

Introduction

The articles reproduced in this retrospective issue may be grouped into two, according to what possible value they may offer to the reader. The first group consists of studies on East Asian relations from the late nineteenth century to the Second World War. East Asia here is defined as the region comprising China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia and the articles in this group are by Ian H. Nish, Joyce Lebra, and Yoji Akashi. East Asia is now the focus of world politics and scholarly interests. A deep understanding of the current situation requires a firm historical background and these works by such respected scholars certainly fulfil that need.

The second group consists of scholarly works that ask theoretically grounded general questions which today are still a challenge to scholars. Robert R. Reed asks what is the role of great cities and why people don't stay put in the rural areas. Frank W. Iklé asks why people undergo religious conversion. Reed's and Iklé's case studies provide examples of how scholars, who take up the challenge, may approach the questions.

Ian H. Nish's forte is the history of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Japan, a specialization which, of course, inevitably touches on Japan's relations with Russia, China, and Korea. The article reproduced here has been expanded into *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance – The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894-1907*. It is common knowledge that Great Britain was the first country to sign a treaty with Japan in 1902 and there is consensus that this treaty emboldened Japan to wage a war against Russia in 1903. The war ended in Japan's victory and consolidation of its power over Korea, which was officially annexed to Japan in 1910. The signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was preceded by almost five years of informal and official talks between Russia and Japan. The signing was commonly held as a failure of Russia's diplomatic efforts and the talks that preceded it were a double-cross of Russia by Japan. In the 1960s, the literature on these talks had not been systematically analyzed. Ian Nish was the first to do this, taking advantage of the opening of the archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Nish concludes that the informal talks were conducted by a government official in his private capacity and should not therefore be considered as a double-cross. Nonetheless, Nish stresses, the contents of the talks show Japan's determination to establish its supremacy over Korea.

Joyce Lebra, in this shorter and earlier version of her full-length book on the topic, *Jungle Alliance: Japan and Indian National Army* superbly adds to the pioneering work of K.K. Ghosh, *The Indian National Army* published in 1969, and a much older work by Hugh Toye, *The*

Springing Tiger, published in 1959. The invaluable addition is a deeper insight into the complex relationship between the Indian National Army (INA) operating in Southeast Asia and the Japanese decision makers in Tokyo on one hand, the interaction between the Indian independence fighters and the Japanese soldiers on the field, on the other, and still on another, the relationship between the latter and the Japanese decision-makers. Lebra was the first among the scholars on India-Japan relations to use primary Japanese sources, thus giving a balanced view of what, until she wrote, were Indian and British perspectives. Even though India was peripheral to Japan's war plans during World War II, from the vantage point of Prime Minister Tojo, the Indians should be motivated to take advantage of Japan's war for the "liberation" of Asia from Western imperialism to expel the British from India. And for this, collaboration between the INA and the Japanese propaganda organization had strategic importance. Was INA a puppet of Japan or was it truly a revolutionary army fighting for Indian independence? After narrating the varying attitudes of INA leaders towards Japan—some were for outright collaboration, others were suspicious of the motives of their fellow Indians for cooperating with Japan, while still others were truly haunted by their former loyalty to the British army, Lebra concludes that the answer is complex and is nuanced by the differing perspectives of the Indian and the Japanese participants.

No doubt, **Yoji Akashi** is the most prominent Japanese scholar on the Japanese occupation of Malaya. He has written on almost every aspect of the occupation, such as the Japanese policy towards the Chinese in Malaya; Malayan scholars of the Japanese government during the occupation; and "Watanabe Wataru: The Architect of the Malay Military Administration" to mention only a few of the works that span more than five decades. The article in this retrospective issue, one of his earlier works, is on the Japanese policy towards the sultans of Malaya. In this article, Akashi posits that the Japanese Military Administration in Malaya was unprepared to deal with the sultans who, during the British rule, enjoyed political independence and high religious and social status. They also received monetary stipends from the British. The other side of the coin was their lack of preparation to deal with religious matters. The Japanese military administrators were unprepared for the simple reason that no thought was given by the central administration in Tokyo to make such preparation. This is evidenced by the fact that no person who could be in charge of sultans and take care of religious matters accompanied the Twenty-Fifth Army. And yet, if the Japanese wanted to gain the cooperation of the people, they had to work with the sultans. Guided only by the general principle of not drastically changing the way the British treated the sultans, the Japanese military governors interpreted the general principle according to the situation in their area of jurisdiction. Hence, the policy towards

