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Director's Letter

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of Eric and Denny, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the delegates of the League of Nations at CYDC 2019. My name is Skyler Chan and I am currently a sophomore at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School. The true culmination of debate, public speaking and global affairs, all of which are his passions: are embodied Model United Nations. Ever since researching a country he didn't know existed (Albania) in grade 8, until now after over 10 MUN conferences, he's fallen not only in love with Wikipedia, Thesaurus.com, and Google Docs, but the magnanimous MUN community that he is truly grateful to be a part of. Outside of MUN and debate, I enjoy fencing, playing the flute, and photography.

As the predecessor of the United Nations, The League was formed to preserve world peace and strives to deliver comprehensive resolutions to counter imminent threats. As the most advanced committee offered at CYDC, the dais team anticipates high-level debates and hopes to see a plethora of engaging ideas presented.

The topic of Preventing Japanese aggression in the Southeast Asia is of great significance, not simple because our history has been written through the actions of this event, but because it set the precedent for imperialist ideologies in Southeast Asia. Delegates are reminded that thorough research is critical for the success of this committee's resolution-drafting process. All representatives of the League of Nations should strive to adhere to their respective foreign policy, while remaining fully diligent and aware of any unforeseen circumstances that will inevitably arise.

It is on this basis, that Eric, Denny, and I are confident that this will be a formidable committee, and I look forward to meeting with you all.

Godspeed,

Skyler Chan
League of Nations Director
CYDCMUN 2019



Topic: Preventing Japanese aggression in the South-east Asia: Introduction

As the Japanese empire casts off its yoke of isolation and humiliation of the early 18th century, the island nation quickly undergoes a series of reforms and modernizations. The unexpected and complete defeats of age-old imperial China and the vast, powerful Russian Empire in territorial conflicts are testament to its new great power status. With weaker nations signing treaties or becoming protectorates of the rapidly growing Japan, it became increasingly clear that there was a shift in the balance of power in East Asia. The Empire realized that the only way to gain recognition and legitimacy on a global scale was to involve itself with European affairs where the pendulum of the civilized world swung. Numerous coalitions were formed with the aforementioned European powers, most notably the 8 nation alliance (to protect their holdings in Peking during the Boxer rebellion), the Entente (WWI), and stayed on cordial terms with Britain over fear of Russian expansion.

WWI was perhaps one of the most important shifts in paradigm of the country. The economy grew at a breakneck rate: Japan's industrial production grew by 10%, and it had become the 3rd largest countries in shipping. Despite Japanese fleets played a large role in garrisoning important strategic islands, escorting and convoying, and coming to the aid of the European navies on multiple occasions, they were still treated as subordinates by European commanders. Worse, the Japanese-proposed Racial Equality Proposal that would see all member countries of Versailles as equals, did not pass despite widespread support. As a result, Japan's denunciation and eventual withdrawal from the League were symptomatic of the Japanese delegation's disillusionment and the alienation that ensued.

US-Japanese trade remained unstrained, but their relations had soured. During the interwar years, Japan had to go through numerous obstacles such as the Washington naval conference, and the Great depression. The only solution that remained appeared to be war, with little military opposition from other Asian countries and plenty of raw materials and morale that could be amassed. The sustained expansion into Manchuria, Indochina, and the east Indies fueled Japan's Industries, Economy, and Influence at a Herculean pace, but it also created friction in the League's axioms of self-determination



and non-aggression. Japan simply exited the league to avoid repercussions, which only increased Western denunciation and suspicion even further. Considering that the Budding Empire had won 3 major wars with European powers in a quarter of a century, each bringing invaluable spoils of war, and saw the Allies as unwilling to cooperate, Japanese expansion was only accelerated.

Timeline

1853 Sakoku policy - Isolation under the Tokugawa Shogunate made the Japanese susceptible to Western influence and Subjugation. This was ended infamously during the Kanagawa conference as a victorious Commodore Matthew Perry demanded to be granted two ports to American ships.

