonour and regret. The fifteen-year war was not inevitable. Yet we also have seen that the varieties of choice were limited, given the conditions of Japan's political and economic system and the international environment, and it has been suggested that this limitation of choice was closely related to the pattern of modernization in Japan.

The modernization of a nation is conditioned by internal and external factors, which derive from the degree of maturity of the nation concerned and the stage of world history characterizing the international environment in which the nation stands. There are certain rules governing forms of relationship between the internal and external factors, with the mode of relationship producing the peculiar qualities which evolve in the modernization of the nation. Japan, differing from the European countries in that she started after a time-lag, was introduced to a world capitalism which had already reached a high stage of development in the later 19th century. As a country only lately come to capitalism, and enjoying the geographical advantages of location in a corner of Asia, Japan caught up rapidly with the Western powers. Under such circumstances, rapid formation of the national economy and of a nation state was unavoidably accompanied by internal structural imbalance. Speaking more simply, the modernization of Japan could be classified as industrialization without democratization. The simultaneous presence of bright and dark sides of the structure characterized Japan's modernization. Co-existence of modern and pre-modern elements was exemplified, politically in the Emperor System, Meiji Constitution and a powerful army; economically in capitalist cities and feudal villages, advanced enterprises and pre-modern minute-scale enterprises, and a pre-modern relationship between capital and labour; socially and culturally in the survival of pre-modern traditions with the expansion of Westernization. We must recognize that at this point Japan was entirely different from the Western countries, which had achieved modernization and gradually reformed their internal structures over a long period of time.

Japan is, however, also different from the developing countries in Asia and Africa, in that she to a certain extent formed a national unity, a nation state, national economy, and national market during the three

hundred years of the Tokugawa era, and in that she has a single language, a racial homogeneity, and developed educational and administrative systems. Moreover, she has no colonial history.

Of course, the modernization of Japan was not necessarily predetermined to follow a fixed pattern. In general, modernization can be identified with industrialization, Westernization, or democratization; and also transformation to capitalism, or rationalization. It is certain that these categories are related; however, their contents are not the same. These do not necessarily develop simultaneously or in equilibrium. There can be industrialization which is not accompanied by a high degree of democratization; and there can also be democratization with a low degree of industrialization. If a nation were not to develop these elements keeping in equilibrium, and if there were a gap in the degree of development in each sector, the nation would have to face the contradictions and the fetters of imbalance. In the end an imbalanced development would break down in some way, but in that process history could only appear as tragedy.

In fact, Japan in the Taishō and early Shōwa periods had attained a degree of maturity within the framework of the Meiji state, and developed party politics and mass culture. The collapse of the pre-modern foundation of village and the appearance of rapid urbanization had been long nourished. This tendency suggested a crisis within the old system itself and, as we have seen, at the moment of crisis she might have been able to obtain a new perspective on the direction of modernization. However, the fact was that the old system was very firmly constructed, and when the situation became tense in Asia, or world depression dealt a blow to Japan, her choice was limited. As a logical conclusion, authorities within the old system escalated the military aggression in China and militarization of the social order in Japan, and made a choice to proceed on the road to war. The choice resulted in the defeat of August 15.

The defeat of August 15 meant "demilitarization," "de-colonization," and "democratization." The new Constitution endowed people with the "Fundamental human rights," the "Sovereignty of the people," and the "Renunciation of war," i. e., pacifism. To adherents of the old system it was a revolution and discontinuity with history, but to those who sought to achieve democratization of the old, it provided solution for contradictions, and a continuation of the democratic elements of the pre-war state. But Japan, immediately after the defeat of August 15, was drawn into the Western camp in the cold war, and was embraced

under the “umbrella of the dollar and the Pentagon.” This provided Japan with the conditions for rapid progress of modernization as a capitalist country, and she realized high economic growth rates. In this sense, the defeat of August 15, together with the Meiji Restoration, constitute the epoch-making incidents in the context of discontinuity with history and continuity of modernization.

Japan had to pay a high price for choosing a fifteen-year war before she started to march on her way to modernization as a capitalist country. We, the Japanese, cannot forget how grave were the contradictions and sacrifices imposed upon the Japanese people by industrialization and development of mass culture without democratization, and how tragic were the results brought about by annihilating or intervening in the national revolutions in neighbouring countries in order to solve domestic contradictions. If we were to ignore the history of dishonour and regret of the twenty years of early Shōwa, and if we were to arbitrarily glorify the modernization of the one hundred years since the Meiji Restoration, we could not escape being charged with forgetting the lessons of history.