the sultans was uneven—liberal with political privileges and monetary stipend in some, stringent in others. The implementation was vacillating and indecisive while changes were made according to the turns and twists of the war situation. When, by 1944, almost towards the defeat of Japan, a more stable and lenient policy was decided, it was applied not only to the Moslem-Malays but also to all races—especially the Chinese and the Indians in Malaya, and to all religions. Akashi traces such vacillation and indecision to the irreconcilability of the Japanese eagerness to impose their own cultural values—Shinto worship, divinity of the emperor, and the so-called Japanese spirit on the Malays—and their desire to obtain the sultan’s cooperation by granting them their pre-World War II privileges and respectable political, social, and religious status. The dilemma was further complicated by the difficulty of having a policy only for the Muslims in a multiracial and multireligious Malaya.

Robert R. Reed’s main scholarly interest is the development of cities in Southeast Asia. This is an area of intellectual inquiry, which in today’s globalization, localization, environmental degradation, and increased mobility of people, has assumed renewed importance. What is the role of the so-called great cities in national and global development? The article reproduced in this volume is a shorter version of Reed’s doctoral dissertation, although this was not the first of his works on the same topic. His 1967 article on urbanization of the Philippines during the Spanish period preceded it and has been quoted by several scholars in the same academic field, one of them no less than the renowned Daniel Doeppers. In the article reproduced here, Reed contends that the political and cultural dominance of primate cities is not a modern phenomenon. As shown in the cases of Manila and Jakarta (Batavia), they were actually colonial creations, although Manila was different from Batavia. The root of the difference was that Spain was different from the other European colonizers in Southeast Asia in that unlike the Dutch, etc., Spain mixed secular and religious motives. To carry out Hispanization and Christianization, Spain embarked on direct rule and establishment of numerous cities and towns in the Philippines. Urbanization proved to be most difficult in the Philippines than in other parts of Southeast Asia because by the sixteenth century, Manila did not have yet any urban center. Other Southeast Asian countries already had well developed coastal towns and sacred cities. Manila and Batavia were fully developed primate cities by the outbreak of World War II; to date, the two cities have remained primate and have retained much of their colonial influences, observes Reed. If the great cities have survived World War II, a great upheaval, would they survive globalization? Would globalization be a force stronger than a world war to dramatically change cities?

The short piece by Frank Iklé is about the general question of religious conversion, a question that until today is very relevant. In the Philippines, for example, what makes those who become Born Again embrace this faith in exchange for their former religion, usually, Roman Catholicism?

Proceeding from the thesis that the spread of Roman Catholicism was mainly due to its association with Roman political power and its perceived possession of higher civilization, Iklé asks why the Franciscan missionary Friar John of Montecorvino succeeded in re-converting the Alanis to Roman Catholicism. The Alanis had been converted to Greek Orthodoxy under the Patriarchate of Nicholas Mysticos, but renounced it in 940. They were transplanted into China and lost the spiritual guidance of the Greek Orthodox Church. Christianity did not appeal to the Chinese because in China, it totally lacked political power and it could not compete with Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. These three religions were considered as representatives of a higher civilization. However, after earning the good favor of the new emperor of Yuan China, Togham Timur (1333-1368), John of Montecorvino succeeded in winning into the Roman Catholic faith the Alanis in 1318. Iklé admits that credit of course could be given to the personality of John of Montecorvino, but this could not be the only reason. He thus hypothesizes that the success was partly due to the fact that the Alanis had had experience of Christianity—through Greek Orthodoxy and after having been deprived of this spiritual experience in China, they longed for it and found in Roman Catholicism a civilization much higher and more fulfilling than Greek Orthodoxy. One unresolved question which Iklé hopes can be pursued in the future is whether Fr. John went to the Alanis or the Alanis looked for a missionary and found him.

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