1868 Meiji restoration - The Meiji Cabinet wipes out the last of Satsuma resistance in the Kiushu provinces. Japan transitions quickly from a feudal system to a highly centralized, nationalistic one.

1879 Annexation of the Ryukyuan islands - The Japanese annex the Ryukyuan islands, previously owned by China. They would play an integral part in the Japan naval doctrine 'Kantai Kessen' (meaning decisive battle, this doctrine called for a textbook mahanian conflict that would cement Japanese hegemony, as opposed to drawn out conflicts in which the tiny nation would be at a disadvantage.).

1894-1895 1st Sino Japanese War - The once-powerful Qing dynasty was soundly defeated by Japanese forces. The Chinese lose territorial claims of Korea, 35,000 men, and much of their influence. The center of power in Far-East Asia swings to the Japanese.

1902 British Alliance- Japan and Britain form an alliance to stay vigilant against Russian Expansion.

1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War - The Russians and Japanese fight over valuable and resource rich Manchuria and Korean peninsula. Japan unexpectedly defeats the European power and gains Great Power Status.



1910-1945 Occupation of Korea - Korea was dominated diplomatically by the Japanese even by the end of the 19th century, much before Russo-Japanese territorial conflict. Even though the state proclaimed itself Empire with numerous reforms and modernizations, they could not escape effective annexation by the Japanese.

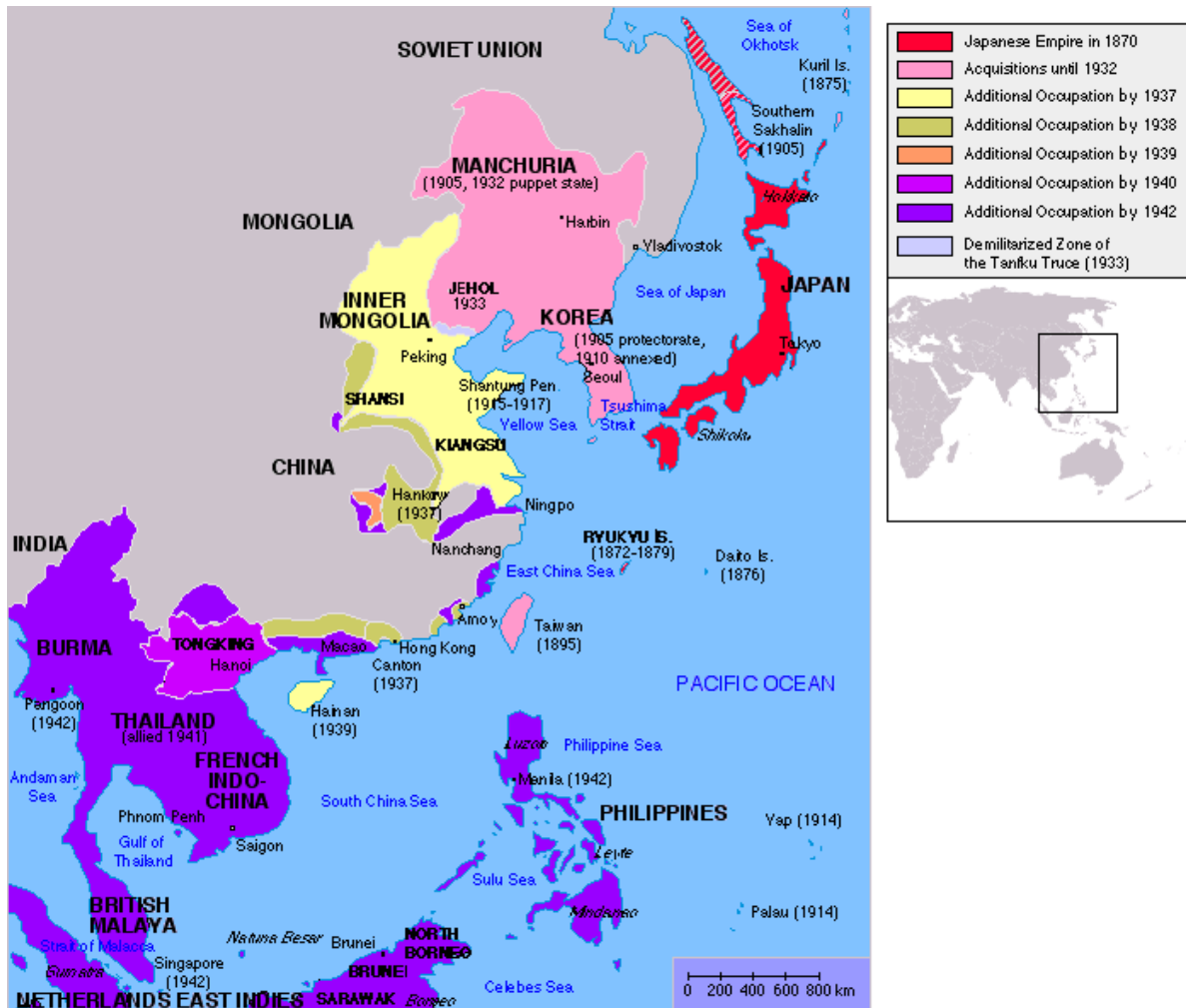
1914-1918 WWI - The Japanese played an important role in the first world war, seizing a plethora of Central Power holdings, which included ports, islands, garrisons, etc. in Far East Asia.

1919 The Treaty of Versailles - The although the Japanese were the only great power in Far East Asia, the two Japanese delegates were underrepresented, and their demands were largely unmet.

1929 The great depression - Of the developed nations that were impacted by the great Depression, Japan suffered perhaps the most. Most production was halved during these years, and the constant increase in wealth was gone.

1931 Mukden incident - The Japanese military blows up imperial railway tracks near Mukden and accuses the Chinese army of sabotage. They mobilize without the authorization of the Emperor.

1931-1932 Invasion of Manchuria - The legendary Japanese Kwantung Army Group (with the assistance of the Joseon Army Group) invade Manchuria without proper authorization. But, given the importance of Military cabinet members and the reports of successive victories, they were powerless to stop it. The League denies Japanese sovereignty over the region and Japan exits the league.



Japanese imperial expansion. Korea and Taiwan are invaluable footholds to defeating the Middle Kingdom, while South Asia provided valuable resources.

Historical Analysis

ECONOMIC

The gold standard

The gold standard was perhaps the most famous instance of a Standard system, which saw currencies being backed by precious metals (as opposed to a fiat system, where governments issued and determined prices). Because these precious metals were so rare, it was implied that, such metals existed in a nominally fixed quantity, which was then expected not to fluctuate in value.



The initial wobbles in the gold standard system occurred after the Great war, when Europe's currencies were in shambles. As a result, Silver (which had pretty much maintained a 15:1 conversion to gold) began to be brought back from the peripheries of empires at a fast pace to maintain stability in the civilized world. But the coup de grace was dealt at the onset of the Great depression, when deflationary policies and credit contraction imposed by the colonizers resulted in colonial currencies remaining stable at the expense of producers biting the dust. Even though investors, spenders, and importers were protected in the short run, the overwhelmingly agrarian economies of Southeast Asia saw a sharp decline in their prices. The appeal for colonialism was greatly diminished because the costs for maintaining the colonies now outnumbered the benefits of buying cheap, deflated raw materials. This led to social developments that culminated in the independence of these colonies.

Agriculture

Of all crops produced by the already heavily agrarian Asian southeast economies, three were paramount in importance. The 'Holy Trinity', so to speak were comprised of wheat, rice, and sugar. To understand the domino effect of dropping crop prices, one has to first understand that wheat is a relative inelastic commodity: people buy practically the same amount of the stuff despite fluctuations in price. So, if price go down rapidly, people may buy slightly more, but not nearly enough to equilibrialize the amount. There is a large surplus between supply and demand.

So, when all credit contracted, every economy was rapidly flooding the market with their now mechanically-mass produced wheat. Though this did not have an immediate impact on rice, bountiful harvests in Japan made the country self-sufficient in terms of rice. As the yen was supported by the gold standard and prices fell all across Japan due to deflation, Rice experienced a shock and was soon in free fall. Other Asian countries followed suit and western investors pulled their assets from the carnage. Rice-based subsistence economies were forced to add poll taxes that were greeted with public outcry, and there was even a lengthy revolt in Burma over this. As for sugar, the crop was only produced in several colonies and an alluring source of income. That is, if one was allowed to sell it. Many economies in southeast Asia that were producing sugar were given quotas if not forbidden to export



sugar. Thus, while the price of sugar remained stable at the cost of internal complications.

Import substitution + Expansionism

All of these economic shocks did have two positive impacts for autonomous Asian states that had resilient populations and potential for self-sufficiency. Only two countries fulfilled these requirements: Japan and China.

Xinghai China had very limited exports and very few imports before the Depression hit. Although European countries dumped many unwanted exports to the country, China had a large rural demographic that could sustain a decrease in their income. The country actually grew about 11.6 percent a year from 1931 to 1935, discounting the implicit costs to the rural population. As silver flowed out of China, the country switched to a fiat system, printing out more money as they saw fit to settle debts.

Japan, on the other hand, was heavily reliant on trade, being one of the largest shipping countries as well as investing billions in China. As the depression hit, Japan enclosed itself by expanding industries and producing cheap textiles themselves. This devalued the yen significantly but gave the Japanese an advantage on the international market. This was called import substitution. The low morale that resulted from loss in purchasing power and underpaid workers called for 2nd part of the composite solution: Expansion. This economic wonder-solution built upon the fierce nationalism of the Meiji era and reinforced Japanese cultural superiority all while staving off economic instability. The gold that poured in from the invasion of Manchuria and the victory over the Russians 30 years ago was expended to pay for trade deficits & war. Japan could no longer maintain gold parity, they, finally exited the gold standard. Thus, stability was preserved for the time being (until the 2nd world war, that is). The Japanese continued to expand into Manchuria and Southeast Asia.

MILITARY

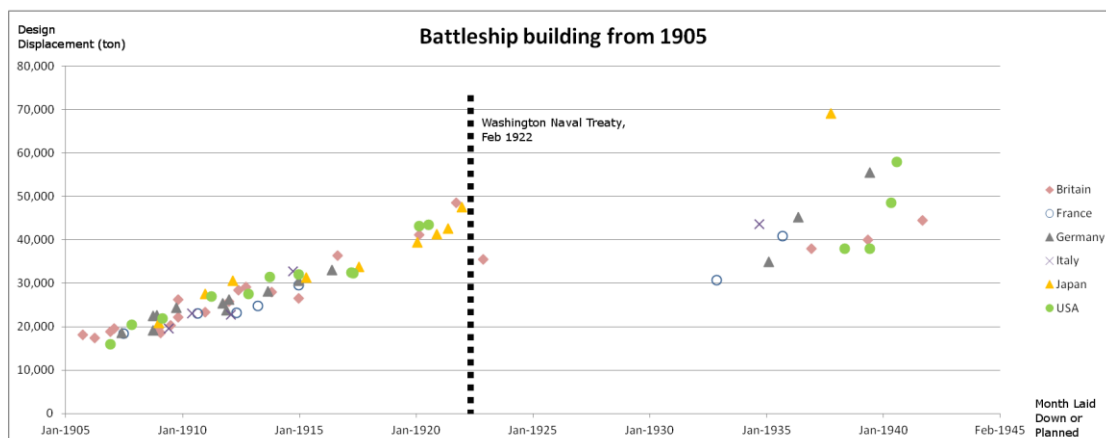
Naval developments in the Interwar period

The most important formal naval agreement during the Interwar period was undoubtedly the 5 power treaty (complemented by the less important 4



power and 9 power treaties) which outlined the as well as unintentionally defined the nature of all naval conflicts in the region up until 1945. At the time, the Battleship was viewed as the embodiment of strength of any Blue Water Navy, and the arms race between the naval powers at the time involved building larger, more modern, and more deadly battleships. But the arms race was neither advantageous for the economies or the naval dominance of those who had triumphed after WWI. They demanded a 10 year pause on the building of Capital ships (Which at the time were Battleships and Battlecruisers) as well as a tonnage ratio of 5 (RN/ Britain): 5 (USN/ US): 3(IJN/ Japan) : 1.75 (MN/ France): 1.75 (MM/ Italy).

Because the Japanese knew that only the USN could arrest its expansion in the Pacific, their naval doctrine was therefore catered to defeating the Americans. However, a 5:3 ratio was determined as inadequate to the minimum of 7:5 required for “Kantai Kessen”. This had several important ramifications. First, the West was scorned for the draconian measures during times of peace and urgent pleas during war. The Japanese knew that their expansionism was mutually exclusive with being friends with the West, and the Treaty of 5 powers proved that the west did not want to be friends. As well, all Japanese warships built after the Washington conference were small in size, but with unusually large armaments. This would prove unreliable to aim and prone to explode in a conventional engagement with the USN, a fact that Pilots would exploit during the war in the Pacific. And lastly, just like in the army, the navy was fractured into a Treaty faction (in support of the 5 power treaty) and an Ultra-nationalistic anti-treaty faction.



Perhaps the most important as well as effective military agreement signed in the Interwar period, the Washington agreement terminated the Naval Arms race until WW2.



Army developments in the Interwar period

The Japanese army proved itself to be an incredibly effective fighting force in the interwar years. A combination of disproportionate government spending, modelling of the German army's organization, and numerous modernizations is perhaps the best explanation for this. Even though the role of the army was still not quite as prestigious as that of the navy, numerous successes in Manchuria and Russia created a formidable reputation for the IJA nonetheless. Thus, even though the Emperor was the ceremonial chief of the Army, the Cabinet's grasp on the Army loosened. (In fact, they could not even make decisions during the invasion of Manchuria due to the boycotting of crucial Army cabinet members' absence.)

Even in the army, fractures began to surface. The factions disagreed on an array of issues, including military doctrine, self-organization, the extent of military in government, and the military stance of Japan itself. Those two factions, of course, were Kodoha (imperial way) and Toseiha (control). The former preached a policy of aggressive militarism, totalitarianism and belligerence to the Soviet Union, and was avidly swallowed up by the most idealistic, fanatical junior officers. The Toseiha, on the other hand were formed by opposition to the Kodoha rather than a unifying ideology. They placed equal emphasis on the importance of the military, but did so with realism rather than the fanatic spiritualism of the Kodoha. These two factions dominated the military. Eventually a coup and several assassinations later, even though the Kodoha lost momentum, their idea of racial superiority and divine right persevered among the ranks of the units until the end of the war.

SOCIAL

Race theory and State Shinto

To many at home who were ignorant of the extreme means taken by the Imperial Japanese Army to achieve complete victory, the campaigns in Eastern Asia was characterized a "*Mission Civilisatrice*" to educate those who belonged to less civilized races.

The nations of eastern Asia were used to this, however. Until the industrial revolution, China was seen as a vast, indomitable and advanced super-civilization from which culture, Buddhism, and influence ebbed into the



northern Barbarians, Koreans, and Japanese. The notion that the Han (who were the descendants of dragons in folklore) were superior was reinforced by the of plethora tributaries which they protected for a high price, an all-mighty central government, not to mention the dozens of engineering marvels. That changed with the centralization of Japan under the Meiji restoration, which emphasized the love of one's country and people. In fact, until the 30's Japanese superiority over other Races was a given for most of the Japanese Populace, and it's evident as to why this is the case.

One can see how such a vast assertion morphed into discourse with the emergence of state sponsored ideas. With state Shinto, ideological runoff contaminated every strata until every schoolchild knew that the Emperor was truly the embodiment of God on Earth. Even more mind-bogglingly, this was not even seen as belief that one subscribed to: rather, it was seen as "a unity of government and teaching," or historical fact rather than a religion. Written records only began to appear in the late 20's as a way to rationalize and reaffirm spoken maxims. Documents like *"An Investigation of Global Policy with the Yamato Race as Nucleus"* responded to issues like living space, justification for expanding and eugenics. Unlike the Germans, however, the Japanese also invoked the Confucian model of the family, where development would only come about if there was a father figure present. That figure, of course, was Japan.

In the army, the sentiment of superiority was used for "materialistic" purposes. There is a common aphorism that "An army marches on its stomach". I prefer to use the word appetite in this situation. The Japanese commanders understood that conquest paramount in importance, so much so that decency was disregarded. To maintain morale, Japanese soldiers committed unspeakable war crimes without fearing reprisal from their superiors. These included killing competitions, infanticide, rape, and torture, and senseless massacres, all made dismissable by the fact that the Yamato race was superior. In this regard, loathing of the Japanese is still not uncommon in China, Korea, and Taiwan.

Continental policy, The Greater East Co-Prosperity Sphere



The phrase “Hakko Ichiu” exemplified Japanese geopolitical ambitions. There is a vocal desire for for ‘all the world to be under one room’ as well as a disregard of human decency in practice.

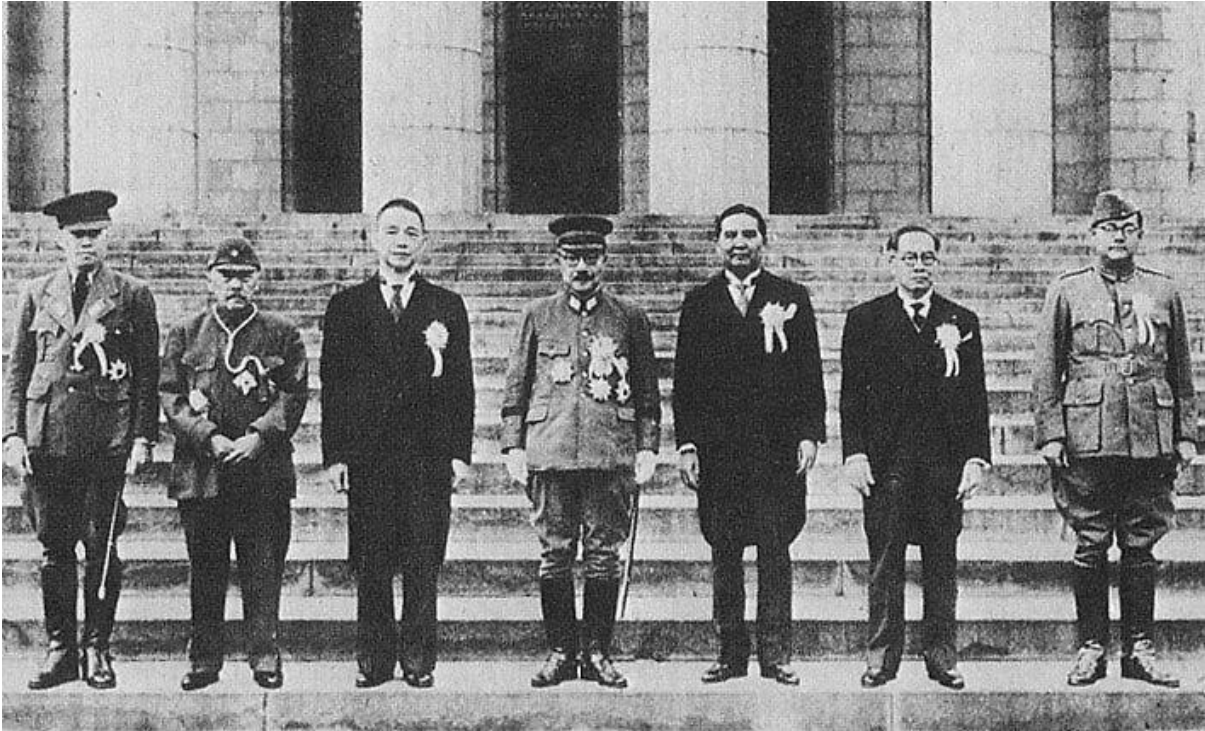
When exactly did this come about? Even though Japan was relatively decentralized under the feudal system, with a miniscule standing army, it had always wished to expand past its coast. In the 16th century, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, one of the 3 great unifiers of Japan, led two full scale invasions against Japan. It was only through the valiant efforts of Admiral Yi and the Chinese reinforcements that the invasion was beat off. But the spirit of conquest was never truly extinguished. The devastating Manchu conquest (perhaps one the most devastating up until then) placed China into a prolonged decline into complacency, and its grasp weakened.

An ambitious plan began to spring up in the minds of the Meiji Japanese strategists. "If we want to conquer the World, we need to conquer China first. If we want to conquer China, we need to conquer Mongolia and Manchuria first. If we want to conquer Mongolia and Manchuria, we need to conquer Korea and Taiwan first." Of course, this did not factor in the massive amounts of steel and fuel to build and run the massive battlefleet, armoured divisions and swarms of planes, which Japan obtained first from the US, then from conquests in Malaya and Dutch East Indies. This Continental policy was a chiral image of its Napoleonic counterpart: Japan imposed this to have resources and wealth flow into the empire, and easily have footholds to attack the Continental power as well as to have buffers before the measly Japanese heartlands.

Another of these envisaged imperial concepts that came to fruition was the Greater East Co-Prosperity Sphere. Like many others we’ve discussed, the Sphere, before being corrupted by militarism and nationalism, was supposed to be a platform for fellow Asian countries to free themselves of Western control. The only members that joined were under direct control or military threat of Japan. Conversely, the Sphere provided a moral justification for war, as any war was a war against European exploitation. All the while, Japan surged with the new imports as well as cultural prestige. It was common for the very same communities that cheered the ‘liberation’ of their villages to be subjugated and oppressed by the very troops they had ushered in so eagerly. As the Sphere did not treat countries others as equals, it did not survive the 2nd world war, when most South Eastern Mandates and Colonies gained



independence. As Japan had no longer standing army nor continental foothold, it seemed as if the narrative of expansion is at its end.



Ba Maw of Burma, Zhang Jinhui of Manchukuo, Wang Jingwei of (collaborationist) China, Hideki Tojo of Japan, Prince Wan Waitayakon of Thailand, Jose P Laurel of the Philippines, and Subhas Chandra Bose of India pose for a photo during the first Greater Eastern Co-Prosperity Sphere meeting.

It would be fallacious to assume that the Japanese only brought Carnage and destruction wherever they went. Even though most of their efforts to bring the world under their roof devolved into a Machiavellian power-grab, Japan was still the only Asian country to wrest itself from Western control (albeit with French aid during the defeat of the Samurai) and rise to Great power status. For example, Japanese economists and governors were sent to the corners of the Imperial Sphere to reform economies and manage resources/infrastructure. The purpose of this maneuver may be to more effectively extract raw material, but evidently, the framework of postwar Asian economies had influence from Japanese populations. Even more, Taiwan and Korea are a testament to the effect of Japanese occupation (and geopolitical ambition). They were both springboards to far more alluring prizes, yet both Taiwanese and Korean infrastructure, public works, education system would not have existed.



But the state of these two 'model colonies' is by no means reflective of how conquests were. So, while the Japanese occupation did improve a few aspects of infrastructure, it's generally agreed that the atrocities that were committed carried much more significance in evaluating the efficacy of the Continental system and the Co-prosperity sphere.

Bloc Positions

The situation now rests on a delicate seesaw of 4 rough groupings of countries based on both their position in relation to the crisis as well as their role on the world stage. It could be said that this rough organization of these Blocs was based on the alignment of interests.

Japanese Bloc

(The information in the overview would be applicable under this section, to both save space and prevent redundancy.)

Resistance Bloc

The name of this bloc is relatively self-explanatory. The majority of these sovereign nations have kept their sovereignty through a relatively centralized government, military strength to resist European Expeditionary Forces, political strength to bargain instead of conceding, and historical prestige to reinforce their legitimacy. All have important diplomatic ties to world powers (the US, USSR, and Britain and France respectively). As a result of their development and retained independence, it would be in their best interests to avoid joining Japanese sphere of influence while trying not to provoke them. This ambivalent stance is easier said than done though, because both are on a collision course with Japanese interests. The monarchy of Siam is gateway to all of the South-East Asia, including resource-rich Burma, Malaya and the port of Singapore. China, on the other-hand, was a conquest in-and-of-itself. For centuries the Japanese have repeatedly launched assaults at the tributaries of China, but never the mainland. With the first Sino-Japanese war and the recent attack of Manchuria, the 'Middle Kingdom' struggles to mount



effective defenses, while the Japanese Empire obtained a direct route to Chinese heartlands.

Old Colonial Powers Bloc

This bloc consisted of Imperial Metropolises and their spheres of control. Two main forms of Colonial governance formed: a Continental one and a more flexible British model. Throughout the history of Colonialism, the former one has seen a more direct and straightforward control. While motivations may differ, this form of governance was characterized by an imposition of one's settlers and expeditionary forces into the peripheries of Empire. The latter opted for a more indirect form of semi-self-governance in which a handful British supervisors and troops oversaw production. As previously mentioned, both structures of colonies were hit hard from cushioning the economy of their colonizers during the depression, and valuable possessions even into the late 1930's. The most notable of these old Colonial powers were France, Britain, and the Netherlands. On each colony were stationed tens of thousands of troops, which yields bargaining rights as well inconveniences. For one, the defeat of any significant force would not mean losing the colony, but also the lives of many citizens, as reinforcements were hard to come by. Also, revolts of the local population posed as much of a problem as an invading army. Withdrawing any military power would forfeit the possibility to bargain in addition to resources that the Empire is reliant upon; delegates of this bloc are urged to seek diplomatic solutions above all else.

New Great Powers Bloc

The Soviet Union and Japan share boundaries in Manchuria with Manchukuo. Although the Soviets and the Japanese don't share the historical animosity in the time of the Russian Empire. What the relation the powers had was a mutual distrust of each other's imperialist ambitions. This manifested in a few border skirmishes, and a few uneasy treaties between the two when they had larger threats to address. Spirited Japanese military planners envision a Kwun Tong invasion of Far Eastern USSR, but it is very unlikely that they could have advanced past Eastern Siberia due to local resistance, the cold and barren landscape, and the sizable supply lines. The US emerges from the first world war as the greatest economic power. However, its military strength from the time of Roosevelt and the last days of the Great war have not advanced at the same rate. As a result, the US armed



forces were diminutive and outdated. Relations with Japan. At first, the two countries were similar in terms of position on the world stage and had aligned interests, such as commercial expansion in China (think 'Open Door Policy'), and respect and good relations between their imperial possessions. However, the Japanese demands concerning China grew increasingly aggressive, while the Americans did not prefer the use of force even to gain control of a lucrative market. This, coupled with a predominantly American rejection of Japan's Racial Equality Clause, led to strained political relations. Economic relations fared better; valuable commodities such as Oil was still being traded between the two Emergent Powers.



Questions to Consider

- 1) Evaluate the roles of European colonialism and the Japanese continental policy as a developing country in the area. In what ways do they share traits or differ?
- 2) Economics are a major point of contention. The raw materials needed for war, international trade, and the relationship between colonizer and colonized all hinges upon this one point. How is your country valuable economically? What steps might one take to stop sympathizers from supporting a Co-prosperity sphere?
- 3) The policy of Appeasement is characterized by Churchill as “feeding a Crocodile” and was ineffective in Europe. But would it have been effective in increasing the overall amount of diplomatic ties and talks with the reclusive but aggressive Japanese, or would it only have been fundamentally irreconcilable with their society?
- 4) What are some shortcomings of some previously decided policies, such as the Mandate system, or the 14 points? How should such issues be dealt with in the future?
- 5) How does your country stand to benefit from south East asian events? In what ways does this happen and how will it affect other countries



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